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Creativity and the Child

Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Edited by

Wendy C. Turgeon

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Creativity and the Child:
Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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Creativity and the Child: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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Introduction

Wendy C. Turgeon

The following essays represent a plurality of visions of the nature of creativity and its place within childhood experience. The authors represent such diverse fields as pre-college education, computer science, psychology, the arts of music, theater, dance, literature, "philosophy by/for children" and hospital counseling. Some report on research and studies that they have conducted; others share theoretical models of creativity and childhood. Many different countries are represented from almost every continent. Each author brings to the table an important set of parameters through which to explore a range of questions which center around the notion of creativity and childhood.

Our essay collection begins with three broad based analyses of the meaning of the child. What may seem so obvious is revealed to be a puzzle that asks us to decode it in the context of culture, experience and politics. Thomas J. J. Storme offers a thoughtful reflection on the dialectic of childhood/adulthood through the metaphorical lens of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. The other, in the story a giant insect, represents the intrusion of the child into society; what ought to be done? Chi-Ming Lam deconstructs the model of childhood as defined by incapabilities so as to suggest a paradigm shift towards empowering the child and in doing so, renegotiating the place and role of the child and adult in society. Finally, Laurent Dessberg offers a Deweyian inspired argument for the role of inquiry in schools as essential for the functioning of genuine deliberative democracy. Contrapuntally exploring the ideas of John Rawls and John Dewey, Dessant asks us to consider how best to create a democracy for adults that is built on a foundation of creative inquiry skills for children.

The question of critical thinking cannot be far from anyone's mind as we explore how children think and act in the world. Roy van den Brink-Budgen charts the relationship between critical thinking, tolerance, creativity and the moral ideal of fairness. With some wonderfully fanciful case studies, he pushes us to articulate the borders between creativity, logic and moral behaviour. How can we nurture creativity in pressing ways which still acknowledge the criteria for good thinking? Amir Ali Nojoumian offers us a powerful and inspiring guide to helping students read contrapuntally and polyphonically as a path towards creative reading and better thinking. He discusses this in the context of his own experience as a teacher in Iran. He discusses the educational successes and the further development needed there. His call for curriculum development resonates with educators around the world as we can easily see this needed everywhere. Philosophy is often claimed to be the discipline par excellence for fostering critical thinking.

Florence Ching Ting Lee and Gabriele Munnix, working in very different cultural settings (Singapore and Germany) build persuasive arguments for the use of philosophy. Lee takes the method of "P4C" as developed by Matthew Lipman and details a critical study of its adoption as a tool for developing self-assessment for learning. She notes the strong advantages and her legitimate concerns before outlining potential solutions. Műnnix, a well known author and professor in Germany, explores how to nurture philosophical creativity through the use of thought experiments- "what if"s"- and how the *practice* of philosophy is even more important for critical and creative thinking than simply *studying* it.

Any collection of essays regarding children, creativity and education needs the voices of practicing teachers at the elementary and secondary levels. The third section of this book offers those voices, loud and clear. Vicky Anderson-Patton details a case study of introducing in-service and pre-service teachers to opportunities to discover and develop their own creativity. This is so essential since we often ask teachers to teach the very skills which they themselves may lack! The second essay in this section offers three voices, Phil Fitzsimmons, Edie Lamphar and Jess Sandford, who share their individual accounts of a case study of the San Roque School in Santa Barbara. California. This institution was developed around the key values of respect and care which became the foundation for inviting the children to explore their own creativity within community. Cathie Harrison continues this theme of care and nurturing in her account of developing new assessment tools which embrace the whole child. She reveals how a carefully and caringly crafted assessment tool called "learning stories" can free teachers to be more directly and emotionally attuned to their young students' experiences as well as bring in parents, the children themselves and the entire family into an enhanced learning and communicating opportunity. Directly addressing teachers of youth, Sarah Turner's essay offers a study of the trends in creative teaching at the secondary level and the goal of further awareness. She details the complexity of cross-disciplinary approaches to the definitions of creativity, keeping in mind that they must be paired with clear thinking to be truly productive. All of these essays offer practicing teachers models to consider in recognizing and nurturing the creativity of their students and themselves.

Certainly any collection of essays dedicated to creativity must acknowledge the nature and place of the arts. In the fourth section, our authors invite us to explore ways in which engagement with the arts both sparks and reveals the human creative urge. Alexandra Antonopoulou, an author of children's stories herself, describes the ways in which she invites children to use established stories to craft their own versions, thereby playing creatively with the ideas of others. Fantasy, myth and fairy tales provide a conduit into active engagements with narrative building. Reading is far from

passive, an echo of the ideas of Nojoumian above. Josephine Mokwunyei crosses conceptual boundaries in her account of using song and theater in Nigerian communities to connect children to the adult world and free their thinking to tackle serous social concerns. Hanna Hakomaki, a musician, takes us to Finland where she had developed a unique approach to music called "Storycomposing" in which the children write their own music and songs, thereby taking prideful ownership of the act of musical expression. Hakomaki has applied these techniques to pre-schoolers, children with special needs and adults with Alzheimer's. Musical creativity gives us back ourselves. In Ireland, Rebecca Bartlett, a playwright, analyses how arts festival programs create a shared environment of creative acts for children and the participating artists. The adults artists and the children participate in a shared creative exchange, a dialogue, which leads to new ideas for participants and audience alike. She reminds us how important that glimpse into the power of art can be for the child. While computer games may seem out of place in a section devoted to the arts, the crafting of such games requires enormous vision and an openness to fantastical possibilities, coupled with technical skills. Tim Göttel argues that, although many criticize video and computer games as destructive of creativity, the opposite can be true. His essay follows a project where children in multicultural schools worked in teams to create computer games which asked them to reflect across differences. Rather than simply lecturing at children to tolerate people of different backgrounds, this project puts the power in the hands of the children to think through the experienced differences towards core points of connection.

The experience of creativity is not simply a cerebral or artistic action upon the world. Children and adults need to recognize their physicality and embodied selves as they construct their worlds. In the fifth section, the essays invite the reader to unpack the concept of "well-being." Luigina Mortari and Valentina Mazzoni collaborate on a research project which both examines the nature of well being for children and invites children to be co-researchers in exploring the parameters of the concept. Icelandic philosopher Robert Jack offers a blueprint for initiating students into mindfulness and reflectivity through a consciously constructed "experiment in living." Echoing ancient Socratic practice and the more contemporary wisdom tradition of Pierre Hadot, Jack details some simple but effective exercises to provoke creative awareness. Judy Rollins brings the project into the environment of a hospital where critically ill children cope with enormous problems even as they experience the impersonality of the sterile environment of the hospital. How can hospitals construct opportunities for these children to see themselves as empowered to negotiate their way through their illness? The project presented and analyzed by Rollins is exciting in its innovative techniques for using art to stimulate fruitful dialogue among children and care-givers.

The final section of our text expands the concept of physical experience to explore children's' understanding of science, their relationship to one another as embodied persons and their relationship to the natural world. Anna Hausberg and Kritina Calvert share some exciting work done in the area of philosophy of science with children. Centering on a delightful example of constructing a "leafspooner," a fantastical creature which shares qualities of a leaf and spoon (nature and culture), the authors explore how children can think around, within and about nature in creative and meaningful ways as an alternative to simple rote memorization of 'scientific fact." Eva Marsal and Takara Dobashi recount an experiment which explores the relationship between creative play and self reflection as a tool for realizing the embodiment of the self. This counterbalances a tendency in education to reduce reason to a cerebral event, ignoring the reality of the *Leiblichkeit* of the human being. Finally, I offer my own essay which explores the importance of a direct and unmediated experience of the natural world for creativity in the lives of children. Taking stock of recent arguments for an acknowledgement of our place within nature and nature's role in our self articulation, I offer some suggestions for new ways to experience and reflect upon the world that is not us but is essential for our being.

Each essay in the collection offers a particular vision of and a unique approach to the question of creativity and childhood and thereby complements the work done in the other essays. What we find here is a tapestry of ideas, richly nuanced and grounded in research and reflection, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary, which can contribute to the our growing understanding of the mystery that is human creativity and the puzzle of childhood.

PART I

Defining the Child/Adult Dyad

Metamorphosis -The Becoming of the Child: A Critical View of the Interdependent Conceptual Relationship of Childhood and Adulthood in Light of Kafka's Metamorphosis

Thomas J. J. Storme

Abstract
It is interesting to remark that in contrast to the so-called 'increasingly complex and demanding world' the presentation of childhood remains somewhat oversimplified. Without thoroughly elaborating historical discussions one could say that the prevailing image of childhood has roughly remained the same for some centuries: it is the Romantic bubble of purity, naivety, of being in touch with ones 'nature' and, yes, of simplicity. So whilst one of the most highlighted features of adulthood today is painted in the confrontation with complexity and uncertainty, childhood is portrayed as a time of simplicity. Whilst it is obvious that adulthood and childhood are interdependent concepts, it is shown that they take on the form of opposed pairs, thus explaining why childhood has remained a concept of simplicity in a time of complexity. The underlying dialectical structure of this interdependence is elaborated by analyzing the idea of childhood and maturity in Kafka's Metamorphosis. Firstly, the quarantine of childhood is elaborated as embodied by the main character, Gregor, who wakes up one morning to find him transformed into an insect of some sort. The author argues that children grow into their quarantine as Gregor grows into his insect-like existence during the story. Secondly, the idea of maturity is elaborated as embodied by the main character's sister, Grete. It is argued that for her to reach this maturity, the quarantine of the main character needs to be upheld. In the last section, the two characters are seen as two poles of one character. It is then concluded that as the play of opposed ideas in the story itself is an acknowledgement of the nature of the debate, the division of the idea of childhood and adulthood are subjected to the same play. We are all, with or without our will, playing metamorphosis.

Key Words: Adult, adulthood, child, childhood, conceptions, dialectics, interdependence, Kafka, metamorphosis, opposition

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1. Introduction

It is a common statement that childhood and adulthood are inseparable. Indeed, without some idea of what it means to be an adult there

would be no meaning to childhood. This interdependence, however, takes on a specific play of opposition that is often left out of the picture. In this paper I will address the turns and twists of this interdependent conceptual relationship. I will illustrate the specific *dialectics* of childhood and adulthood and try to show that this play is not without consequences; that there is, indeed, something at stake in this play. To illustrate this dialectics I will make use of Kafka's short 'Metamorphosis'.

2. Metamorphosis: The Becoming of the Child

In zoology the term metamorphosis is used to designate the series of transformations a larva passes through to evolve into a full-grown individual. It's one of Kafka's many merits that he reverses this image to begin his short story. It is a common adult dream to wake up as a child and be liberated from adult duties, or to be able to do childish things. In a sense this is what happens to Gregor, the main character in Kafka's short story 'Metamorphosis', as he wakes up one morning from anxious dreams and discovers he has been changed into a monstrous verminous bug. [1]

The idea of a metamorphosis has undergone Kafka's reversal. Our main character has grown through a transformation into a certain stage, yet he has not grown into what we would acknowledge as a more fully-grown individual, but into a bug, which we would see as a less grown individual. In this sense, and in this reading of the story, Gregor has awakened into some sort of childhood, and the story itself becomes an illustration of and a criticism on the dialectics of childhood and adulthood.

Yet seeing our main character as a child already poses us with the first problem: Gregor just wakes up, and "finds himself transformed". As such his childhood does not seem to have a history. When we describe childhood, we normally see this from the viewpoint of the child itself. This would then imply that we show how the child is begotten, how it evolves prematurely and how it is born. We would then research the development the child has from newborn baby to toddler, from pre-schooler to adolescent and so on. For this we would use different psychological models of development to illustrate different stages of development, or refer to biological changes, such as the growing of pubic hair or the maturing of the brain-structure. The child, or the concept of the child, functions as a starting point to research the phylogeny or the ontogeny of the human child. The becoming of the child, then, is a biogenetic question. Indeed, it is in this framework that we are used to talk about the child. However interesting, productive and useful this framework may be, it cannot help us here, for Gregor is a child of which we have no precognition. Another approach is needed when we see Gregor as the child. We want to learn something about this child that we do not know. As such we are going to read the story without precognition of what we know to be the child and ask ourselves what Gregor, and the rest of the story, can tell

us. What Kafka shows in the character of Gregor, we might say, is an experience of the idea of childhood. What Gregor has to tell us, then, is a happening in which the idea of the child, and thus the idea of a difference between childhood and adulthood, comes into existence, and is maintained. In what follows I will refer to the becoming of the child not as a biogenetic issue, but as the birth and growth of the idea of the child itself. Being born into childhood is then akin to waking up as a bug from an epistemo-genetic viewpoint. In this epistemological happening the interdependence of both the concepts of childhood and adulthood has a central part to play. The difference between Gregor and the rest of his family is given from the very first page, and so the play of ideas can begin. Let us start with our main character, and what he can show us:

3. Gregor's Room: The Quarantine of the Child

On this specific morning, when Gregor awakens, he finds himself confronted with a drastic change yet to our surprise he is not consumed by the idea why and how this change has occurred. The metamorphosis into a bug is a given fact that starts with the change of Gregor's body and continues to evolve throughout the story. The metamorphosis first of all means that Gregor is alienated from his own body. He shivers as he tries to scratch an itch, and is shocked when he hears his own voice, which is now more and more some sort of squeaking. He goes then through a series of changes that lead to him growing into his insect existence. He must learn how to move about or how and what to eat. His tastes change, as his interest goes more at rotten vegetables than what used to be his favourite food. He experiences uncontrollable movements of his many legs, or the seemingly automated snapping of his jaws. As the story continues his experience of time and space alters as he seems to forget how much time passes and as he gets a totally different view of his room.

There is an interesting aspect of play in the way he grows into his situation. From the very beginning, when he tries to get out of his bed he is taken by the playfulness of his body by rocking back and forward; a method, the author tells us, is now more of a game than an effort. Gregor is then more occupied by his own body than what is happening outside of the confinement of his room he now finds himself in. In the second chapter he starts entertaining himself by going into the habit of crawling up and down the walls and ceiling, and he is especially fond of hanging from the ceiling. This aspect of play illustrates a certain forgetfulness Gregor has for the outside world as he is more and more a bug in thought and act.

He can only become this bug by forgetting or abandoning the duties and responsibilities he used to have. His first struggles with his new form are overshadowed by yet another struggle. It is the moral struggle of

responsibility. Before his metamorphosis, we learn, Gregor worked as a travelling salesman for a company that his parents owe money to. He wonders what would happen if he reported sick for his work today. But that would be suspicious because he never reported sick in fifteen years of service. The company's doctor would come around then, and his parents might be accused of having a lazy son and he would be seen as merely workshy. Most striking is that Gregor seems to believe that the doctor would not be entirely wrong. "*Apart from a really excessive drowsiness after the long sleep, Gregor, in fact, felt quite well and even had a really strong appetite.*"[2] This is the surest sign that Gregor does not identify himself with his situation as a bug in the beginning of the story, for he is too occupied with this moral problem of his. Maybe after exposing himself, he thinks, an exit out of this moral dilemma will show itself. If he could only open the door, which he locked from the inside, the others could see him.

> He was keen to witness what the others now asking about him would say when they saw him. If they were startled, then Gregor had no more responsibility and could be calm. But if they accepted everything quietly, then he would have no reason to get excited and, if he got a move on, could really be at the station around eight o'clock.[3]

As he painfully manages to open the door, his family is struck by his appearance and his moral problem seems to be solved for now: he no longer carries responsibility for them and he can now rest.

His metamorphosis started with alienation and some sort of a denial of his situation, we might say, yet after abandoning responsibility he identifies himself more and more with his existence as a bug. As such, he grows into his own existence. He stays in the confinement of his room, and every time he tries to exit this room, he is confronted with the impossibility of communication and is driven back to his room. Even though he can still understand his family, he literally no longer has a voice. In this sense Gregor has become the *infans*: he who has no voice. In this form, Gregor shows himself as a pure image of the disruptive child. Communication is barely possible as the mere sight of him is repulsive in its uncivilized and animal form that denies all hierarchy or order we have come to understand. As such Gregor is confined to the quarantine of his room, so that he is not to be seen or heard, where he is in the end left for starvation and finally quivers. The last phase of his metamorphosis is then his own death...

His death, however, is not in vain, for it tells us a thing or two about his experience of childhood. To begin with, Gregor wakes up as an insect, in very much the same way as we are born into childhood. He is then confronted with a given difference between himself and his family. Throughout the story

Gregor grows into this difference and as such he identifies himself more and more with his insect existence. The time and space for living his 'childhood' is then the confinement of his room. He is, we might say, grounded. His room becomes the architectural manifestation of the quarantine of childhood. Two features of this quarantine of childhood are to be seen in the character of Gregor. Firstly, in order to live this childhood, in order to become the child, Gregor has to accept the given difference. He does so by giving up human responsibility. Secondly, after abandoning responsibility Gregor can fully become the child, and this then means that his experience of being changes. The more Gregor plays a bug, the more he forgets everything that happens outside his room. Gregor shows us that a child grows into its own childhood; and this by these two movements. As such, children, we might say, are playing childhood. And in this play they become more and more childlike as their experience of their given difference becomes more and more a qualitatively different experience then the others (i.e. the adults), thus resulting into the quarantine of childhood. Gregor reminds us then, that the difference between children and adults, although it is a given reality, is also made into a qualitatively different experience of childhood. The children's mask worn becomes the child's face.

4. Grete's Maturity: The Dependency of Adulthood on Childhood

At the other end of Gregor's quarantine we find his sister Grete. As the idea of the child in Gregor's character might be less clear at first sight, the idea of maturity and maturation is manifest in the character of Grete. She has her own growing process throughout the story. She gradually goes through different spaces and stages as she first starts out in the room next to Gregor as she asks him *"Gregor? Are you all right? Do you need anything?"*[4] Because she gets no satisfactory answer, she gets up and tries to help the situation by going after a doctor and a locksmith. The first development she goes through is from an apparently 'lazy' sister, to a helping position. She becomes, then, gradually more present. After her initial helping position, she takes on a job and becomes Gregor's unique helper. She doesn't want anybody else to feed him, or see him. We might say that she takes up the position of the educator. She has a unique access to Gregor's room, moreover she demands this unique access as she hopes her brother will come back. Towards the ending of the story however she is more and more convinced of the fact that *"We must try to get rid of it"*[5] and *"It has to go"*[6]. Her brother is then not a person anymore, but a burden, a stop sign between her and her maturity. In the end she lets her brother quiver and starve a slow death by simply not feeding him anymore as she is now occupied with moving on and upwards in her life. She has now *"[...]taken on a job as a salesgirl, in the evening studied stenography and French, so as perhaps to obtain a better position later on."* [7] It is then a maid that shows some kind of interest in Gregor that notices that

he no longer moves and has thus died. It is significant that the family from this moment on is released from a burden and wants to move on. They decide to enjoy the rest of a beautiful day and take a trip on the tram along the open country outside the town. As the story finishes, the striking last sentences refer to Grete's maturity:

> While they amused themselves in this way, it struck Mr. and Mrs. Samsa, almost at the same moment, as they looked at their daughter, who was getting more animated all the time, how she had blossomed recently, in spite of all the troubles which had made her cheeks pale, into a beautiful and voluptuous young woman. Growing more silent and almost unconsciously understanding each other in their glances, they thought that the time was now at hand to seek out a good honest man for her. And it was something of a confirmation of their new dreams and good intentions when at the end of their journey their daughter stood up first and stretched her young body.[8]

The idea of maturity that is shown through Grete's character reveals the dependency of it on Gregor's existence. Grete her growing process can only take place by at first hand Gregor's absence, then by upholding his quarantine, and lastly by getting rid of 'it'. Her character tells us that the idea of maturity needs the absence of a responsibility, after which it upholds this absence as a dependency, to be able to do away with it at the appropriate time. In other, and simple, words: in this conception the idea of maturity is dependent on the idea of the child. Grete shows that the idea of maturity uses the idea of the child. The concepts of child and adult take on then an oppositional structure. Grete is an active responsible working adult, whereas Gregor is a passive playing child. As such the idea of maturity is dependent on the idea of the child through this polar structure. Gretes maturity becomes a qualitatively different experience than Gregors childhood, and it does so through these oppositions.

This oppositional interdependency of both concepts, nicely shown by Kafka, shows itself in our world in many ways. While the child is seen as depending on the adult for care and nurture; the idea of adulthood is dependent on the idea of childhood it constructs in opposition. What is of importance is that this seems to be so from the viewpoint of adulthood. The world of duties to be fulfilled, of early morning alarm clocks to be snoozed, shopping mall lines to be endured and bills to be paid orientates itself in opposition to a world of possibilities and playfulness. Those that can see, see the blindness of the child they once were, and envy its blissfulness.[9] And so the world of adulthood becomes the negative mirror image of the world of

childhood – the world belonging to the child that I once was. In the same way as Grete uses Gregor to reach her adulthood, the idea of the child is used to maintain an image of maturity. In this use Gregor becomes the opposite of everything she wants to stand for.

5. Gregor and Grete: Inner Dialectics

This oppositional conceptualization is an interpersonal happening, as shown above, and has thus consequences for children and adults alike, yet it is also an intrapersonal happening. We can see Gregor and Grete then as two poles of one process, as one person that is split into two polar structures of the same epistemological happening we have referred to as the becoming of the child. The difference between both halves is installed through the simple transformation: Gregor is a bug, and Grete is not. He is the animal-part and she the human element. The story starts of when they are in a similar room, and as the story develops Gregor only goes deeper into the shadows of his room while Grete steps into the light of the outside world. Gregor hides under his couch, and for Grete it is finally time to look for a proper husband – the ending of her maturation. Yet before we reach this ending, our double character has but once more to be confronted with its other halve.

This confrontation is facilitated in the third and last chapter, when the door of Gregor's room is put open and as such, a window of opportunity for their meeting is left open. It is significant that Gregor and Grete's last meeting or confrontation in the story is when she is playing violin for the lodgers. It is in the arts that childhood and maturity seem to come together. Gregor, who is by now not interested in what happens outside of his confinement, and no longer has an appetite, crawls out of his room upon hearing his sister play the violin. *"Was he an animal that music so captivated him?"*[10] He wonders. *"For him it was as if the way to the unknown nourishment he craved was revealing itself."*[11] Called by this nourishment Gregor crawls out of his quarantine because he wants to be reunited with his other halve, call her, invite her into his room.[12]

Yet Gregor's fantasy is abruptly put to an end when his presence is noticed by the lodgers. His other halve, having awakened her animal part through playing the violin stops playing and our double character stands then at the threshold of maturity. After a moment of silent despair Grete pulls herself together and starts fixing the lodgers beds. It is then clear what choice she has made.[13] It is right after this scene that Grete decides *"things cannot go on any longer in this way. Maybe if you don't understand that, well, I do. I will not utter my brother's name in front of this monster, and thus I say only that we must try to get rid of it."*[14] And thus Gregor goes back in his room where he feels that he must go far away, even stronger than his sister and then, without willing it lets his last breath flow from his nostrils. As such,

Grete's way for maturation is cleared through the destruction of her opposed animal part.

This oppositional conceptualization of seeing and denying, of creation and destruction even, is indeed specifically clear in the domain of artistic creativity. In these last scenes, two conceptions of childhood creativity can be seen. At one hand there is Gretes creativity. Her violin is then similar to the colourful pencil or magic marker that is offered to children as soon as they can hold something, because, as we all know, 'children are creative', and it is supposed to be good for development to give several ways of expressing and several ways of developing skills. It is then also used as a means of getting an insight into the world of the child. In short: it is 'normal' for a child to be creative in this specific way. The older one grows, the rarer these creative processes take place, albeit because the developmental issue is no longer at stake, and it is no longer needed to gain insight in the world of the child, albeit because there is no longer place for drawings in the life of the adult because he or she 'cannot draw something beautiful', lacks the time or the interest, as it is for Grete. Although these creative processes are part of children's lives, children are not called artists, for this they require (at least) the feature 'adulthood'.

On the other hand, there is the creativity Gregor comes to signify. Artists are sometimes referred to as children. Picasso, Klee, Miró and many others used the idea of the child to regain access to their creative process, to reinvent this process. As such the child – who cannot be an artist – gets the status of a guide to a renewing access point of creation where, we hope, new man stands in unison (with his unconscious, his dreams,...). As such the child is involved in a sacralisation which, as David Kennedy points out, has since long been part of our cultural heritage.[15] The image of the child has a long history of playing the *"psychopomp of the return of the repressed"*[16] in our cultures. In the past century, however, there seems to be an emphasis on the possibility of children's creativity to undermine fixed ideas. Where the child has been used since long to cross a bridge between worlds, the bridge that is built for it in the twentieth century[17] in contrast seems to be a drawbridge: the child is not the guardian of the order, but seeing as the child is beginning anew, a fresh creation in which all hierarchy and fixations are to be undermined. The child is then seen as a child-genius which conveys a revolutionary force in its gaze: a *"terrible innocence"*[18], as disruptive as Gregor is for his family.

There is off course, a great difference between both conceptions of childhood creativity briefly shown in the last paragraphs. At one hand the child needs to be nurtured and is as such 'not yet'; whereas the second conception allows the child unique access to a certain experience of the here and now and consequently allocates the adult to the land of 'not anymore'. For Grete this means on the one hand that she is supposed to take

responsibility and raise her inner child into maturity (protect and assure the transmittance of the order, one could say); and on the other hand she should regain her own child-genius by symbolically going into the room with Gregor (and thus negating that very same order). This dilemma is solved through the ending of Gregors disruptive existence. The story then seems to tell us that our double character cannot live as one. Grete stops playing her violin and thus does away with the possibility of their unison. Maturing, then, Grete tells us, is at its last stage doing away with the disruptive element that childhood has come to signify.

6. Playing Metamorphosis: The Institutionalized Dialectics

Let us here step out of our story for a minute and pause at an interesting feature of both conceptions of childhood creativity, and thus show one consequence of this dialectics. The oppositional structure of the dialectics we are describing is present in a very clear form here. In both cases the child enjoys a certain simplicity: the simplicity of automated, un-deliberated and thus liberated actions. In two very different conceptions of childhood creativity the idea of simplicity is common and stands at its very core. Childhood, then, becomes a time and place of simplicity in an increasingly complex and demanding world. Without thoroughly elaborating historical discussions one could say that the prevailing conception of childhood has indeed roughly remained the same for some centuries: it is the Romantic bubble of purity, naivety, of being in touch with ones 'nature' and, yes, of simplicity. So whilst one of the most highlighted features of adulthood today is painted in the confrontation with complexity and uncertainty, childhood is portrayed as a time of natural simplicity.

It is, however, not very difficult to show that children's lives are as much embalmed in complexity as adults'. At the dawn of our lives we are confronted with the world's richness. Sights and sounds are to be seen and heard, insights to be gathered and movements to be made. The entire gamut of human experience is to be confronted, gained – lost at times, and regained at other times. We can hardly say that this process goes on without effort. Children all over the world make their problems and sufferings explicit, and there is a great amount of stress reported. We can then hardly call this process of 'dealing with the world' simple. It is thus not very difficult to argue that childhood is far more complex than we seem to acknowledge. For this the ever-growing publications and research projects in sociology of childhood, for instance, should suffice.

So whilst it is obvious to show the parallel of the complexity of children's world with adult land the idea of simple childhood is deep-rooted. We are, nevertheless, keeping childhood simple. In the confinement of his room, Gregor has but to play. He has no responsibilities. The cause of this strong idea, I argue, lies in the specific dialectics of the concepts of child and

adult. The complexity of children's lives is show, yet we still give the child the statute of simplicity because of the oppositional structure that lies in the use of both the concepts of childhood and adulthood itself. We don't perceive childhood as we do because we don't share the same world, but we divide our world into a time and a place for adulthood and childhood because we perceive childhood in opposition to adulthood.

The first feature of this specific dialectics is thus that we start from this idea of a division, of a caesura in time and place between both, so that the play of two of the most dominant poles of human life can begin. This dialectics is not 'just conceptual'. Its play underlies the experience of time and space of all of us, and has a central part in the experience of our individual lives. The becoming of the child, then, is a play of conceptual divisions and oppositions. It is part of a 'machinery' that divides human life into polar slices of time and space. In this becoming of the child, we mingle different and seemingly opposing conceptions of childhood at the same time, such as the classical developmental view and the reversal idea as shown above. It is this mingling of different and often contradicting conceptions that makes it so difficult to have clear-cut ideas about how we should educate, or think about the child. It is then characteristic of this thinking about the child that one stands in the middle of opposing ideas and theories, where a logic of contradiction and tautology does not seem to hold the fort together. And with this, we enter Kafka's realm, and its strong, stubborn, dialectics.

What is of importance is that this dialectics is institutionalized today in many forms. We are, we might say, with or without our will playing Kafka's metamorphosis. Gregor's room is to be found in plenty structures of our modern world. And, as living in his room does for Gregor, these structures make divisions into different qualities of life for everyone of us. Schooling, for instance, creates a distinction between study and work, which become caricatural nametags to refer to different phases of our lives. Childhood consists then of qualitatively different 'tags' than adulthood, created throughout these structures, such as schooling, but also law, media, religion, natural sciences, family, media and economics. Indeed, education rests on the fundamental differences made by this dialectics and is as such subject to its polar structure. This institutionalized dialectics is particularly stubborn: even though we often do not intend it, children are made into passive, simple, incomplete, powerless, naive creatures by it - as if reaching maturity means leading an active, complex, empowered and complete life of wisdom. Most of us are quite aware of this caricature yet we are all born like Gregor, into a given difference and are as such already sure of being at the centre of a lifelong process of excluding and including opposing features of human life that result into these different qualities of life.

Notes

[1] F Kafka, *Metamorphosis* (I Johnston, Trans), retrieved 10/08/2009 from http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/stories/kafka-E.htm, Chapter 1 §1.
[2] Ibid, Chapter 1 §6
[3] Ibid, Chapter 1 §21
[4] Ibid, Chapter 1 §7
[5] Ibid, Chapter 3 §20
[6] Ibid, Chapter 3 §25
[7] Ibid, Chapter 3 §3
[8] Ibid, Chapter 3 §38
[9] For a beatiful example of this use of 'the child' see F Nietzsche, *On the use and abuse of history for life* (I Johnston, Trans), retrieved 10/08/2009 from http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/tkannist/E-texts/Nietzsche/History.htm, Chapter 1 §3
[10] Ibid, Chapter 3 §14
[11] Ibid, Chapter 3 §14
[12] Ibid, Chapter 3 §14
[13] Ibid, Chapter 3 §15
[14] Ibid, Chapter 3 §17
[15] D Kennedy, *Changing conceptions of the child from the renaissance to post-modernity: a philosophy of childhood*, The Edwin Mellen Press, New York, 2006, p.80.
[16] Ibid, p.80
[17] The prevalent metaphysical use of 'the child' in the twenty first century is yet another story. The idea of disruptive childhood as used by artists seems to arise in the twentieth century.
[18] Ibid, p.83

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A Sociological Deconstruction of Childhood for Justice

Chi-Ming Lam

Abstract
Notwithstanding the multiplicity of constructions of childhood in various disciplines, the prevailing view is that children are incompetent in the sense of lacking rationality, maturity, or independence. In this paper, I first examine how this dominant view is constructed in the field of sociology, highlighting the constructions of children as playful, vulnerable, and passive. Then, following Jacques Derrida who conceives justice as a source of meaning for deconstruction, I deconstruct these dominant constructions and argue that they do not do children justice. To return justice to childhood, I suggest that children should neither be constructed as workfree, in which case the building of the "playing-child" image of childhood reinforces a worrying tendency to downplay the reality of the prevalence and complexity of child labour; nor as innately innocent and vulnerable, arising from which the protectionist approach to childhood is often not really protective but even counter-protective. Moreover, I suggest that the common practice of legally fixing a chronological identity for adults within the life course should be challenged. In order to explain properly how children can act as social agents rather than passive objects under the dominating influences of adults, I further suggest that the relationship between social structures and agency should be understood in terms of relational rather than co-deterministic theories, and thus that the evolution of the social world should be interpreted as the result of trans-actions between various interdependent actors rather than of inter-actions between social structures and agency.

Key Words: Agency childhood, children, construction, deconstruction, justice, sociology, structure.

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1. Introduction

Many people, including educators, are dominated by the notion that children are distinct from adults, yet depend on them for protection, supervision, and decision-making. This notion of childhood distinctiveness and dependence is typically concomitant with a universalisation of childhood, i.e., a view that childhood is much the same across historical and cultural boundaries.[1] It is assumed, to a large extent, that such dominant conceptions of childhood are justified and beneficial because they are believed to serve the interests of children. However, a body of evidence suggests that it is doubtful whether this assumption is valid. In the following discussion, I first

examine how the dominant views of childhood are constructed in the field of sociology, highlighting the constructions of children as playful, vulnerable, and passive. Then, following Jacques Derrida who conceives justice as a source of meaning for deconstruction, I deconstruct, or problematize, these taken-for-granted views together with their associated practices in order to find a just way of constructing the world for children.

2. Construction of Childhood in Sociology

Notwithstanding the multiplicity of constructions of childhood in various disciplines, the prevailing view is that children are *incompetent* in the sense of lacking rationality, maturity, or independence. Within the discipline of sociology, instead of seeing childhood as a biological given or social fact, social constructionists see it as a social construction that is "interpreted, debated, and defined in processes of social action."[2] In other words, within a social-constructionist framework, there is not a single absolute conception of childhood, but a multiple, relativistic, and changeable one that varies between cultures or societies. Nevertheless, since children are generally subordinate to adults in society, many social constructionists maintain that childhood is basically a product of what adults think and do, or a product of the dominant discourse created by adults.

A good example of such discourse is the association of childhood with play, in contradistinction to work, which is said to be characteristic of adulthood. This construction of the "playing-child" image of childhood is based on the assumption that children are incompetent, who show emotional, cognitive, and social immaturity that precludes them from having responsibilities and thus from working in terms of earning an income.[3] As children are free from responsibilities or work, they play.

Another prime example of adult-made discourse about childhood is the representation of children in the media as innocent, passive, and vulnerable. This representation is commonly found in news coverage wherein emotive images of children are used to illustrate adult news items, such as stories about disaster and the impact of war.[4] What is noteworthy here is that it is not without consequences to propagate the discourses of childhood innocence, passivity, and vulnerability. A case in point is the victim images of children presented in media campaigns against child sexual abuse, which often produce strong protectionist reactions among the adult population, typically a tighter control of children's everyday activities.[5]

In fact, such protectionist approach to children based on constructing them as vulnerable or incompetent is also prevalent in the legal world. For instance, in the UK, while children are classified as "vulnerable witnesses" under the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 so that they may be physically protected behind screens or videotapes when giving evidence in criminal trials, [6] the law of torts treats children as lacking

competence to foresee risk so that it makes allowances for their negligent behaviour even though they are liable in the same way as adults in principle.[7] A far-reaching consequence arising from this poor opinion of children is that they are usually denied the right to have a voice in decisions that affect them. To illustrate how education law in the UK fails to recognize children's participation rights, Blair points out that the Education Act 1996 grants all parents an unconditional right to withdraw their children from sex education without giving children a voice in their parents' decision.[8]

3. Deconstruction of Childhood for Justice

The primary message of the foregoing inquiry into representations of childhood in sociology is that children are constructed by adults. Adults, having enormous social and political power over children, can define the reality of children by shaping the ways in which it is possible to talk and think about issues concerning them in society. But the key question is, does the adult-made reality of childhood reflect the true state of affairs fairly and adequately? An exceptionally useful way to address this question is by deconstruction, for it typically seeks to transform the taken-for-granted into the problematic through the revealing of power, competing interests, and conceptual privilege. More importantly, according to Derrida, it is justice that gives deconstruction momentum and meaning.[9] Given that justice from a Derridean perspective is a concern for the other, or the otherness which is concealed, excluded, marginalized, and suppressed, deconstruction is well suited for answering the question of how to do justice to a similar concern here, viz. childhood.

A. Children as Playful

The central problem here is that, within the social-constructionist framework, children are *institutionalized* on the main basis of age as essentially distinct from adults, particularly as playful, vulnerable, and passive. To start with, it is questionable to claim dichotomously that children play and adults work - hence the construction of childhood as workfree and carefree - on the assumption that children cannot, and thus should not, work. For one thing, from ancient times to the present, numerous children have demonstrated their ability to work and had substantial economic responsibilities in different parts of the world. Indeed, child labour still persists on a massive scale and is not confined to poor countries.[10] For another, given the wide variety of contexts in which children work, it is not impossible to argue that they should work. By way of illustration, McKechnie and Hobbs point out that children may gain such benefits from employment experience as self-reliance, business knowledge, and a positive sense of self-esteem.[11] Admittedly, play is an integral part of children's life; yet, the construction of the "playing-child" image of childhood reinforces a worrying

tendency to downplay the reality of the prevalence and complexity of child labour. This does a grave disservice to the protection of working children from exploitation and harm.

B. Children as Vulnerable

With regard to the construction of children as innately innocent and vulnerable, it implies that they are constantly at risk and thus in need of protection. Paradoxically, however, the protectionist approach to children is all too often not really protective but even counter-protective. One good example is that, in response to the image of children as innocent and vulnerable victims disseminated in media campaigns against child sexual abuse, some protectionists' call for locking up children at home may actually put them at increased risk, given that many of them are sexually abused in their own families.[12] Moreover, using the notions of innocence and vulnerability to provoke public revulsion at child sexual abuse, as Kitzinger points out, is also problematic in at least two ways.[13] First, innocence is an ideology that serves to deny children access to knowledge, about sex in particular (even telling them about incest is seen as corrupting childhood innocence), making them more vulnerable to sexual abuse. Second, vulnerability, depicted as an innate characteristic of children, diverts attention from their socially constructed oppression, especially their structural dependence on adults or parents, which is intensified by government policies in housing, employment, and education.

C. Children as Minor

What is noteworthy here is that it is in law rather than in the maturing process per se that adults achieve "adulthood" and, correspondingly, children "childhood". More specifically, once children attain the age of majority, whatever their maturity, they are given the whole gamut of legal rights and responsibilities generally available to adults. However, fixing a chronological identity for adults in this legal way within the life course is beset with two problems. First, it is arbitrary in both the sense that the age of majority is different in different places and at different times;[14] and the sense that many laws apply arbitrarily with little consideration of whether the child is really adult enough to indulge in the adult activities.[15] Second, it poses a formidable obstacle to the empowerment of children: legally granted the status of non-adulthood, hence non-personhood and non-citizenship, children are "deemed to be not competent, to be dependent and thus subject to the hegemony of adult views and judgements."[16]

D. Children as Passive

Besides, it is problematic to construct children as passive: with the advent of the new paradigm in childhood studies wherein childhood is understood as a socially constructed and culturally specific phenomenon,[17] children can hardly be seen as just the passive products of universal biological and social processes, but as active participants in the determination of their own social lives, that is social agents. However, given that children are subject to the dominating and socializing influences of adults, a question arises as to whether they can really act as social agents. The answer to this question depends crucially on how the relationship between social structures and agency is understood.

Co-Deterministic Theories

As one of the most influential sociologists who attempt to define the relationship between structure and agency, Giddens conceives structure as rules and resources that are organized as enabling or constraining properties of social systems, and agency as the capability rather than the intention of individuals to influence a specific state of affairs.[18] Moreover, he asserts that structure and agency are mutually constitutive of each other in the sense that social structure shapes, and is shaped by, human action.

Sensible as it seems, Giddens' insistence on the mutual constitution of structure and agency is criticized by Archer for severely limiting their utility in practical social research in that it precludes one from disengaging the properties and powers of the agent from those of the structure, which prevents analysis of their interplay.[19] Instead, Archer argues that agents and structures are temporally distinguishable so that the method of examining the interplay between structure and agency can be captured as a chronological sequence in which structures condition action first, then actors act upon both constraining and enabling structures, and finally the pre-existing structures are transformed or maintained.[20]

Relational Theories

Admittedly, the co-deterministic theories of Giddens and Archer, which interpret the evolution of the social world as the result of interactions between agency and social structures, receive considerable support in modern sociology. Still, many theorists contend, quite rightly, that the reality of the social world is more faithfully reflected by relationism than by co-determinism. The latest one of these theorists is Dépelteau who, conceiving any individual action as "always one piece of a moving puzzle composed by interdependent actions,"[21] asserts that relational theories perceive the social universe correctly as the result of trans-actions between various interdependent actors. According to Dépelteau, Archer's theory has two major problems. First, Archer reifies agency in the sense that she attaches

agency to independent actors and explains it as an individual property. But in reality, relational theories suggest, agency is the empirical effect of social processes or relations that are constituted by interdependent actors through their trans-actions. In other words, agency cannot be seen as simply an individual property intrinsic to actors. Whether specific social actors and actions are agential depends on the nature of relevant empirical chains of trans-actions. Second, Archer's theory treats social structures, e.g. family, school, culture, racism, etc. as static givens as if they have a fixed structure like a building. But in actual fact, social structures are always in a state of flux in that, relationally speaking, they refer to specific trans-actions which are more or less similar, continuous, and reproduced through time and space. Hence the failure of Archer to adequately see the fluidity of social structures.

4. Conclusion

To sum up: the construction of children by adults as incompetent in the sense of lacking rationality, maturity, or independence does not do justice to childhood. This is reflected in the process of deconstruction, which problematizes various taken-for-granted conceptions of childhood. As a way to return justice to childhood, children should not be constructed as work free, in which case the building of the "playing-child" image of childhood reinforces a worrying tendency to downplay the reality of the prevalence and complexity of child labour. Nor should they be constructed as innately innocent and vulnerable, arising from which the protectionist approach to childhood is often not really protective but even counter-protective. Moreover, considering its arbitrary nature in application and disempowering effect on children, the common practice of legally fixing a chronological identity for adults within the life course should be challenged. Last but not least, in order to explain properly how children can act as social agents rather than passive objects under the dominating influences of adults, the relationship between social structures and agency should be understood in terms of relational rather than co-deterministic theories; hence the interpretation of the evolution of the social world as the result of trans-actions between various interdependent actors rather than of inter-actions between structure and agency.

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Deliberative Democracy and the Improvement of Children's Rational Thinking

Laurent Dessberg

Abstract
By considering the demands for deliberative democracy some liberals are oriented to affording citizens more direct opportunities. It is this situation that Rawls takes into account with his method of reflexive equilibrium. For him, inquiry appears as a means of evaluating principles of justice and moral judgments. When people receive information opposed to their own beliefs about particular issues, revisions are to be made. In this investigation, particular issues give the opportunity to test higher and lower beliefs. They become ultimately acceptable by looking for their general coherence. People have to accept the deliberative process in which they may change their considered judgments of justice or some principles. Nevertheless, Rawls still considers the ways « free and rational persons » may develop rational thinking without any reference to children's development of creativity. We would like, therefore, to insist on the possibilities given by Dewey's pragmatic method of inquiry. In fact, Dewey was also interested by the conditions of reconstruction of the cognitive sets possible in democratic regimes, but primarily in schools. He contends that education should promote the development of intelligence applied to democratic experience. In his definition of valuation as inquiry, Dewey has in mind the use of History in curriculum. Teachers may present an " indirect sociology" that describes people's habits as contextual practices. They could belong to foreign countries despite the fact they are part of our History. It helps to improve the efficiency of the reflexive equilibration by enlarging the national perspectives. In this case, the coherence of children's judgments depends on their ability to imagine how they would react if they were in some other place. It goes beyond tastes for investigation that schools can provide to students who are engaged to acquire the values of reasoning.

Key Words: Creativity, deliberation, democracy, education, environment, experience, history, inquiry, reflexive equilibrium, school.

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1. Introduction

One of the main issues today in democratic regimes is the limited means available to satisfy the needs for public deliberation. Of course, means exist in terms of technological supports offered by the new modes of

communication such as cellular phones, Internet and the different opportunities given, for everyone, to share his own opinions and engage discussions on unlimited and widespread topics. That is what we call progress, since the first steps made by Ancient Greeks in public forums.

Nevertheless, Greeks also told us how deliberation should be understood by considering its significance for democracy. Deliberation is necessary for a society's institutions. It offers an ongoing process of political improvement. As long as debates in the legislative procedure are open to free citizens, they remain under the control of public scrutiny and criticism[1]. But, there is another reason for such a priority of deliberation, which is obviously linked to the first. This scrutiny is the possibility to express reasonable judgments that can be shared by people and (now) by each member of the assembly (Parliament).

We also used to say that the majority rule is the basic function which allows each community (Association, Political Party) to take actions, as it gives its effectiveness to the process. Despite that, the legitimacy of public decisions needs to be ratified in such a different way. Its success also depends on the ability for each member to be well-informed and to participate in a common and rational manner.

That is the reason why, today, political philosophers show interest in the mode of reflection adopted by citizen who express an increasing demand for public participation. John Rawls is one of the most famous philosophers of the last century. He was concerned by the pre-conditions of this democratic demand. More precisely, he wanted to provide rational ground for preferring one moral or political view over another. And, for this, he presented a process of reflective deliberation dedicated to rational persons able to incorporate a wide range of diverse moral commitments into a coherent moral conception.

However, he offers a model (procedural justice or constructivism). As he says, "for a good beginning toward justice, we characterize one (educated) person's sense of justice"[2]. Rawls can only postulate that we have a 'moral sense' which leads us to form judgments in a rather common way and, consequently, to condemn moral intentions that disagree with those preliminary standards or fixed points. For example, every rational person has to condemn slavery. This is one of the "facts" against which "conjectured principles can be checked, namely, considered judgments in reflective equilibrium"[3].

The problem we are facing now is how can people take an active part in this process and become full citizens, able to deliberate.

For an answer, we have to consider what this reflective equilibrium is, and then, to evaluate the means by which people are allowed to appreciate democratic principles, linked to the values of social life. That is what we intend to do by considering the role John Dewey has given to historical

instruction. John Dewey is an American philosopher, certainly one of the most important thinkers of the last century who wrote: “I have given my life to the work of education, which I have conceived to be that of public enlightenment in the interests of society.”[4] And this is important today, because the public is entitled, in deliberative democracies, to give its opinions and participate in debates. Under these circumstances, John Dewey will help us to understand what a significant participation would be, especially by considering his understanding of inquiry.

By seeing these points, we should be able to apprehend in a new way the need for methodological process in modern democracies, where as Rawls says, people have renounced metaphysical or religious assumptions.

2. Two Different Reflexive Equilibria : NRE and WRE

John Rawls presented in his book, *A Theory of Justice*, what he believed to be the means for a democratic society to reject some beliefs for the benefit of the political question. According to him, the divisions we can find between citizens are due to the influence of comprehensive doctrines which excesses have to be reduced by a method called Reflexive Equilibrium. In order to understand the deliberative process of this method, we consider the difference between Narrow Reflective Equilibrium (NRE) and Wide Reflective Equilibrium (WRE).

Reflexive equilibrium implies an epistemological point of view which includes judgments, moral theories and principles. In Rawls' theory, people start with "considered judgments" whose existence depends on the sense of justice. These may be understood in several manners. They are judgments about a certain level of generality (like the example given in the introduction) or specific moral cases. If our judgments conflict in some way, we proceed by adjusting them until we get equilibrium. All the beliefs have to remain stable and form a coherent set.

Rawls argues that moral theories have to be evaluated in a comparative way. They represent deeper opinions or values whose legitimacy must be appreciated not against intuitive beliefs, but as related to accurate judgments or moral data. They are found in what we believe to be ‘considered judgments’ and depend on the public conception of justice. As he says, “the aim of a theory of justice is to clarify and to organize our considered judgments about the justice and the injustice of social forms”[5].

It certainly seems that the deliberative process can be adopted by any individual isolated from the group, who is able to find by himself the way to regulate his opinions and get closer to the society principles. Nonetheless, for Rawls, this would be a ‘negative process’ that does not take into account the totality of possible reasoning. It is a narrow reflective equilibrium, by which irregularities are suppressed. It is made by well-informed persons or some superior technicians (like experts). Their ability to attain the

equilibrium remains operational, only if the conditions of democratic debate are excluded.

All the information collected or well-informed judgments are considered as belonging to individuals who aim to attain an equilibrium they do not possess. They have to think about themselves, not as isolated persons but as parts of a community including all the other communities. The democratic society represents a 'political culture', with its principles and philosophical doctrines. They have to rely on each other for attaining this Wide Reflexive Equilibrium[6]. In this way, it is a test not for experts who check their own position, but for every citizen who need to deliberate and to appreciate different perspectives.

How do we acquire these judgments? How do we come to compare them to society's principles at the core of basic institutions?

3. From Rawls to Dewey: What is lacking in Reflective Equilibrium?

If we want to see people giving priority to these principles or higher order values over their particular opinions or interests, we say that they have to adhere to principles they judge morally sound, after using, as rational persons, their sense of justice.

In other words, they really have to participate in fair institutions or to be influenced by people who do so. For this reason, children (as future citizens) need to receive these values from their parents. Free persons, as Rawls (and Kant) often argue, only comply with the principles they think reliable. They do not obey the law in order to satisfy some interests (for example, if they fear of being punished). As moral persons, they are respectful of the principles of justice because they have the desire to be so. However, we still have a gap between their actual life and the belief in the true value of democratic institutions.

As mentioned earlier, Wide Reflexive Equilibrium describes a position due to the political dimension of the deliberation. It is a cooperative way of thinking. When we say this, we also have to underline a point which is left aside in Rawls's theory. From the beginning, people have to rely on practical values that only school can afford. If these feelings (or the sense of justice) are not just sentimental tendencies (as Hume and Rawls say), they grow up along with intellectual understanding. Therefore, our aim is to establish the conditions for public deliberation and to show the means by which we can promote such a development.

4. What Sort of Inquiry do we Need?

The improvement of rational thinking depends on two points. It implies the recognition of citizens' opinions, but also a methodological reasoning that can be found in what Dewey calls "inquiry". Of course, the

significance of public rational thinking is often compared with the accuracy of 'experts' analyses. Nonetheless, under an Aristotelian perspective, J. Dryzek reminds us that

"All problem-solving is experimental inquiry under condition of uncertainty, and involves a number of inquirers rather the solitary thinker. Social problem-solving in particular feature an ever-changing agenda to which particular sorts of expertise may be relevant, but for which any single sort of expertise is rarely conclusive."[7]

If the "scientific community" does not offer the warrants we are looking for, the research may be directed toward the public itself. To argue for the "great community" is, for Dewey, to be prepared to admit to changing the minds. This step could be made by using a method of inquiry defined as "the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is as determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole"[8].

This notion is central for pragmatists (like Peirce). Its relevance lays in its reference not only to beliefs, but also to doubt and meaning. According to Pragmatism, there is a "struggle" to attain the state of belief[9]. On the other side, doubt is the state which results when prior habit or beliefs are confronted by some disturbing experiences.

For John Dewey, in the classroom, we create doubt and disorder (in the mind) to arouse curiosity and solve the problem set. Accordingly, inquiry should not be understood as making a comparison between our beliefs and some principles. It implies a process which initiates an active manipulation of our environment. Under this condition, it remains uncertain as growth can be, along a natural process. For both cases, we have to solve issues and re-adapt ourselves. In this way, like W. Turgeon, we may describe the

> "community of inquiry as a place where children can gather and explore ideas about the status of the natural world in its ontic and axiological sense. They can construct and deconstruct such as ideas as "natural", the difference between humans and other animals, animal consciousness, responsibility and rationality, emotions and actions, growth and value, meaning of self as given/as achieved." [10]

This capacity for a "community of inquiry" (classroom) to give its own and rational interpretation of the natural world goes with the Principle of continuity described by John Dewey. It is still the way by which pupils belong to the same process where the "act enacted and undergone modifies the one who act and undergoes, while the modification affects, whether we wish it or not, the quality of subsequent experiences"[11]. And, by quoting Cooper, G. Osthoff-Münnix also indicates about individuals that "thought

experiments (…) involve the construction of narratives (which make them so attractive to children and youth) which facilitate identification and enable judgement. They are attempts to construct models of possible worlds"[12]. As they entail the formation of new attitudes and ethical reasoning, these two perspectives display means by which Dewey's mode of inquiry might be understood or developed.

However, is it possible, to maintain the necessary relation between intellectual methods and creative engagements?

5. The Place of History

It seems now that Rawls's theory of justice is hard to defend on practical grounds, because he cannot show us the way to give deliberative democracy (and its pre-conditions) its effectiveness. The process of deliberation depends upon the recognition that philosophical concepts such as "justice" have to be presented or used in a discursive manner. More precisely, as A. Hausberg and K. Calvert tell us, "they can, on the one hand, be unequivocally identified, on the other that they remain infused with multiple meanings"[13].

Here, Dewey helps us to solve the problem by pointing out the link between History and Social values. For him historical instruction has to be seen as the genealogical study of society's principles. It is not regarded as the record of the past when it shows "the motives which draw men together and push them apart, and depict what is desirable and what is hurtful"[14].

In Dewey's mind, the use of History in curriculum describes how people came to live together. Teachers may present an "indirect sociology – a study of society which lays bare its process of becoming and its mode of organisation."[15] It describes people's habits as contextual practices. For example, it indicates they could belong to foreign countries, despites the fact they are part of our History. This interpretation permits one to improve the efficiency of reflexive equilibrium by showing the interdependence of people at its roots, from the beginning. For him we have to consider our "industrial history" as part of a dialectical movement which begins with "primitive history". And, "When history is conceived as dynamic, as moving, its economic and industrial aspects are emphasized"[16]?

Educators may explain how men had to think differently. If the coherence of children's judgments depend on their ability to imagine how they would react if they were in some other place, it enlarges the national perspectives. In this way, schools can promote democracy whose principles can be more than ideals. It helps to conceive democracy rather as a mode of associating living, derived from shared experiences.

6. Conclusion

In Dewey's philosophy, inquiry is linked to a principle of continuity (or experimental continuum). This is a way of presenting the relation rational persons have with their environment, whether they are considered as individual or as members of a community. Consequently, inquiry's concept involves "discrimination between experiences the ones that are worth while educationally and those that are not"[17]. It allows to distinguishing deliberative thinking as the last development of this intelligence responding to contextual (historical and cultural) situations.

John Rawls certainly offers a method for improving our deliberative mode of reflexion, when he takes into account the stability of personal beliefs and their different levels (as principles or judgments). But only Dewey gives us the means to combine the values of public participation we received from the ancient democratic Athens with the encouragement of intellectual growth. He does it by underlining the political role of schools. Education is the uplifting of social values by means of creativity and enhancement of experience.

Notes

[1] Samuel Freeman, "Deliberative Democracy: A Sympathetic Comment", *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 29, N°4, p. 372.
[2] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, revised edition 1999, p. 44.
[3] Ibidem.
[4] *The Case of Leon Trotsky – Report of Hearings on The Charges Made Against Him in The Moscow Trials*, by The Preliminary Commission of Inquiry (John Dewey – Chairman), New York, London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1937, p. 5.
[5] John Rawls, "Reply to Alexander and Musgrave", *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, n° 88, 1974, p. 633.
[6] The distinction between NRE and WRE appears to be significant as Rawls renounces to rational intuitionism for the benefit of Kantian constructivism. In order to compare and appreciate the valuation of these modes of reasoning, one may consider the opposite arguments presented by D. W. Haslett « What Is Wrong with Reflective Equilibria ? », *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 37, (Jul., 1987) pp. 305-311 and N. Daniels, « Reflective Equilibrium and Archimedean Points », *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 10 (1980) pp. 83-103.
[7] John S. Dryzek, « Pragmatism and Democracy: In Search of Deliberative Publics », *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 18, N° 1, 2004, p. 72.

[8] John Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, *The Later Works*, vol. 12, ed. J. Boydston, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1988, p. 108.
[9] Robert Talisse, "Two Concepts of Inquiry", *Philosophical Writings*, N° 19 & 20, 2002, p. 71.
[10] Wendy Turgeon, "The Natural World of the Child: Dogs, Bogs and Honeysuckle", *5th Global Conference: Creative Engagements – Thinking with Children"*.
[11]John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (1925), revised edition, New York: Norton; London: Allen and Unwin, 1929, chap. 3.
[12] Gabriele Osthoff-Münnix, "Change of Perspective and Thought Experiment and the Development of Creative Critical Thinking in Children", *5th Global Conference: Creative Engagements – Thinking with Children"*.
[13] Anna Hausberg and Kristina Calvert, "How Creativity is expressed in Philosophizing with Children about Nature", *5th Global Conference: Creative Engagements – Thinking with Children"*.
[14] John Dewey, *School and Society and the Child and the Curriculum* (1910-1915), ed. Philip P. Jackson, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1990, chap. 8.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17]John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (1938), *The Later Works*, vol. 13, ed. J. Boydston, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1988, p. 33.

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PART II

Critical Thinking and Creativity

Critical Thinking and the Problem of Tolerance

Roy van den Brink-Budgen

Abstract
Critical Thinking is often described in terms of both skills and dispositions. The skills of analysis, evaluation, and production of argumentation are widely agreed but there is much more of a problem in agreeing on one of the dispositions. This is that Critical Thinking either requires or produces tolerance. This position is examined and found to be questionable. By focusing on the relationship between claims and inferences, the Critical Thinker actively questions dubious lines of reasoning. As a result, the Critical Thinker cannot tolerate poor argumentation. In addition, Critical Thinking will be intolerant of contradiction in definitions. A central question in this discussion is 'what does tolerance of disputed positions mean when it is linked with Critical Thinking?' Is it 'respect'? Is it 'acceptance'?
However, there is a way of seeing tolerance as part of Critical Thinking (indeed a required part). This is to see it as an essential part of the creative aspect of Critical Thinking. In looking for explanations of claims (most obviously, evidence-claims), Critical Thinking accepts that there could be a wide range of alternative explanations. A tolerance of the generation of such a wide range is justified by seeing it as an important part of creative thinking, thus emphasising the close relationship between Critical and creative thinking.
This tolerance of competing explanations is then applied to two very different scenarios. One is a problem faced by Darwin in looking for explanations for a surprising correlation. The other is the famous story of the Cottingley fairies, in particular the account given by Geoffrey Hodson who claimed to have observed hundreds of fairies and other such creatures and gave a detailed account of what he saw.
Tolerance of competing explanations thus allows tolerance of different inferences, without the Critical Thinker having to compromise their intolerance of poor argumentation.

Key Words: Argument flaws, Cottingley, creative thinking, credibility, critical thinking, Darwin, explanation, fairies, intolerance, inference

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Critical Thinking is often described in terms of both skills and dispositions. Though the skills are agreed in centring on analysis, evaluation, and production of argumentation, the dispositions are more problematic.

What sort of a person is a Critical Thinker beyond someone who practises skills in inference?

The American Philosophical Association (APA) has described such a person in the following terms.

> The ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgements, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit.[1]

So, looking at that description of the ideal Critical Thinker, can we infer that, whatever else that person is, they are tolerant? To put it another way, does Critical Thinking not only encourage tolerance but also require it? To put it somewhat differently, is intolerance a feature of the person who is not a Critical Thinker?

In their list of the features of the lack of a disposition towards Critical Thinking, Facione et al include intolerance amongst a catalogue of negatives, along with dishonesty, inattentiveness, haphazardness, mistrustfulness of reason, indifference, and being simplistic.[2] Interestingly, the corresponding positive of 'intolerance' in their list is 'open-mindedness'. This raises the question 'Is being open-minded equivalent to being tolerant?' An attempt to measure Critical Thinking dispositions gives the answer as 'yes'.

> Open-minded people act with tolerance toward the opinions of others, knowing that often we all hold beliefs which make sense only from our own perspectives. [3]

In this connection, the largest British school examination board, the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) sees Critical Thinking as encouraging tolerance.

> It should encourage students to respect the views of others, even when they are not inclined towards them, nor likely to be persuaded by them. [4]

Respecting the views of others might sound a worthy end for education, but does it fit with the skills of Critical Thinking? The claim that

Critical Thinking should encourage respect for views even when one is not "likely to be persuaded by them" is a very troublesome one. The Critical Thinker can see lines of inference and any disjunctions between claims and inference. They accept that inferences are normally drawn with no more than probability. They'll apply the principle of charity. But their skills will lead them to have to say to someone whose argument is flawed 'that line of inference has to be rejected because…' Critical Thinkers *have to* react *against* poor argumentation.

Let's look at an example. In May 2008, in London, someone was stabbed in a queue of customers for the computer game 'Grand Theft Auto IV'. The British MP Keith Vaz said "Grand Theft Auto IV is a violent and nasty game and it doesn't surprise me that some of those who play it behave in this way." [5]

What Vaz is doing is drawing an inference about the game from the evidence of the stabbing. It is a single example that is being given, yet it is a big inference. So should we be tolerant of the inference? Should we say that we respect the inference even though we are not persuaded that the evidence is sufficient? Or should we point out to Keith Vaz that the evidence is insufficient to draw any inference from, thus making it an example of poor (unacceptable) inference?

Here's another example. About 10 per cent of all US presidents have been assassinated (4 out of 43), which is roughly as high an occupational death rate as street drug dealers. If someone were to draw the inference that 'It is surprising then that anyone would want to be President', then we would react against this argumentation. We would say that the inference should not be drawn because doing so demonstrates a failure to understand the issue of the different timescales in the two examples (if nothing else).

In each case, in that we can quite simply find other explanations for the evidence than the one that is being used in order to draw the inference, we would be justified in saying that we find the inference at the very least a problem. However, we would, I think, want to go further and say that we find the inference one that we don't accept. In this way we have encountered our first intolerance as a Critical Thinker.

This intolerance comes from actually doing Critical Thinking, from being, as the APA has stressed, open-minded, fair-minded in the evaluation of claims, careful in making judgements from evidence and in looking for relevant information, and thus focusing on the limits of inference.

What other sort of intolerance might the Critical Thinker be involved with? Do they fret about the use of language? Will the Critical Thinker stand by and have merely a neutral fascination in a disagreement between Mussolini and Mill?

> …if liberty is to be the attribute of living men and not of abstract dummies…then fascism stands for liberty, and for the only liberty worth having, the liberty of the State and of the individual within the State. [6]

> The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. [7]

Will the Critical Thinker respect both positions as alternative descriptions of the same thing? Or will they use criteria (required for Critical Thinking by the APA) to determine that there is a problem in doing so?

We have seen then that the Critical Thinker is going to be intolerant of dubious inferences, and intolerant of the acceptance of contradiction in the description of principles. And this intolerance is in the name of, is indeed required by, good thinking.

Intolerance also comes in the form of that long list of what are unashamedly called 'flaws' in reasoning. There's no softness here, no accepting that the user might have a point. Those who use circular arguments, red herrings, inappropriate *ad hominem*, straw men, and the like *don't* have a point, *don't* have a position worth considering, *don't* use *good* argument (at least in this part of it.) Good argument is where the reasons have sufficient strength to give the conclusion a useful probability of being the case. And good argument is what we're expected to strive towards, to encourage in others, to commend when we see it. Good argument is a major goal for the Critical Thinker, perhaps the major goal.

So has Critical Thinking now become something like the swaggering playground bully, enforcing good thinking wherever it goes? Does our Critical Thinker not know where to stop? The Critical Thinker can (strongly) suggest explanations why Munch painted the sky in 'The Scream' red. The Critical Thinker can explain why it might be immoral to make any sacrifices for future generations. The Critical Thinker can show why there are problems in the account of the crossing of the Red Sea. There are perhaps no limits.

Let's remind ourselves again of the claim made by the British assessment board AQA.

> It should encourage students to respect the views of others, even when they are not inclined towards them, nor likely to be persuaded by them.

There are various ways that we can go with this claim. We can reject this position as not fitting with what Critical Thinking is about. We can accept it and seek to fit our previous discussion into it. We can accept part of it. For me, there are two central problems with it.

The first is the question 'What do we mean by "respect" in this context'? Does it mean 'tolerate'? If so, what does that mean? Does it mean 'not criticise'? If so, then we do have a problem. Is AQA saying that Critical Thinking should encourage students not to criticise positions that they disagree with? Does it mean 'accept as intrinsically valuable'? Or what?

The second problem is the last part of the claim. It is difficult to see how we can expect the Critical Thinking student to be neutral when it comes to views that are not persuasive. If they are not persuasive, then there is likely to be a problem with the reasoning, such that something doesn't follow. Should we respect the position of Keith Vaz even though it's deeply problematic?

Perhaps, though, there is a way forward. This is to consider the status of alternative explanations for evidence. Charles Darwin provides a very good example. In 'The Origin of Species', he describes the correlation between the number of 'humble-bees' and the amount of red clover in an area, such that

> if the whole genus of humble-bees became extinct or very rare in England, the…red clover would become very rare, or wholly disappear. [8]

It is not difficult to explain the correlation between the bees and the red clover. But what Darwin also looked at is that the number of cats in an area also affects the amount of red clover. Here is something that is less obviously explained. It is an exercise that can show the power of Critical Thinking to be a highly creative activity. And, through this creativity, we can see a way forward to tolerance.

I have used this exercise with many groups of learners, from children aged 8 up to teachers. The task is to explain the correlation between the number of cats in an area and the amount of red clover. Typical suggested explanations will be 'cats brush against the clover and thus carry the pollen from plant to plant' and 'cat faeces provide good fertiliser for clover'. In judging explanations like this, we should be happy to be tolerant of them in that they demonstrate a useful thinking-through of the problem.

But it took one nine-year-old girl to turn the correlation on its head and thus produce a completely unexpected explanation. This was that female cats don't like to have their babies in fields of wheat and suchlike because farmers send in large machines to cut these crops down. Therefore they prefer to have their babies in fields of red clover because farmers aren't going

to send in these large machines to cut it. This, she argued, explains why the more red clover you have in area, the more cats you find. [9]

Here we have an entirely unexpected line of explanation, reversing the significance of the correlation. And, though we might think that it is unlikely to be the explanation for the correlation, we welcome the power of its creativity. And, in welcoming this creativity of explanation, we can see where the Critical Thinker will want to be tolerant. This is not tolerance of poor argumentation but that of productive creativity. An explanation might well not be the one that fits best with the rest of the evidence, but we keep it on the table as having a possible significance. [10]

This tolerance of a range of explanations takes us into areas where tolerance might seem to some to be problematic. A very useful test of our tolerance of alternative explanations can be found with the famous story of the Cottingley fairies. This is a well-documented account of the apparent sighting of fairies by two girls (Elsie and Frances) in Cottingley, Yorkshire in 1917. The story is well-known primarily for its five photographs of fairies (and a goblin). [11]

Though the photographs have been the main focus of interest (and though there was later agreement by the two girls that four of them were fakes – with the fifth in dispute), the Critical Thinker is faced with the problem of tolerance with another aspect of the case. This is the evidence of Geoffrey Hodson. He was sent to Cottingley by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to use his expertise to investigate further. His account of what he saw in 'Cottingley Glen' in August 1921 is a good test of our tolerance. It is worth reading in full to get the full impact of what he reports. [12] Here is a very small selection.

> In the field we saw figures about the size of the gnome…I saw a water sprite…Two tiny wood elves came racing over the ground past us…The field appears to be densely populated with nature spirits of various kinds – a brownie, fairies, elves, and gnomes…Frances sees tiny fairies dancing in a circle…A group of goblins came running towards us…There has suddenly arrived in the field a fairy director with a band of fairy people…

What we have here is a series of claims. Each sighting, each description is a claim that 'this happened'. The Critical Thinker is faced, as with any claim, with the task of considering what the claim means, what significance it might have. Just as the stabbing in London in the queue for Grand Theft Auto IV is given a significance by Keith Vaz when he draws an inference, what significance (and thus inference) do we tolerate with Hodson's long, detailed account?

What criteria of credibility do we use? That of the ability to observe points us strongly in the direction of the evidence of Hodson (and the girls) being credible. That of corroboration also points us the same way. That of expertise is problematic (although we do need to deal with the point that Hodson was seen as an expert in this area. Had Hodson a motive to lie? Yes, given that it might have been difficult to report that he saw nothing. (Although Conan Doyle makes the point that Hodson was "an honourable gentleman with neither the will to deceive nor any conceivable object in doing so." [13]) But just because this might be an explanation does not make it the explanation. So do we tolerate an explanation for the evidence as being plausible, as being one that we would accept? I think that we do, on the grounds that it is a possible explanation, supported by other sightings and reports. We just leave it on the table, like we do the one about female cats.

What this case shows is that the Critical Thinker can tolerantly approach examples where they might be strongly inclined to reject someone's argument, by allowing an alternative explanation, an alternative position, an alternative version of events, an alternative inference to remain on the table. 'Yes', they can say, 'though it is difficult to believe that, it remains possible.'

This is where the familiar distinction between critical and creative thinking happily breaks down. In the search for alternatives, the Critical Thinker can roam tolerantly far and wide.

There is perhaps another way forward. Perhaps we can see Critical Thinking as having an educative function. The Critical Thinker could say 'I understand why your argument is poor and I am concerned to help you to improve it.' The Critical Thinker becomes then, not the playground bully, but the concerned friend. Such an approach might work with those who have an openness to rethink, but will not, of course, work with those who do not. For example, someone's rejection of whole areas of scientific method and evidence cannot invite respect from the Critical Thinker.

In the end, we need to look critically at the claim that Critical Thinking should encourage students to respect completely unpersuasive arguments. Instead of saying that Critical Thinking "should encourage students to respect the views of others, even when they are not inclined towards them, nor likely to be persuaded by them," we ought to say that Critical Thinking should encourage detailed examinations of inferences from claims, but should not rule out claims or inferences which retain some degree of plausibility or reasonableness. I recognise that we might disagree on the extent of plausibility but at least we have removed some of the previous fuzziness over the issue of tolerance.

This then becomes the key. The Critical Thinker can (indeed should) tolerate (indeed welcome) a range of possible explanations. This strong tolerance does not conflict with the need for similarly strong (and necessary) intolerance of poor argumentation.

The Critical Thinker will go through the world with the demanding but fair test of reasonableness. It is not reasonable to believe that the moon is made of cheese but it might be reasonable to believe that fairies make themselves visible to young girls and grown men.

Notes

[1]American Philosophical Association, *Critical Thinking: A Statement of Expert Consensus for Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction*, (The Delphi Report), Executive Summary, California Academic Press, 1990, p. 2

[2]Facione P. et al, 'The Disposition Toward Critical Thinking', *Informal Logic*, Vol 20, No 1, 2000, p. 23

[3]*The California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory*, Insight Assessment, California Academic Press

[4]Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), *Critical Thinking specification*, AQA, 2007, section 1.2.

[5]'Man stabbed in queue for Grand Theft Auto IV', *The Times*, April 30 2008.

[6]B. Mussolini, 'The Doctrine of Fascism' in *Social and Political Philosophy*, J. Somerville and R. Santoni, Anchor Books, 1963, p. 426

[7]J. S. Mill, 'On Liberty' in *Utilitarianism, Liberty, Representative Government*, J M Dent, 1910, p. 75

[8] C. Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, Penguin Books, 1985, p. 125.

[9]This explanation was given at a session for Year 5 students in July 2009 from two schools in Nottingham, UK: Highwood Player Junior School and Robert Shaw Primary School.

[10]Darwin's own explanation for the correlation can be found on the page given above. It is that the number of bees in an area "depends in a great degree on the number of field-mice, which destroy their combs and nests." Since the number of mice in an area, in turn, depends on the number of cats (for obvious reasons), this means that the number of cats in an area is positively correlated with the amount of red clover.

[11]The most complete account of the story is J. Cooper, *The Case of the Cottingley Fairies*, Robert Hale, 1990.

[12] A. Conan Doyle, *The Coming of the Fairies*, Pavilion Books, 1997, pp. 64-73.

[13]ibid., p.62.

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The Double Bind of Narrative Engagement with Children

Amir Ali Nojoumian

Abstract
It is often argued that children learn about themselves and the world first and foremost through narratives. Narrative structure certainly shapes every individual's cognitive faculties and this effect is more intensive during childhood. The process of learning has also been quite closely associated with the use of narratives.
My aim in this paper is to argue that "narrative engagement with children" is paradoxically engaged in a double bind. *On the one hand*, the act of narration gives so much impetus to the creative engine during childhood. Children's creativity is partly evaluated in the form of narration. In this sense, narratives are "play"-oriented texts, in Barthes's and Derrida's sense of the term. Moreover, parents mainly "think with" children through the medium of narratives. *On the other hand*, narrative structure acts as a limiting, restrictive and reductive mechanism through which the child's point of view and identity is shaped and structured by the inculcations of adults. Therefore I intend to point out how the role of narratives in "engaging with children" and "thinking with them" should be discussed in a sensitive manner according to its paradoxical impact.
Here, rather than embarking upon a typological study in which narrative could be divided into creative and non-creative, I try to focus more on the reader-oriented approaches (within Structuralist and Poststructuralist paradigms) to discuss my argument. My main argument is that it does not matter 'what' text we read; what is important is 'how' we read. Therefore, I introduce certain strategies for this kind of reading and will relate them to "deconstructive reading," "contrapuntal reading," "oppositional reading," and "polyphonic reading". Finally, I will consider some narratives from the Iranian children's literature and educational curriculum as case study.

Key Words: creativity, engagement with children, divergent thinking, narrative theory, reading strategies.

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1. Creativity and Creative Thinking

'Creativity' is a vague and multi-faceted term. In order to discuss the relation between creativity and narrative, I need first to define creativity in the context of the present study. Creativity and creative thinking has been

studied extensively for decades and has been associated with the notions of "divergent thinking"[1] and "originality"[2] since the 1950s. One of the seminal studies in this field has been the writings of J. P. Guilford's studies of the "traits of creativity,"[3] the "development of creativity,"[4] "the structure of intellect"[5], and "the nature of human intelligence."[6] Guilford defines "divergent thinking" as "a type of productive thinking, characteristic of creative persons, that is not goal-bound, channeled or controlled, but rather "frees" itself from the stimulus and tends toward the novel and unknown"[7]. Divergent thinking "involves searching around or changing direction. It does not necessarily mean flying in the face of convention, but it frequently leads to unconventional results […]. [C]reative people are more likely to excel in the divergent thinking abilities".[8] Gaier and Dellas elaborate on this approach to thinking as the orientation from the unknown towards the known. Conversely, the convergent thinking is "oriented toward known or 'right' responses". According to Gaier and Dellas, "highly creative elementary school children … produced uncommon, off-the-beaten-track ideas and related dissimilar elements to create new forms. Mere openness or receptivity to stimuli does not in and of itself lead automatically to creative results; it is only when the individual can see the potential form and relevance of his experiences and then bring them into some order that creative endeavor occurs.[9]

Gibson et al also explain the difference between "divergent" and "convergent" thinking and argue that most of the studies afterwards follow Guilford's theoretical framework and mention fourteen major studies in this respect:

> Divergent thinking is distinguished from convergent thinking, which is defined by a narrowing of possible responses to reach the correct solutions. In contrast, divergent thinking involves flexible ideation to generate many responses to open-ended and multifaceted problems. Convergent thinking works best with well-defined problems that have a clearly defined response, while divergent thinking is best suited for poorly defined or unstructured problems. According to Guilford, it is divergent thinking that provides the foundation for creative production because it requires ideational searching without directional boundaries, and is determined by fluency, flexibility, and originality. Since Guilford's seminal contribution to the study of creativity, divergent thinking has remained as a conceptually, internally, and externally valid element of the creative process.[10]

"Divergent thinking" could be associated with "originality" simply because the concept of "divergent thinking" involves "generating novel associations"[11]. Creativity has also been related to certain "personality traits" such as "fluency, flexibility, visualization, imagination, expressiveness, openness to experience and increased schizotypal traits"[12]. Gaier and Dellas believe that, along with the notion of divergent thinking, other distinguishing characteristics of the creative person are: "intelligence and creativity," "preference for cognitive complexity," "cognitive flexibility," "perceptual openness," and certain "personality traits". They also argue that "concepts formed in the creative mind are: formed more easily and quickly, are more diverse and encompasses a broader range, are idiosyncratic, more flexible, more subtle and complex"[13]. I should also mention in brief the link between creativity and perseverance. Wallach and Kogan have also proposed that "one aspect of creativity is a high degree of task involvement, with unwillingness to relinquish a problem until all possibilities have been exhausted"[14]. The relation between "creative thinking" and "critical thinking" is also central to my argument and I will return to this later.

2. Narrative and Creativity

Polkinghorne, the psychologist, in his *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*, discusses about the centrality of narrative to human experience and argues that "narrative is the primary form by which human experience is made meaningful"[15]. Narratives are so important that they dictate the way we live our lives. In other words, we live our lives in the form of narratives.

For children, narratives are even more fundamental in constructing their understanding of the world in which they live, their own self within this world, and the function of their self, and understanding the goal of life they are thrown into. I would argue that children need narratives to make sense of the world (without them they would feel lost) while adults just follow certain narratives they have accepted in the childhood. Narrative shapes children's experience. They find their role in the society through narratives and construct meaning units for themselves.

Therefore, one can also draw a very significant relation between "narrative form" and the concepts of "understanding" and "thinking" in children. The process of narrativizing is the process meaning making. Through selecting certain events and arranging them in a certain order we give meaning to our lives. In that sense, things and events in the world do not have a meaning of their own; it is the narrativizing of these things and events that give meaning to them. In a nutshell, narratives as linguistic structures are the go-between human beings and the world.

I think that the relation between "narrative form" and the notion of "play" is of high significance here. Children's playing usually is structured by narrative forms and their structure. Additionally, children create narratives in the context of narratives. In other words, children's pre-planned games and even more spontaneous playing follow certain narrative structures: beginning, middle and ending; goal-oriented structure; closure-driven narratives games; role playing; character functions and roles. In that sense, children always follow narrative structures when they engage in playing.

More importantly, "play" acts as the link between "narrative form" and "creativity". Vygotsky emphasizes the impact of play on creativity as the prototype of all creative activities[16] and Lindqvist also argues that play is a syncretistic, creative and aesthetic activity[17]. During childhood, children usually show their creativity through playing and the way they improvise situations, character-making, etc. For them, playing is the most serious activity.

3. "Difference Within" *vs.* "Difference Between"

The title of this paper might suggest that my attempt is to argue for a "typological study" maintaining that there are at least two types of narratives. This long-standing argument suggests that there is one type of narrative that encourages creativity, divergent thinking and originality, and another type that acts as a hindrance in creative activity. Bakhtin's distinguishing between the "polyphonic" and "monologic" writing in his *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* or Barthes's distinctions between the "readerly" and "writerly" texts and also between "work" and "text" in his "From Work to Text" are the most well-known typological studies in this respect. Based upon this model, one can argue that the open-ended texts allow production and encourage creativity while texts restricted with closure and causality are only for consumption and restrict creative thinking.

In the context of children's literature, this argument might lead to a certain distinction between texts. Based upon this distinction, one can attempt to distinguish well-known texts in children's literature: for instance, Roald Dahl's writings (e.g. *Revolting Rhymes*) or Dr. Seuss's works (e.g. *Horton Hatches the Egg*) on one side and Enyd Blyton's stories or Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* on the other side. In the former, the critical look towards social and gender roles and the unexpected twists in the narrative structure challenge grand narratives, encourage personal thinking and engagement and consequently motivate creative thinking, while in the latter, absolutist character roles (bad or good), linear structure, final and fixed endings (reminding us of the elements of didactic literature) usually prescribe convergent thinking in which children are carefully directed and their reading is orchestrated based on certain already made morals, solutions and answers mainly intended to problem solving and answering children's questions. In

this sense, children's narratives could construct its readers ideologically and ideologically-constructed readers lack creative energy.

Although this theoretical formulation seems quite interesting, I would argue that there is a major contradiction in Barthes's and Bakhtin's formulation. On the one hand, they argue for two different "types" of texts as if *ontologically* and *essentially* one can identify "texts" from "works". But they also argue for an epistemological difference in which the difference is not between two types but *the way we approach* or "read" a text.

And this is precisely the argument of the present paper. Following post-structuralist ideas, here I intend to argue for a "difference within" rather than a "difference between"[18]. Barbara Johnson argues for this in her book, *The Critical Difference*, "[d]ifference, in other words, is not what distinguishes one identity from another. It is not a difference between (or at least not between independent units), but a difference within"[19]. Or as Karin Littau argues, "any *difference between* readings arises from a *difference within* texts" and "reading itself is marked by a difference within, never revealing just one reading, but at least two incompatible, contradictory and irreducible readings"[20]. It is worth mentioning that this argument does not ignore or negate the importance of the text. Texts always in one way or another condition and direct the process of responding to them as I mentioned above. There is always a give and take between the text and the reader but the focus here is on the less studied part: the role of reading texts rather than distinguishing between texts.

I believe that "narrative structure" is always entangled in a "difference between". Every *single* narrative (whether didactic or non-didactic, formed based on closure or open-ended, based on predictable logic between events or completely unpredictable, answer-based narrative or question-based one, etc) has the potential to be approached or read in a *creative* or *uncreative* manner. Reading narrative is at the same time a liberating *and* restricting experience.

4. Towards a Contrapuntal, Deconstructive or Polyphonic Reading

Therefore, I will focus on the reading process and argue that all texts (even the most authoritarian and didactic ones) can encourage and motivate creative thinking *if* (and only if) we read them creatively.

J. Hillis Miller uses the image of the labyrinth in his *Ariadne's Thread: Storylines* in which the centre is "everywhere and nowhere". He sees a "double bind" in the narrative in which one experiences "at once the failure to reach the center of the labyrinth and at the same time the reaching of a false center, everywhere and nowhere, attainable by any thread or path"[21]. In the same book he argues that "a single definitive reading" is impossible[22]. Through this, J. Hillis Miller opens the way to an anti-essentialist

understanding of the text in which the text does not come to life with certain per-planned features.

In the context of children's narratives, I would argue that each narrative could be approached, read or treated in a creative manner or vice versa. Therefore, children could learn to read critically, divergently, creatively, and productively. Or better to say, children could benefit from *not learning* to read "convergently" taught by adults! Now the question is "what does creative, divergent, critical or productive reading constitute"? Here, I want to suggest and outline certain strategies that could be employed by readers in order to approach a text in order to motivate creativity in relation to narrative:

A. Polyphonic Reading:

If we accept this hypothesis that "polyphony" (to borrow the term from Bakhtin) with its potential for multiple meanings could encourage creativity, then my argument is that polyphony is everywhere and is not restricted to certain texts as Bakhtin distinguishes between Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy. It is interesting how Barthes himself eventually chooses Balzac (an example of monological text) in his polyphonic reading[23]. I would argue that all texts are polyphonic. In other words, all narratives are engaged in "difference within". In polyphonic reading, one needs to pay attention to the polyphonic potential of words, sentences, the entire text and the social text (the discourse). Each and every narrative, even the most ideologically-driven one, contains never-ending voices and in ordinary reading only few of them get the chance to express themselves. Polyphonic reading is attempts to contain different contradictory voices within a single narrative and remain satisfied with contradictory voices and do not allow one single authoritative and commanding voice dominates the text. In the context of children's literature, there has always been this tendency to come to certain monologic endings when narrative finishes. Polyphonic reading allows ambiguity and undecidability enter the realm of the text.

B. Contrapuntal Reading:

Edward Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* coins a kind of reading, the "contrapuntal reading," in which the reader learns to read against the colonial intentions implicated in the text. This type of reading acts as a "counterpoint" to the established or dominant moral or social messages or codes. Somerset Maugham's reading (or better to say, re-writing) of the famous Aesop fable, *The Ant and the Grasshopper* is a good example of reading turned into a new short story. Charles Sarland in "The Impossibility of Innocence: Ideology, Politics, and Children's Literature" uses the term, "oppositional reading," which could has a lot in common with Said's argument[24]. I could also add the way contrapuntal narrative could be sensitive

to cultural issues. Children could start challenging cultural stereotypes and designations and attempt to incorporate cultural diversity into the most monologic narratives.

C. Deconstructive Reading:

I would argue that deconstructive reading also encourages divergent thinking which in turn would foster critical thinking and creativity. In a nutshell, deconstructive reading, as Jacques Derrida argues in his "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences" is reading against the "structurality" of the structure or the narrative. In this type of reading the reader attempts to read without pre-structured patterns of reading. In other words, the reader approaches the text without taking certain paradigms or frameworks of reading. Of course, the question remains whether this is totally possible or not. I believe one is always entangled in certain paradigms when approaching a text whether consciously or subconsciously. Therefore, reading absolutely free from the reader's structural competence is impossible.

Here I would outline some of the major characteristics of deconstructive reading as I understand. When the readers read a text, they could think of alternative beginnings or endings for the narrative structure. The readers could also visualize the story from the point of view or focalization of another character(s), and adopt their own perspective within the narrative. They could go so far as trying to read against the actual author's, the implied author's or narrator's intentions or orchestrations of the events. Another strategy is playing the "what if" game in which the reader poses new possibilities for the existing narrative. As an instance of playing the "what if" game, the reader could de-contextualize the narrative and could perform, recount, or rewrite the narrative in the contemporary context. In the context of children's literature, children could start reinventing the text based upon their own experiences or their personal cultural references.

Derrida argues that one of the major aspects of deconstruction is discussing and revealing the ideologies hidden behind the text. Umberto Eco also believes that "all texts carry ideological assumptions, whether overt or covert. But readers, he argues, have three options: they can assume the ideology of the text and subsume it into their own reading; they can miss or ignore the ideology of the text and import their own, thus producing 'aberrant' readings – 'where "aberrant" means only different from the ones envisaged by the sender'; or they can question the text in order to reveal the underlying ideology"[25]. In this kind of reading the reader undermines the gender roles, social roles, or racial stereotypes.

In this type of reading there is no correct or incorrect reading and reading experience becomes interactive as an act of participation on the part of both the writer and the reader. Interactive fiction offers the reader a choice

of paths through the narrative structure. Children's adventure books that ask the reader to decide what they think the characters should do next, and then give them various alternatives are examples of textual interactive fiction. Early computer adventure games were also good examples of interactive fiction[26].

In the context of pedagogy, deconstruction should challenge the test-oriented studying. Tests, especially wh- questions with specific answers, always dictate the way we read narratives. As an alternative, open-ended questions and tests that could be evaluated by peers rather than the teacher could be substituted. Students sitting in circles and the teacher acting as the facilitator decentralize the teacher as the only and always point of reference.

D. Writerly Reading: Reading through Writing:

Of course, children's engagement with narrative is in two ways: reading and writing. In an oppositional reading, reading (as an act of reception) is always accompanied with writing as a productive and creative act. Creativity, in this sense, could be defined as the dialogue between the reading and the writing, between the reader and the writer. One could go so far as claiming that reading is important as much as it results in writing. Therefore, one could claim that children should read for writing. I would argue that reading critically or deconstructively could lead to writing creatively. As a simple example, in educational context, children could be encouraged to re-write the texts they have read adopting a new point of view and collaborate in "co-narration" or "co-authoring". They could simply take a marginal character in the story and write the same story imagining what that character might think, feel, or react to events or other characters. Therefore, in classroom context, special attention should be made to post-reading activities in which children reflect on the text they have read and create their own texts in the form of diaries or other forms of narrative. What is important is that most of post-reading activities should involve writing. More specifically, children could be asked to write journals retelling their own personal experience and recording their thoughts, emotions, feelings and associations as they read the text.

5. Creative Reading: The Case of Iranian Educational Curriculum

The corpus of my study is the Reading and Writing Textbooks for the elementary students (6 to 10 year olds) and guidance students (11 to 13 year olds) in Iran. I also take into account the major policies dictated by the Ministry of Education and the way it strives towards the standardization, regulation and policy making of curriculum materials. These policies set definitions and delineations for the textbooks. For the purpose of this paper, I have studied the narratives in these textbooks based on the types of narrative

forms selected, the questions posed in the books, and the teachers' teaching techniques and attitudes.

Narrative materials in school textbooks should "make learning active, engaging, and self-directed"[27]. The Iranian school textbooks have enjoyed many significant changes during the past few decades encouraging creative and critical thinking but, I would argue that, they are still quite far from textbooks that could help nourish creativity. As an example, there are still very few critical questions and post-reading activities for this purpose. The narratives selected usually incorporate ideological presumptions and dictate certain social, political, moral, and religious codes. The way gender is represented and more specifically the separation of gender spaces is an instance of these ideological biases. Furthermore, most of the narratives selected for these textbooks are non-imaginative, non-fictional texts oriented towards socialist realism as proposed by György Lukács in the Soviet Union mixed with religious values. It seems that post-revolutionary ideologies are against imaginative fairy tale structure as examples of bourgeois anti-revolutionary values.

Regarding the post-reading activities, the new Reading and Writing books consist of some creative activities yet still many presuppose already-thought answers and encourage "institutional reading"[28]. Dieter Richter's characterization of Enlightenment propaganda reading strategy seems an appropriate description of the context of this study: propagation of correct reading and warning against false reading[29].

When discussing the role of narratives in creativity for children, the most critical issue in the Iranian educational context is the teaching techniques and more importantly teaching attitudes deeply rooted in cultural values and social norms. The relationship between teachers and students cannot be isolated from the social relationships and norms. The Iranian educational system is still dominated by teacher-centered approach to teaching. The simple fact that still all students face the teacher and students do not sit in circles or in groups is a concrete example of this approach. In the Iranian context, most teachers still presume that they are the source of knowledge and classroom is the setting for the transferring of this knowledge to the students. This kind of reductive thinking makes restrain the chance for the fostering of interactive and creative learning.

Another problem deals with the way teachers' understanding and consideration of the narratives in the textbooks. Richter argues that "contemplative attitude/approach" is "the most unproductive" one which "turns the literary word into a monument"[30]. The opposite of this contemplative attitude or the 'deviant' reading[31] is the productive one[32]. If the contemplative attitude aims at a view of the finished works, the productive attitude dissolves "finished works into unfinished ones"[33]. Most Iranian

teachers by taking the "contemplative attitude/approach" in effect silence any challenge or questioning towards the narratives in the textbooks.

6. Conclusion

The focus of this research was on reading critically and consequently creatively. I argued that by focusing on the act of reading itself, we can foster creativity towards the most reductive and conventional texts. Therefore, we must pay attention to the following questions when we study the relationship between creativity and narrative: what happens when children read, what are the major influences on children's reading, how their reading changes, does it matter who reads a narrative, why are they reading a particular narrative, who tells them to read that, is there a test after they read the text, how would this test direct children's reading, what does the beginning and ending of the text say about the major theme and idea behind the text, is this text a finished one or could it be changed, what are the objectives of the establishment or the institution that has decided to put this text in their curriculum.

A few years ago, when I was teaching a short story entitled "I'm a Fool," by American writer, Sherwood Anderson, one university student responded to the delicate and complex issues presented in the story simply and reductively and commented that "this story tells us we should not tell lies!" This response is a clear indication of the way pre-university studies did not foster any divergent and critical reading for these students. Therefore, even the best texts with lots of potential for thinking critically or creatively can be ruined by not adopting non-conventional reading strategies. I think, when encountering narratives, by focusing on these questions about "the act of reading," children could start thinking creatively, divergently and critically and will, in turn, be able to create and produce ideas.

Notes

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Using Dialogue in the Philosophy for Children Classroom to Promote Assessment for Learning

Florence Ching Ting Lee

Abstract

Recent trends in education have highlighted the importance of assessment as a powerful tool to improve students' performance. In Black and Wiliam's 1998 seminal work *Inside the Black Box*, they argue that formative assessment can raise standards of achievement. The term "Assessment for Learning" or "AfL" has also been coined to give emphasis to the relationship between assessment and learning. In the preliminary recommendations shared by the Primary Education Review and Implementation (PERI) Committee, Ministry of Education, Singapore, the need for "more engaging teaching methods" and "holistic assessment to support learning" is highlighted. The recommendations from the PERI committee signal the need to greater align the place of assessment in the teaching and learning experience of our students.

In view of existing research on the need for assessment to support learning and the quality of interaction in class to support assessment for learning, this working paper examines the use of dialogue as a means to engage students and provide constructive feedback to help students improve their learning. It explores the use of dialogue as a pedagogical approach in the teaching of Philosophy for Children in Jing Shan Primary School, Singapore, and outlines the pedagogical strategies that are implemented to help students improve their reasoning skills.

Key Words: Philosophy for children, assessment for learning, dialogue.

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1. Introduction

Schools exist as part of a wider societal framework and educational philosophy and policies are often a reflection of the social context in which they are situated. The shift from the old economy of the industrial age to a knowledge economy has necessitated some changes to the education system in Singapore. In an economy that depends on almost no export of raw resources, there is an increasing investment in our human resource and in equipping our young with the right skills and dispositions that will give them a competitive edge in this globalised landscape. It also entails the need for our students to have a high intellectual capital and be equipped with the ability to think critically and creatively. In this way, Singapore can nurture a workforce that contributes ideas and knowledge actively, instead of reproducing tried and tested ideas that have worked in the manufacturing era. Mr. Goh Chok Tong, then Prime Minister of Singapore articulated a vision for education in this new knowledge economy at the opening of the 7th International Conference on Thinking in Singapore when he said:

> The old formulae for success are unlikely to prepare our young for the new circumstances and new problems they will face. We do not even know what these problems will be, let alone be able to provide the answers and solutions to them. But we must ensure that our young can think for themselves, so that the next generation can find their own solutions to whatever new problems they may face.[1]

This vision of Thinking Schools Learning nation is an important milestone for Singapore's educational landscape and provided the systemic and structural groundwork for other initiatives and innovations in the classroom. The Teach Less Learn More (TLLM) initiative, announced in 2005 by then Minister for Education Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, continues the TSLN journey by focusing on improving the quality of interaction between teachers and students. In a sense, TLLM marked another milestone in learning and teaching in Singapore in its call to schools to focus on teaching better, to engage our learners and prepare them for life, rather than teaching more, for tests and examinations.[2]

Since the start of this TLLM journey, many schools have developed, implemented and studied their own school-based curriculum innovations and pedagogical approaches to improve the quality of classroom interactions. This working paper explores the use of dialogue as a pedagogical approach to enhance classroom interactions and makes some observations regarding this approach in helping to improve students' ability to reason. The curriculum partnership commenced in October 2008 as an initial pilot project, and currently involved two Primary Four classes in Jing Shan Primary School, a

school located in the South One cluster in Singapore. The paper will first discuss the theoretical underpinnings for the design of the programme and continue with an outline of the pedagogical approaches and methods employed. It will be followed by a discussion of some of the preliminary observations made. Finally, it will offer an evaluation of this study and share some personal reflections on the relevance and applicability of this approach.

2. Theoretical Underpinning

A. Philosophy for Children (P4C)

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is an approach that was first developed by Professor Matthew Lipman and his associates in the early 70s at the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children in New Jersey in the United States. Lipman was moved to create such a programme because he thought that schools were failing to teach thinking, and this was having social ramifications, as seen in the widespread racial conflicts and student protests taking place at that time. He believes that children can be transformed into thinking individuals by education, but to do this, education must be transformed to make thinking, rather than knowledge, its guiding priority. Lipman goes on to argue that children bring to school a burning curiosity and eagerness to learn but these elements diminish with the years of education. To prevent this from happening, it was necessary for the discipline of philosophical inquiry to be created as an experience for all schooling children.[3] From Dewey's works, Lipman discovered the pedagogy for converting classrooms into communities of inquiry.

Such communities of inquiry create an environment conducive to foster critical thinking in the classroom and help to develop in students the capacity to be independent, critical, creative, yet community-minded and caring thinkers. [4] Children are encouraged to engage in dialogue and to think philosophically. In order for good thinking to take place, teachers have to be skilful facilitators. They will have to use suitable open-ended questions to generate meaningful dialogues and encourage their students to talk through and reflect on their thinking processes.

B. Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Elsewhere, an important shift can also be observed in the place of assessment in education. Assessment is no longer seen as only serving the function of accountability and ranking where students are assessed though the administration of internal and national tests administered at the end-point of a course of study. There is now a shift towards formative assessment and Assessment for Learning (AfL) where the educator's focus is shifted to teaching activities and practices that are conducted at regular and timely intervals to inform, support and enhance the learning process. Black & Wiliam argue that formative assessment is at the heart of effective teaching.

They aver that teaching and learning must be interactive and that assessment activities give teachers valuable information about their students' progress and difficulties with learning. This information can then be used to refine the teaching and learning activities so as to better meet the varied needs of the learners.[5] They further maintain, "opportunities for pupils to express their understanding should be designed into any piece of teaching for this will initiate the interaction through which formative assessment aids learning."[6] In such a learning environment, the quality of classroom interaction and communication is key to its success.

3. Research Methodology

Philosophy for Children programmes have been implemented in many school systems to raise students' thinking abilities, social skills as well as moral quotient. Drawing upon both the theoretical underpinnings of P4C and AfL, this exploratory research attempts to fuse the pedagogical approaches of P4C with the principles of AfL to improve just one of these aspects – the reasoning abilities of students. Employing a mixed research methodology, both quantitative data such as test scores and qualitative information such as observation and reflection will be collected and analysed. The research instruments consist of a reasoning response test, a corresponding set of assessment rubrics for it, student's self-reflection checklist and teachers' reflections.

The reasoning test, rubrics and checklists were adapted from a number of sources to fit the objectives of this research and the Singapore context. Reference were made to the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) Middle Years Ability Test in Victoria, Melbourne[7], Critical Thinking Framework rubrics developed by F.A and B.T. Haynes[8] as well as the Rubric for Participation in Class, Regina Public Schools.[9] The reasoning tests were created with the explicit focus on two themes, namely, *respect* and *integrity* as these were part of the Jing Shan Primary School's Corporate Values. This research is based on a case study involving two classes of Primary Four of high ability, totalling 80 students. At this point of the research cycle, the students have had one series of four P4C lessons involving one stimulus story. They will continue with the second series of lessons for another stimulus story next term.

4. Pedagogical Approaches

A. Establishing a Community of Inquirers

One of the first thing that was done for the two classes involved was to establish a community of inquiry, an approach that is commonly used in P4C programmes. In order to achieve the objectives that the study set out to meet, it was important that inquirers in this community respect one another and are committed to the quest of learning and seeking knowledge. Teachers

had to ensure that the classroom environment is a non-threatening and conducive one for students to express their ideas without fear. Teachers also laid down the 'rules of engagement' and students were reminded to abide by the rules so that the dialogues can be meaningful for all. Lipman explains:

> …the pedagogy of philosophy involves converting the classroom into a community of cooperative inquiry, where all are democratically entitled to be heard, where each learns from the other, and where the spoken dialogue among the members of the class, when internalized and rendered an inner forum in the mind of each participant, is the basis of the process known as thinking.[10]

Although students' may have different points of view and come to different conclusions regarding the questions raised, what is important is the quality of the dialogues and the inquiry process during which thinking and reasoning take place. The premium is on the process, not the product. Carefully nurtured thus, students will grow up to become critical thinking adults of tomorrow, capable of evaluating themselves and the world beyond the classroom. The teacher's role in the inquiry process is to facilitate discussion rather than provide answers to questions. The teacher does not need to be formally trained in Philosophy and he or she is not expected to have all the answers. What is more important is for the teacher to be part of the community of inquiry, playing the dual role of co-inquirer and facilitator, modeling for the students the right dispositions in seeking and discovering truth and meaning.

However, to help the children with the inquiry process, the teacher-facilitator guides and models by providing prompts, asking procedural questions and seeking clarification. The teacher's aim should be to help foster an inquiring spirit among the class-community, encouraging the children to raise questions, initiate discussions and articulate views with examples and counter-examples. This inquiry process improves the quality of the classroom interactions and strengthens students' thinking and reasoning skills. In a safe and intellectually rigourous environment that welcomes and respects individual opinions, students also thrive and build on their social skills and self-esteem. Giving relevant and timely feedback also help students improve their thought processes.

B. General Approach

In coming up with the general approach of a thematic unit of P4C inquiry, reference was made to the procedure described by SAPERE (Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education).[11] The principles of AfL was also built into the dialogues that the

students and teachers will have. One thematic unit typically involves the following steps:

- Getting Started – rules setting and/or warm-up activity
- Reading of the stimulus story material
- Time for students to generate questions related to the issues surfaced from the story.
- Making connections between the questions generated
- Deciding on a line of inquiry
- Discussion and building on the ideas shared
- Review
- Closure

In all the session, the teacher facilitates the dialogues by using a set of procedural questions developed by Philip Cam[12]. The teachers were all given a handout with examples of questions for the following eight categories and they have had some opportunities to practice the use of these questions in the training workshops conducted by this researcher. The eight areas of questions include:

- Asking for clarifications
- Looking for other points of views
- Attending to assumptions
- Exploring concepts
- Thinking about reasons and Evidence
- Thinking about Inferences and Implications
- Dealing with Objections and Disagreements
- Seeking Intellectual Cooperation

5. Preliminary Observations

A. Student and Teacher Profile

The students involved in the programme are drawn from the top two Primary Four classes from Jing Shan Primary School. These students in the top class are students who are academically strong in English, Mathematics, Science and Mother Tongue, meaning to say, all of the examinable subjects that they are currently taking. The students in the second class are also academically strong, but there is usually some unevenness in their abilities in these four subjects.

In terms of teacher profile, the teaching experience of the two teachers who are implementing the programme is between two to four years. They have both undergone a series of P4C training sessions where they were introduced to tools of philosophical inquiry and how to go about organising

the class and prepare them for philosophical dialogue. A community of inquiry, where students sit in a circle, together with the teacher as a facilitator and co-inquirer were also introduced. The teachers also observed how this community of inquiry can be established and participated in this inquiry. Thereafter, they were given opportunity to share their lesson ideas and facilitate a community of inquiry in session.

B. Students' Participation

When the first P4C lesson was carried out, it was observed that the students, not having been exposed to speaking up about such abstract issues, were at first rather shy or reluctant to voice their opinions. Their initial questions generated also tended to be more comprehension-type question rather than philosophical in nature. Their responses to questions also reflected more of the first-hand intuitive thinking rather deep thinking at the beginning. This general discomfort with dealing with abstract issues for which there is no single correct answers is not surprising as it has been observed that teachers in Singapore are more inclined to focus on correctness and testing in their teaching. Sripathy, in her study, notes that the teaching style in Singapore is one where accuracy of responses and correction of errors are emphasized at the expense of spontaneous participation and personal engagement.[13] As a result, students are accustomed to seek only 'correct' answers from the teachers and prescribed textbooks.[14]

However, it was heartening to note that the students became more comfortable at speaking up and questioning issues raised with encouragement from the teachers. Furthermore, through the use of the procedural questions such as '*What do you mean by that? Can you give us an example?'* and '*What does it mean to have respect for someone? Is fear different from respect?*, students were able to engage with the issues in a more sustained and rigourous manner.

6. Evaluation

At this point of the research cycle, it is too preliminary to assert with great confidence the efficacy of Philosophy for Children as a pedagogical approach to improve reasoning skills. This is particularly so given the wide-ranging goals that P4C programmes can serve and the absence of appropriate evaluative instruments, as has been observed by Fisher.[15] Anecdotally though, the teachers have reported that their students are now more inclined towards building on the ideas of others and in showing more persistence in the discussion of an issue. The teachers also shared positive feedback they have with the teaching experience. Generally, while there was some apprehension at the beginning in the facilitation of philosophical dialogues, the teachers now feel a greater sense of confidence in discussing these issues with their students. They also feel that conceptually, they have gained a better

understanding of ideas such as respect, something which many have taken for granted.

However, while the qualitative feedback received from both students and teachers has been positive, the quality of the classroom interactions still have much room for improvement. For one, teachers occasionally slipped into the mode of asking for correct answers, or in the passing of value judgments which steered the dialogues in a certain direction. Furthermore, while the teachers had the lesson plans to guide them, they were not always able to deliver the intent of these lesson materials fully due to their level of conceptual knowledge of the themes discussed, their facilitation skills and their understanding of P4C and AfL. As has been observed, the success of P4C is highly "teacher-sensitive"[16] and the process of philosophical enquiry depends more on the quality of interaction and dialogue engendered rather than the lesson procedures that have been drawn up.[17] Secondly, teachers at the primary school level are usually more authoritative as they have to manage students with shorter attention spans. This created a dilemma in the teachers as they had to switch between their authoritative self, and the encouraging self. Inevitably, the dialogues and sessions became more teacher-directed than initially envisioned. The third challenge that this study faced was the huge class size. Both the classes observed had a class size of 40, and it is impossible for the teacher to make sure that every student had a chance to participate for all the sessions. It was frequently observed that the faster and more dominant students tended to speak more and receive more feedback consequently. This compounded the earlier issue of teacher competency in the delivery of the programme.

For future implementation, teachers delivering the programme will undergo more in-depth training so as to build their capacity and realize the intent of the programme more fully. In particular, facilitation skills, a vital factor to the success of the programme, will be more greatly emphasised. On top of that, lesson packages developed will take into consideration the different teaching experience the teachers have and allow time for teachers to discuss the lessons prior to implementation. Whenever possible, teachers will be invited to observe the P4C sessions that other colleagues are delivering and have conversations about their lessons. In this way, teachers can improve on their expertise through the practice with their fellow teachers and at the same time, continual refinements can be made to the lesson resources. Attempts to circumvent the problem of the huge class size, such as operating on a split-class system will be explored in future.

7. Conclusion

The implementation of Philosophy for Children and AfL will not by themselves improve students' ability to reason. Teacher competence, students' autonomy and ownership of the learning process, and meaningful

dialogues are but some of the pre-requisites that will engender a generation of students who are more pre-disposed to good thinking and reasoning. For this to happen, time and practice for both teachers and students to be receptive to, familiar with and skilful in P4C and AfL will be needed.

Notes

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Thought Experiment and Change of Perspective: Stimulating Creative Critical Thinking

Gabriele Münnix

Abstract
In this paper the author who has been a member of the commission to develop the curriculum of "Practical Philosophy" for all types of secondary schools in NRW/Germany (and who has been engaged in forming and training teachers for this subject) outlines one of the didactic methods that have been employed for this subject. By thought experiments and changes of perspective we can arouse curiosity and can motivate critical unusual thinking and creative fantasy, and these skills can be trained: we can observe a growth of knowledge and a commitment to thinking.

Key Words: Anderwelten, change of perspective, creativity, critical thinking, exploring possibilities, Practical philosophy, thought experiment.

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1. "Practical Philosophy" Against "Intellectual Robotry"

In his remarkable essay on "intellectual robotry" A.B. Palma describes "a disease of some intellectuals", "a habitual indulgence in clever words for their own sake", a "fixation about the potency of arguments as a sort of involved commitment to certain fashionable ideologies." He observes this attitude especially in "philosophers: words generate each other all the time. It is the words that have the generating power, not the thoughts." You can observe such people losing themselves in generalizations. Palma spots a problem with this sort of "intellectual ideology": "They profess to believe in some generalizations about human nature or society, but if you tap them perceptively and carefully at certain places, you become aware that there is an emptiness inside them." He advises: "All you need here is a little bit of unprejudiced perception." [1] Who could be more apt to contribute this "unprejudiced perception" than children?

It seems to me that the described "disease" is very old and widely spread: Socrates, Wittgenstein and Austin (to mention only three) were masters in spotting hidden exceptions to all sorts of generalizations – ethical, metaphysical, epistemological, etc. In my opinion "intellectual robotry" can be compared with what Harry G. Frankfurt and Kerry S. Walters called "bullshitting".[2]

We do not want children bullshitting in "Practical Philosophy", a school subject we have created in NRW/Germany for all types of secondary schools and which has met many prejudices of this sort in the beginning. We

have developed a curriculum for children and youth from 10-16 , who do not take part in RI, (Religious Instruction) which contains 7 compulsory philosophical topics to be dealt with every two years. Equally important for philosophising with children and youngsters, perhaps even more, is the way we philosophize with them: teachers have been trained not primarily to convey knowledge, but use Socratic methods: asking questions, giving examples or counterexamples, asking for reasons and encourage reasoning. They have to examine the truth of generalizations not on their own, but in dialogue and always go back to examples of practical life. This prevents people from falling "into robotic ways of talking and robotic ways of writing, using many clever words, but they lose sight of each other, they lose sight of people and they lose sight of facts."[3]

We follow Kant's principles and want to encourage children 1. to think on their own and 2. we want them to learn thinking themselves in every other person's place, at any time (!).[4] (And the second principle implies a social task that is not easy at all, but none the less most important in classroom communities as well as in a globalized world.)

In this paper I would like to concentrate on the method of thought experiments (and many of them imply a change of perspective).

Thought experiments deal with possibilities, of what might perhaps be the case, they stimulate the imagination and can train a habit of questioning propositions, exploring alternative concepts and their consequences and will therefore – so we do hope – turn out children and youngsters who are curiously concerned with what they – or others – think.

2. What are Thought Experiments, and How Do They Work?

If you saw a white rabbit with pink eyes running close by you saying to itself "oh dear, I shall be late", taking out a watch out of its waist coat pocket, looking at it and then hurrying on you might think you were in a daydream.[5]

But could you as well by accident have been landed in some sort of parallel world, as it happens to H.G. Wells' party in "Men like Gods", who suddenly find themselves in a world hundreds of years ahead, where roads are made of glass, where there are only beautiful people who can read thoughts before they are expressed and therefore can understand any language?

Imagining fantastic worlds and people different from our own is one common trait of thought experiments. Beginning with Plato's cave and the ring of Gyges, with Aristotle's tower and the Leibniz mill[6] philosophers have created imaginative examples to visualize, prove or question theories on the nature of thought and the world we live in. Though many thought experiments have a narrative form imagining concrete situations and very special conditions with perhaps unusual consequences they provoke serious

systematic reasoning. (See for instance Putnam's "twin earth" and the case of the living pencils.[7])

John Norton thinks thought experimenting is mainly arguing[8], but James Brown has even developed an alternative epistemology where thought experiments play a most central role not only in science, but also in philosophy, because they have a heuristic value. He distinguishes destructive from constructive thought experiments: they "can destroy or at least present serious problems for a theory". Or they may be constructive.[9] John Searle's famous thought experiment of the "Chinese room" for instance destroys or at least questions theories of artificial intelligence holding that computers might one day replace human intelligence. It is now commonly understood that computers will probably not reach the same level as human brains: they will always lack the inner dimension of really understanding the meaning of signs and words, which leads Searle to maintain a "rediscovery of the mind".[10] A thought experiment of this kind is designed "to undermine a theory by demonstrating either an inconsistency internal to the theory or its incompatibility with other background beliefs."[11] But this can lead us to new theories: Jackson's "Mary" and Nagel's "bat" have brought about a new awareness of very subjective qualia as an important part of our concept of mind, so that the focus is no longer on objective rationality alone.

John Rawls's "veil of ignorance" definitely is a constructive, positive thought experiment: it may help to form a fair society, where advantages or disadvantages of birth do not prevent justice and equal opportunities for all members of society. But there is still another function of thought experiments: John Wilson maintains that thought experiments are very fruitful to clarify our concepts.

> Sometimes it is necessary to invent cases which are in practice quite outside our ordinary experience....Thus suppose we discovered creatures hundreds of miles below the earth's surface which looked more or less like men, and had intelligence, but no emotions, no art, and never made jokes. Would we count them as men? ... The analysis of concepts is essentially an imaginative process.[12]

Thought experiments invent counterfactual worlds to show by analogy what the philosopher wants to maintain (like Thomson's violinist and her transfer to abortion cases). Hume's image of a floating stone (quoted in "Sophie's World") helps to explain causality psychologically, and we can imagine what it would be to be zombies or cyborgs. [13]

As one can see there is much more to thought experiments than just argument. Conducting a thought experiment is to make a judgement about

what would be the case if the particular state of affairs described in some imaginary scenario were actual. [14] "What if?" questions create a vivid imagination, they examine propositions and they stimulate different thinking. To Sörensen thought experiments are just experiments, not arguments.[15] Of course, thought experiments are experiments, and some of them can really be carried out. For instance Jonathan Swift's description of a strange project at the academy of Lagado. In order to spare energy words are replaced by things, so that everybody has to carry a bundle of things with him, and a conversation then consists of two persons who "would lay down their loads, open their sacks" and talk to each other by pointing at the things they mean. So let small groups of children prepare a conversation about a topic of their choice by collecting the necessary objects at home. Let them perform their conversation only by showing these objects. Let the others find out what they presumably have been "talking" about. You will come into thinking why this sort of conversation would not work.[16])

But not all thought experiments can be carried out, they may be unethical or far too expensive to perform in reality. Real experiments involve, as we have seen, manipulations on material objects whereas thought experiments do not.

"Brain swapping" or "teletransporting" are not possible at our present state of affairs. Should they ever? (Would brain transplantation including memories alter a person's identity? Or can you only recall memories if you can relate them to your own bodily experience? Is physical continuity essential to personal identity, or can it be destroyed and rebuilt on Mars with the same characteristics as before?) Nevertheless these thought experiments are valuable to cope with new or future developments of medical technologies and to explore our opinions of what should really *not* be.

Rachel Cooper maintains, and I would like to confirm her, that thought experiments are models. Distillations of practise, they involve the construction of narratives (which makes them so attractive to children and youngsters), which facilitate identification and enable judgment. They are attempts to construct models of possible worlds.[17] A model for Cooper is a "dynamic representation of a situation"[18]. It might consist of propositions describing a situation, but it may also be pictorial. "The form of the model may well differ in different cases", but it is one of the tools human beings have developed that enable us to perform mental operations and that manage to construct an internally consistent model of a possible world. "Whether the thought experimenter reasons through the situation via manipulating a set of propositions or a mental picture, or even plasticine characters, makes no difference to my account. In my account the form of the model is unconstrained", and this is, in my opinion, the best condition to stimulate creative and critical thinking.[19]

But what is the difference between Putnam's living pencils and Lewis Carroll's living chess figures or playing cards? I think we can maintain that thought experiments originate from a background theory with a certain intention, and they are able to improve our judgement and increase our knowledge because they can lead to systematic and innovative thought.

3. Change of Perspective

Now I would like to examine a special sort of thought experiment: Change of perspective. To take someone else's point of view could be understood very literally: of course we can go and take his or her place and see the world from their point of view. But she or he looks with different eyes, and with different experiences, and different cultural or subcultural traditions in his or her mind. How can we really understand other people's worldview? The second Kant principle has its difficulties. We are to think ourselves in the place of each other, and this does not only aim at better understanding, but also at enlarging our knowledge about the world. Different horizons and worldviews will enrich our own ways of seeing things. (It is for this sake that I have developed a programme of multiperspectivity with three different steps of changing perspectives, and it can be didactically employed.[20])

Of course nobody can see us as we ourselves see us, and there will never be a way to feel exactly what it is like to *be* someone else - but there are approximations. This is much easier if we listen carefully to what other people think and say and ask them about their opinions and reasons. Our models of what and how other people think about the world will be more and more appropriate. And we can begin to train this skill in the classroom. Different opinions and arguments will not only set common thinking in motion, but there is also material to accomplish our own ways of seeing the world. This is, I am convinced, not a danger, but an enrichment to our own perspectives. Of course we can practise role taking, but we can also do this mentally and imagine different ways to see the world.[21]. (What is it like to be a boy, if you are a girl, and vice versa? What is it like to be old? What is it like to be a twin? What is it like to be a thief?)

Children should become curious about what other worlds could look and feel like and they should have fun in exploring these imaginative worlds. Being able to imagine different perspectives is - in Piaget's opinion - a development away from childlike egocentrism to more maturity and will enable them to integrate perspectives other than their own into their own thinking[22].

4. The Impact of Thought Experiments on Creative Thinking

It is now easy to understand that thought experiments can stimulate creativity. They can even lead to inventing one's own thought experiments,

and this will provide the experience to tell good ones from bad ones.[23] Can we explain how creativity comes about? Plato thought a rational understanding of creativity to be impossible[24]. Today we are more optimistic in explaining creativity: Margaret Boden uses a model herself: the analogy of connectionist computer networks to the self-composing neuronal network of the brain. Though there are differences in complexity, connectionist digital networks and neuronal networks do have similarities, and the computational model can help our understanding of creativity. [25]

Several broad types of creativity can be distinguished: combinatorial, exploratory and transformational creativity.[26] I find the second type of creativity most enlightening: Mozart for instance like other composers had the structures and laws of composing in his mind and systematically explored all the possibilities of these structures, and if people like him reach boundaries, they do not hesitate to alter the traditional laws and structures and try to create new variations by leaving out some of the usual laws. (and this applies also to famous painters).[27] Boden even mentions Searle's famous thought experiment, so she is concerned with philosophical creativity as well.[28]

Even a child is able to internalize structures and laws, for instance of language and harmony, unconsciously. The Mozart case is important in yet another way: It shows that early training and an environment that is full of inspiration (in this case music) from the very beginning of his life do their work. Creative ideas present unusual and surprising combinations, but they do not come from nowhere, "ex nihilo".[29] Some conditions in early life can produce a commitment to music, painting, science and even philosophy that is far above the normal commitment. It can develop into a passion for thinking, composing, exploring nature and its laws, and other occupations, and this is what makes creative persons special and valuable to society. And we now know that we can try to create favourable conditions.

Lipman in his chapter on philosophical creativity recommends

> "ampliative reasoning,... which goes beyond what is given... it bursts the bounds of the known and breaks the barriers that our literal knowledge imposes on us ... Ampliative reasoning can be said to carry us beyond actual experience to a domain of possible related experience. ... Many children are so comfortable with such counterfactuals and with the exploration of possible worlds that there can be little doubt that they make very creative use of methods of explicative reasoning as well."[30]

5. The Development of Critical Thinking

Washoe the chimpanzee could learn how to use signs intelligently by imitation. But none of the animals which possess this sort of intelligence, dolphins for instance, have ever formulated questions. This would mean not to be content with the given but transcending it, looking for new horizons to enlarge our knowledge or to find reasons.

Questioning is not only the start of natural science, but also of philosophy, of knowledge in general. According to Russell, the important thing in philosophy is to ask the right questions.[31] And thus we come to question our questions.

R. E. Emett distinguishes several kinds of questions as I myself have always done in my philosophy courses for children. Philosophical questions ("philo-questions", according to my "philo-fables" that I have written for them) do not have quick answers: they require thought, and they may perhaps have several possible answers that have to be discussed and evaluated. It is important to avoid questions that make illegitimate or erroneous assumptions, questions that beg the question and cause perhaps the most frequent sources of error in the whole history of thinking. "Knowledge that is unquestioningly taken for granted will not allow us to make important new steps forward in thinking: it is necessary to break away from the generally accepted notions... from what may be called the 'conventional wisdom'."[32] Of course critical thinking cannot be "flabby, amorphous, and unstructured" but has to adhere to certain criteria such as validity and consistency, to standards, guidelines, precepts, requirements, stipulations, limits, conventions, experimental findings, methods, policies, norms, principles, assumptions, goals and aims.[33] But let me add: each of these criteria can be critically questioned itself.

I find Marcuse's account of critical thinking in *One Dimensional Man* to be quite convincing. In his dialectical model he describes two dimensions of being and thinking. The affirmative dimension is too commonly spread and often deceives us, because we take the freedom of choosing our goods as a consumer for freedom itself. It is absolutely necessary that the second dimension, that of critical thinking, is not only some sort of compensation, because otherwise there would be too much alienation in society. It is necessary that this critical power be directed *against* the forces of affirmative positive thinking.[34] And this is what some thought experiments can teach us. Without this critical power society as a whole cannot progress. And critical thinking of this sort can also be trained by philosophizing with children. They are probably not aware of how close they are to the Socratic model. But they learn to know each other's points of views, they explore unusual possibilities, they sharpen their concepts and thus gain not only more competence in thinking, but also more self-estimation and estimation of others.

6. Some Educational Aspects

We need not say much now about the educational value of thought experiments and changes of perspective with children. They make an important contribution to the ways we philosophize with children and youngsters. But let me maintain at the end that not only strict criteria of rational discourse enable children and youngsters to think critically. Lessons take place regularly and over a long period, and there has to be a lot of motivation to develop commitment to the adventures of thinking. Thought experiments inspire fantasy, bring fun, and not only reason can lead to intellectual autonomy, but also creativity, which is usually full of thought, as well.

This is why I prefer Ann Margaret Sharp's wide account of rationality: Imaginative philosophical dialogue to her is "a necessary condition for the formation of autonomous educated persons."[35] Imaginative expression whether it be manifested in the form of talking reflectedly to classmates, writing, drawing carefully, even dancing or music making with care is an important component of philosophical reasoning.[36] Thought experiments and changes of perspectives are highly imaginative and belong to this concept of rationality as well. They go along with mental pictures that can be analyzed. And they can even create an ability to construct images or visions of a potential tomorrow[37].

The encouragement of creative, critical and diverse thinking against the forces of conformity is not only a pedagogical issue, but also important to society. There is rich material in literature and films which could inspire you to choose thought experiments according to the age of the children[3839]: Can we use words as Humpty Dumpty does - which mean what we choose them to mean? Can there be a lobster quadrille without lobsters? A grin of a cat without the cat? Is there a reverse world on the other side of the mirror, where not only space but also time are reversed? Can one live backwards, as Benjamin Button does? Can there be punishment before the trial and the trial before the crime? (see not only Alice, but also "Minority Report"). Can we live the same day again and again and improve our reactions on what happens to us? (Groundhog Day, Indian philosophy, and perhaps Nietzsche). Is it conceivable that there be a republic of wise horses who hold men ("Yahoos") in cages, because they are so raw and uncultivated? How would one feel and think as an ant in an anthill? As a dog hunting butterflies? As a lonely rat, that is dreaded by almost everyone? What is it like to be an Indian Paria? An Eskimoe? A clone? Can a wooden doll become an ordinary boy? Can a tin man have a heart? Will there be robots that aim to be like men and want to die like men?

And this brings us back to the beginning, to "intellectual robotry", which may be prevented by such confusing yet interesting and intriguing questions. Destructive thought experiments train critical skills, constructive

ones can develop creative ideas, but the boundaries are flowing. A destroyed theory opens up for new possibilities of thinking. Inspired by these or similar examples children and youngsters may begin to invent their own thought experiments and deliver material which the "community of inquiry" can think about. And this is inspiring not only for children.

Notes

[1] A B Palma, 'Intellectual Robotry'. *Philosophy*, vol. 61 (1986), pp. 491-501
[2] H G Frankfurt, *On Bullshit*, Princeton, N.J., 2005 and K S Walters, 'On Bullshitting and Brainstorming'. *Teaching Philosophy*, vol. 11, December 1988, pp.301-313 (the author refers to an earlier journal article by Frankfurt).
[3] Palma, ibid., p. 499 and p.501.
[4] I Kant, *Logic*, A 85 and A 58.
[5] L Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland* contains wonderful ideas!
[6] For these and the following thought experiments see P Tittle, *What if? Collected Thought Experiments in Philosophy*, New York 2005.
[7] M Bunzl, 'The Logic of Thought Experiments'. *Synthese*, vol 106 (2), 1996, p. 238.
[8] J D Norton, 'Are Thought Experiments Just What You Thought?'.*Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 26, Sept 1996, pp.333-366, here: p. 336
[9] J Brown, *The Laboratory of Mind*, London 1991, pp. 43ff and 40f : A mediative thought experiment facilitates a conclusion drawn from a specific well articulates theory, a conjectural th.exp. prods us into conjecturing an explanation, and direct thought experiments do not start from a theory, they end with one. (see Norton, p.337).
[10] J Searle, *The Rediscovery of the Mind*, MIT 1992.
[11] Bunzl p. 231.
[12] J Wilson, *Thinking with Concepts*, Cambridge Univ.Press 1963, p.32f.
[13] R Stalnaker, 'What is it Like to be a Zombie?' in T S Gendler and J Hawthorne (eds), *Conceivability and Possibility*, Oxford 2002, pp. 385-400.
[14] T S Gendler, *Thought Experiment. On the Powers and Limits of Imaginary Cases*, New York 2000, p.398.
[15] R Sorensen, *Thought Experiments*. NY Oxford 1992 and R Sorensen, The Art of the Impossible' in TS Gendler and J Hawthorne (eds), *Conceivability and Possibilty*, pp. 337-368.
[16] T Nagel, What Does it all mean? A very short introduction to Philosophy, Oxford 1990, p. 54 and T Nagel, Conceiving the Impossible and the Mind-Body-Problem'. *Philosophy* vol 73, 1998, p.337-352.
[17] D Cole, 'Thought and Thought Experiment'. *Philosophical Studies* vol. 45 (1984), pp. 431-444, where he critizises Searle.

[18] R Cooper, 'Thought Experiments'. *Metaphilosophy* vol 36 (2005), pp. 328-347.
[19] Cooper, p. 338.
[20] G Münnix, *Zum Ethos der Pluralität – Postmoderne und Multiperspektivität als Programm*, Münster 2001.
[21] I have written a book book for children with philosophical fables which deal with diverse ways of seeing the world: G Münnix, Anderwelten. A Fabulous Introduction to Philosophy, München 2009.
[22] J Piaget and B Inhelder, Die Entwicklung des inneren Bildes beim Kind, Suhrkamp Frankfurt 1966, and E Billmann-Mahecha, Egozentrismus und Perspektivenwechsel, Hübner Tübingen 1998.
[23] an example for a bad thought experiment: Bernard Williams' idea (in *Problems of the Self*), how it would be if humans would split like amoebas: it is not clear how this splitting should be done to produce an independent person: one leg, one arm? Only two legs, only two arms? What about the head?
[24] M Boden, *Dimensions of Creativity*, Cambridge London 1994 p.1 quotes Plato in her introduction: "A poet is holy, and never able to compose until he has become inspired, and is beside himself, and reason is no longer in him..., for not by art does he utter these, but by power divine."
[25] M Boden, *The Creative Mind, Myths and Mechanisms*, London 1990.
[26] Boden, ibid., p.310.
[27] see Boden, *The Creative Mind*, p. 302 (on Picasso).
[28] Boden, ibid., p.331.
[29] Boden, ibid, p.44f.
[30] M Lipman, *Philosophy goes to School*, p. 180 ff.
[31] see ER Emmett, *Learning to Philosophize*, Longmans London 1984, p.72.
[32] Emmett, p.80.
[33] M Lipman,'Critical Thinking: What Can it be?' in D Camhy (ed), *Philosophy with Children*, Graz 1990, p. 12.
[34] H Marcuse, The One-Dimensional Man, Beacon Boston 1964.
[35] A M Sharp, 'Is there an Essence of Education?' in D Camhy (ed), *Philosophy and Children*, Graz 1990, p.47.
[36] Sharp, p. 49.
[37] A Toffler, 'Philosophy and Utopian Thinking', in P E Richter and W L Fogg (ed), *Philosophy Looks to The Future*, London 1978, pp.555-561, here p. 557 (see also E Matthews, 'Science Fiction as a Tool for Teaching Philosophy', in Camhy 1990, pp. 76-82).
[38] further thought experiments can be found in J Baggini, *The pig that wants to be eaten and 99 other thought experiments*. London 2006.

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PART III

Teachers in the Schools: Models of Creativity And Caring

Re-educating Creativity in Students: Building Creativity Skills and Confidence in Pre-service and Practicing Elementary School Educators

Vicky Anderson-Patton

Abstract
Creativity, innovative thinking, and problem solving are the workplace qualities most identified by corporations as essential criteria for success in future employees[1]. In our current educational climate of standardized testing and "one size fits all curricula," creativity becomes buried as students enter school and become immersed in the reproduction and memorization of information[2]. This is in sharp contrast to the innovative, flexible thinking, and joy associated with creative expression, thinking, and problem solving.
This paper describes the learning content and process of pre-service and practicing elementary school teachers who took a university creativity course. Throughout this class the creative process was embedded into learning, the arts were integrated into the curriculum, a classroom climate of risk-taking was established, and modeling creative behavior were all avenues for re-educating students back to their creative potential. We must ignite creativity back into the classroom and one way to achieve this is for universities to produce a new generation of educators who will teach for creativity. In this way we are building a culture of excellence and purpose in our classroom learning environments, where creative thinking and expression are valued and therefore more likely to occur.

Key Words: Building creativity skills/confidence, creative engagement, pre-service/ elementary educators , teaching for creativity.

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1. Sources of Creativity

Creativity has been around as long as humankind and has existed both as vehicle for communication and a means of expressing emotion. Magnificent ancient cave drawings from 30,000 years ago in France[3] depicted messages, information for people who would come after the illustrators, and allowed them to reveal human emotion as a basic human need. African drumming was another means of communicating both messages and emotions. Maoris, the indigenous people of New Zealand, utilized their creativity in oral storytelling, passing down the myths, stories, legends, and information from one generation to the next, while developing communication, understanding, contact and bonding between human beings.

Creative problem solving has also existed as long as humans have roamed the world. Groups have had to construct safe places to live and sleep. Cultures have had to figure out how to build tools to hunt and gather food for survival. Creativity has also enabled cultures to express their differences. Many cultures hold different rituals and rites of passages, as children become adults. Frequently these involve dance, chanting, and other forms of creative expression. These examples provide evidence indicating that creativity, although it may take many different forms, is a basic part of being human. We are all born with creativity, although perhaps in different potentialities.

Maslow described creativity as "the universal heritage of every human being that is born" although he also "differentiates between creativity associated with great tangible achievements (special talent creativeness) and the potential for creativity and self actualization in everyone."[4] He believed self-actualizing creativeness was more widespread, a manifestation of mental health, and found in everyday life activities, in character (such as humor), processes, products, and problem solving. Maslow likens self-actualizing creativeness to the natural creativity of

> …*all* happy and secure children. It was spontaneous, effortless, innocent, easy, a kind of freedom from stereotypes and clichés. And again it seemed to be made up largely of "innocent" freedom of perception, and "innocent", uninhabited spontaneity and expressiveness. Almost any child can perceive more freely, without a priori expectations about what ought to be there, what must be there, or what has always been there. And almost any child can compose a song or a poem or a dance or a painting or a play or a game on the spur of the moment, without planning or previous intent.[5]

Robinson also identified creativity as part of being human.

> Creativity is a function of human intelligence: it takes many forms, it draws from many different capacities and we all have different creative capabilities. Creativity is possible in any activity in which human intelligence is actively engaged.[6]

Young children seem to be naturally creative as they grow and learn through exploring their environment with their bodies in a sociocultural context. Young children are often curious and utilize their imaginations through play as they interact with their immediate world. They experiment using their senses to engage in, to discover, and to learn about the world around them

and how they fit into their context.[7] In fact, studies have indicated that:

> a lack of opportunities for unstructured, imaginative play, can keep children from growing into happy well adjusted adults. Free play is critical for becoming socially adept, coping with stress and building cognitive skills such as problem solving:[8]

Yet "children's free play time dropped by a quarter between 1981 and 1997."[9] Introducing preschoolers to music lessons, dance lessons, and organized sports has "reduced time for the type of imaginative and rambunctious cavorting that fosters creativity and cooperation."[10] This trend is continued and exacerbated as children enter the school system and begin to learn there are right and wrong answers, facts to memorize and regurgitate on standardized tests. They quickly discover conformity is the norm while imaginative thinking is not valued, and free play is discouraged. Particularly in the current United States educational climate of high stakes standardized testing that have resulted from No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001), children as early as kindergarten are struck with a packed curriculum of standards that must be taught to every student, often in the same manner.

2. Creativity and Education

Thirty nine years ago Guilford asserted that "the most urgent reason (for studying and fostering creativity) is that we are in a mortal struggle for the survival of our way of life in the world."[11] So why are schools not focused on facilitating student's natural creativity? Instead "research in education has indicated there is an inverse relationship between creativity and education."[12] Long before the implementation of standardized testing in schools, (fifty one years ago) Torrance described a plateau in creativity when students reach fourth grade in school that remains throughout their school years.[13] Today, this author contends that student's creativity begins to plateau or even go underground as soon as they enter the school system in kindergarten. One way to counteract this trend is to teach pre-service and practicing teachers that schools must be a place that facilitates the development of each individual student's natural creativity. Furthermore, universities and continuing teacher education programs must provide courses that develop the skills, self understanding, and knowledge so educators can teach for creativity.

Von Oech described the following 10 mental locks that shut down our creative thinking:

> The right answer
> That's not logical

Follow the rules
Be practical
Play is frivolous
That's not my areas
Avoid ambiguity
Don't be foolish
To err is wrong
I'm not creative[14]

All of these locks are learned; so, according to Von Oech, we can "unlearn" them. Many of these rules are learned and reinforced in school. To unlearn these rules we must first become aware of when we are thinking in a mental lock perspective, and then we need to practice thinking something different, something that will lead to more lateral, flexible, inventive and innovative thinking. Teachers must be aware when their students, and themselves, are stuck in one of these mental locks and guide them to change their thinking.

Teresa Amabile, a social psychologist has defined creativity as having three components: (a) domain-relevant knowledge and skills; an individual or group is typically creative in a field; (b) creativity relevant techniques that promote multiple perspective taking; and (c) intrinsic motivation.[15] Clearly, teaching and the classroom climate can have an important positive or negative effect on each of these components and how they are developed in students. Hennessey and Amabile have conducted a great deal of research that has helped educators understand the relationship between creativity and learning. They have identified the following creativity killers, which are sure to undermine a student's creativity, motivation, and meaningful learning.

Have children work for an expected reward
Use competitive situations
Have children focus on expected evaluation
Use plenty of surveillance
Use restricted choice situations for students[16]

Teachers and parents can inadvertently implement these creativity killers that develop a classroom climate where trust, between the teacher and student and between students, is not established, risk taking is discouraged, and students' intrinsic motivation is dissipated.

As noted in this section our educational system appears to discourage good thinking, which I maintain involves both critical thinking and creative thinking and expression. Rather students in many classrooms, spend hours practicing taking the standardized tests, completing mundane

worksheets, are drilled in the skills they learn, and school quickly becomes boring as their natural creativity is no longer part of their everyday learning environment. Some schools go to the extreme of utilizing scripted curricula so all students are taught the same information in the same manner, at the same time. Yet we know that one size curricula does not work, students learn in different ways[17] and students are more successful when teachers differentiate instruction. Furthermore, small successes in learning situations develop student's intrinsic motivation. Students thrive academically and socially in an environment that nurtures their creative development

Over the past decade through discussing creative teaching, teaching for creativity, with hundreds of elementary educators who my senior education major students considered were creative, their universal cry is "we need more time to facilitate creative development." Teachers feel stressed with their over packed curriculum, standards, and constant testing. Personally my own children came home from school in third grade and said school was now "boring." Both as a parent and an educator I was dismayed how could school be boring for eight year-old twin boys in different classrooms? This was 2002-2003 the year the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSA's) were piloted and my boys informed me that all they did was practice taking tests and it was tedious. This is consistent with Robinson's contention that students are educated out of their creativity as they progress through the school system.[18] Life is not about passing a test, but about creative problem solving, critical thinking, communication, decision making, goal setting, appreciating diversity, compromise, working with other people, finding one's purpose, and play.

Sternberg adamantly advocates, "We need to educate students, not merely prepare them for tests."[19] Further, he believes:

> Our society is moving in the wrong direction. If we continue to turn our schools into test-preparation centers, we are neglecting the important three Rs of reasoning, resilience, and responsibility. What's more, test prep is not even an adequate way of teaching the first three R's….We need to educate to immerse them in the full range of the curriculum, including music, the arts, and physical education. We also need special programs that meet the needs of gifted students and those with developmental disabilities….We must concentrate on (excellence) for *all* students and teach them how to be active, productive citizens in a rapidly changing world.[20]

3. Creativity in Teacher Education

I have had the privilege of teaching an undergraduate and graduate course "Creativity in the Elementary School Classroom" (undergraduate level) and "Creative Expression in the Elementary School" (graduate level) for the past seventeen years. In talking with many educators during this time, I had learned that it is not typical for education majors to have such a course in their teacher preparation and continuing education programs

My undergraduate education major students are seniors and typically take this course just before they student teach, so they have completed all their methods courses. After approximately 17 years of education my students are initially very cautious about the idea of a class called "creativity in the classroom" as they typically have a very narrow definition and understanding of creativity and what constitutes creativity. They come into my classroom expecting to do lots of "crafts" which is not the curriculum.

Throughout all the classes I model creative and critical thinking, creative problem solving, how to teach for creativity, as I express my own individual creativity. I constantly embed opportunities for students to utilize their creativity while they learn, rehearse their learning, complete papers and projects, and demonstrate their learning. The first day of class I give students an index card, ask them to write their name on one side and then on the opposite side I have them rate their creativity from 0 to 10 and write a couple of sentences describing why they gave themselves this rating. Students are reassured that this will not be shared with anyone in their class, however I do collect them. This is an assignment I have borrowed from a colleague[21] I give these index cards back to students on the last day of the semester and ask them to rate their creativity again, having completed the course. Without exception students ratings always go up, and I believe that this is in large part due to their increased confidence in their creativity, as they become more willing to take risks to engage in creative thinking and problem-solving, and they appear to connect with their natural creative voice that had become buried during all their prior years of schooling.

As students become more confident in their own creativity, they feel an increased excitement about entering into their student teaching experience and trying some of the activities and assignments we have completed. The majority of the assignments, learning experiences, and experiments in these courses are open-ended, with no right or wrong answers. Initially students struggle with this lack of structure as they are so used to years of being told by the teacher exactly how many words are expected, what margins and font to use, how many pages are expected, basically what the assignment should look like, and often with detailed rubrics that leave no room for creative thinking or expression.

For example, the initial assignments I give students the first day of class are, to complete a personal nametag that includes his/her name, displays her/his interests, tells us something about him/herself that we do not already know, perhaps some intriguing facts, experiences, talents, ideas they may have, and also to include a photo if possible. I also encourage students to use their creativity in all the assignments they complete in class throughout the semester, and constantly remind them I appreciate their uniqueness. I never want to read or see two assignments that appear alike. The second assignment is to write her/his personal narrative in no more than two pages. For the nametag assignment I usually give two days for students to think about and play with how they will complete this assignment (this is incubation time), and for the personal narrative I typically give a week as students are often overwhelmed during the first week of a new semester.

I am always surprised and amazed by the array of truly unique artifacts individuals bring in to share as his/her nametag. I've seen examples such as an empty coke bottle filled with sand and sea shells because this student loved the beach. She also decorated her bottle with a photo of herself and quotes from literature and education that were meaningful to her. Last semester I had a male student who loved to draw, and was clearly talented in this domain. He created a nametag that was a piece of heavy stock paper that he folded in half lengthwise. On the outer, front facing fold, he wrote his name in large, colorful letters and cut a split to the top of the fold between each letter. Then underneath each individual letter he drew a picture that captured his personal interests, experiences and skills that was also consistent with the letter it represented in his name. Students have created an imaginative assortment of boxes, gift bags, and decorated CDs for music lovers. Each nametag is decorated individually and clearly reflects the person and allows him/her to utilize their creative strengths in completing the assignment. Recently one student created her nametag upon a large imitation aqua flower, her favorite color, to which she added her name, and photos of the people whom she loved.

The second open-ended assignment, invites students to write their personal narrative in less than two pages. The following prompts are provided however students are reminded that what they write is their own story and there is no wrong or right way to complete this assignment. They are encouraged to think about who or what experiences have influenced them thus far in their lives, to consider their creative strengths, and to reflect on what has lead them into the field of education. The only restriction for this assignment is the two page maximum length. Every semester I see and hear students struggling with what to write, where to begin, and how to complete the assignment in two pages or less, especially if they are older students with more history to write about. Most importantly students constantly ask for more guidelines as they try to figure out the game of "what does the teacher

want me to write, and what do I need to say to get the A". As students struggle I remind them that persistence and ambiguity are part of the creative process. This also reinforces the difficulties some of their students have when learning new information. Students are given the opportunity to share any part of their narrative with a small group of peers and at the end of the class I collect and read them to provide descriptive comments and informative reflections. These narratives are not graded, as I do not believe you can grade a person's life story. I have found each narrative to be unique, honest, personal, and touching. Students have completed this assignment in a number of different ways, some have written their story in a chronological form, others have written funny stories, poems, and even a song.

Following both of these assignments, I asked probing questions to prompt students to think about and discuss the development of their nametag and narrative. For example, how did they begin each assignment, reflect on the process of each assignment, what was easy or a challenge in completing each assignment. This allows students to get to know one another more intimately thereby developing a climate of trust and mutual respect. Reading the narratives, seeing the nametags and hearing students discuss the process of each assignment enabled me to begin to really know and to understand each student as whole unique human being. I learned about each student's background, how she/he likes to express her/his creativity, what they value, and some of their journey thus far in life. I believe that in order to teach for creativity each educator has to "know" his/her student's strengths, interests, challenges, values, background, and culture as much as possible. Additionally, I believe that the more self awareness (intrapersonal intelligence[22]) a teacher has, then the more he/she can be available to his/her students, to provide a classroom climate of empathy and psychological safety, so students feel more comfortable taking risks, stretching out of their comfort zones to express their creativity and ideas.

From the first class I model creative thinking, critical thinking, creative teaching strategies, facilitating creative expression and creative problem solving. Students are immersed in a classroom climate where authenticity, honesty, individuality, diversity, and creativity are valued and expected. I share my narrative verbally the first day of class, and also bring in my own nametag so students get to know me on a more personal level. Every task I assign to students I also complete and describe my process and reflections with the work, so students see and hear that I "walk my talk." . .

In my graduate class I have my students, most of who have been teaching for at least two year, develop a teaching portfolio over the semester. The overriding question for this portfolio is "How do I teach for creativity?" As the semester progresses a personal sub-question usually emerges for each student. For example in my own portfolio, my sub-question was "How do I balance structure and open-ended guidelines to facilitate learning and

creative development in my students?" Another example is a teacher whose sub-question was "How do I utilize creative strategies in my classroom with special education students to improve their learning and creative expression?" Each portfolio is made up of a series of artifacts.[23]. An artifact can be anything that is important or meaningful to the teacher. These may be examples of student work, lesson plans, something the teacher has developed that expresses his/her creativity in a particular domain, a lesson plan that really bombed and a reflection about how this occurred, a piece of music, literature, or something in nature that really moved the teacher, a lesson plan that really worked. The only requirement for the portfolio is that it includes an introduction that provides a context for this teacher, describing his/her educational and work background; each artifact must have a caption describing why it was included, and a conclusion that reflects what they learned through the process of putting together this portfolio. This explains how the process has influenced his /her teaching practice and as an individual innovative educator has transformed his/her professional development as a self-reflective practitioner[24]. This has been a powerful learning experience for the teachers and me in this graduate class as life-long learners. Together we discovered that this type of open-ended assignment has helped to positively transform each individual's teaching practice as they have shared with critical friends what works and has not worked in their teaching and they have received informative feedback from each other.[25]

In all these creativity classes I use small groups (base groups, teams, tribes) of three to five students at the undergraduate level, and typically three educators who form a "critical friends" group at the graduate level who meet for a short time at the beginning of most classes to give each other feedback, to spark, build and extend on each other's ideas (developing creative and critical thinking), to support each other and to build a classroom climate of intimacy and integrity. Numerous authors have described the positive impact that comes from teaching small groups how to work together so they are able to come up with more innovative ideas, solutions, and product.[26]

4. Urgent Call for Creative Engagement and Creativity Development throughout the Educational System by Improving Teacher Training.

Throughout the history of education the pendulum has swung from the rigid structures of standardized testing where one form of education fits all children, to a more laissez faire approach where teachers have great independence and flexibility within their classrooms. This author hopes that we have learned throughout this period that students need a balance of structure and freedom in the classroom, where they can engage in authentic learning experiences and delight in the discovery of using their imagination and expressing their inherent creativity. This means that teacher education

training needs to be carefully reviewed, so that student teachers in training spend more time in the field interacting and getting to know their students' creative strengths, interests, values, and learning styles. Teachers in training must learn how to develop classroom climates that facilitate the development of individual student's creativity. This includes knowing what undermines and fosters creative development in the classroom. Providing students with choices in the way they demonstrate their learning, project based learning, and cross curricular teaching are all effective strategies for encouraging both creative and critical thinking, and creative problem solving. Performance based assessments such as developing teaching portfolios, reflective journaling, flexibility in lesson planning and implementation, and interviewing teachers who students describe as creative are all examples of teaching for creativity and exploring students' creative development in the classroom.

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Emotional Distance and Emotional Integrity as Linkage to Creativity Practice

Phil Fitzsimmons, Edie Lanphar and Jess Sanford

Abstract
This chapter explores the relationship of the culture at one progressive school in the United States and the construction of a wholistic school based focus which incorporates the elements of creativity, critical thinking and Cambourne's notion of 'engagement.'[1] However, this school has formed these elements into a unique pastiche of praxis, implementing these facets through a highly specific and focussed school designed centred on a socio-emotional framework. In this design each teacher becomes a wholistic facilitator, which generates a very different 'politics of teaching.'[2].While seeking to develop the whole child, a key aspect of this whole school approach has been the fostering and nuturing of opportunistic creativity grounded in the teacher-student relationships. Through this process the notion of 'risk taking' in tandem with 'genuine care' as opposed to the usual teacher dominated, rule bound "emotionally distant interaction found in high schools"[3] is a key understanding and expectation of the students. As they teachers have an overarching sense of purpose related to the concept of 'genuine care' the students have the freedom to explore personal directions and interests within a collaborative framework.

Key Words: Care, advocacy, emotional distance, developing creativity.

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1. 'Philing' You In: One Perspective of Multiple Voices

The project that generated this paper began over a dinner conversation with a group of teachers from San Roque School, Santa Barbra, California. With a K-12 stream, this progressive school was created to be almost the opposite of how schools typically work and function. As I sat back and listened to this banter of ideas and beliefs about what made this school 'pedagogically tick', and ideas were tossed around, debated and unpacked I recognized that here was one of those incredible teacher moments that Cvetkovich, calls "best moments", discussion that are "off the record, popping up in the more casual observations that people make when the tape recorder is not on."[4] In these 'best moments' it seems that teachers unpack their tacit knowledge making clear links between their ideology, knowledge of how learning occurs and practice. The main issue seemed to be that while this group 'thought' they knew how their school functioned, it wasn't as clear

as they had hoped. While recognising that the process of school based learning was a process of constant evolution, out of this 'over a meal' discussion a more formal project grew that was based on illuminating the facets that made this school 'work'. The notion of creativity was hanging around in our conversations but it wasn't until we began to talk about methodology not only did we have similar research beliefs but I also realized that it was a critical component of these teacher's thinking. As you will see in the following discussion where we walk the fine line between melding academic rigour and our axiomatic values concerning educational research.

As it is our belief that narrative discourse is the dominant mode of teacher talk, and therefore in our opinion should be one of the primary methodology foci of educational research, you the reader should note that, this paper follows these ideals. It is therefore written in a very different manner than the usual academic format. At the core of our beliefs is the axiom that narrative in all its various forms is made up of a multiplicity of voices, and so this paper will contain all our voices, and at times there will be different tense and person changes.

While it is partially written in the first person revealing the perspectives of "self-as-the-only-data-source"[5]and the autoethnographic nature of the methodology, the initial sections will told through the voices from three narratives written from out different perspectives, extracts that show "subjective or personal aspects of experience."[6] The use of italics will signal we are speaking as one and will told as a conflation of understandings as "the aim is to reduce the distortion as much as possible"[7] as well to "provide an authoritative voice that permits an insightful glimpse of an otherwise hidden world."[8]

Overall this paper represents the understandings generated through a pastiche of qualitative research methodology that includes data gathering through the highly specific and highly personal 'insider's perspective of autoethnography'[9] critical group appraisal of each of our understandings, classroom observations and reflective journaling. The data was then sieved through a ground coding process and produced a set of themes "connecting the personal to the cultural."[10]

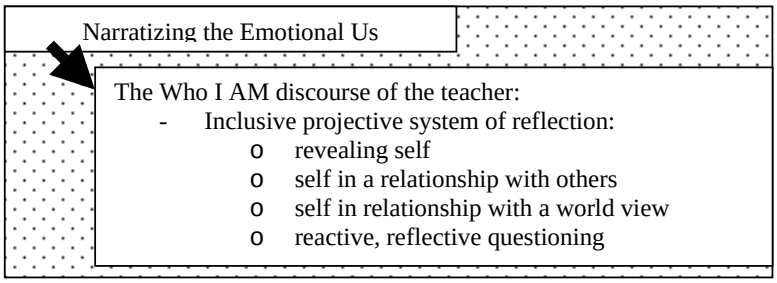
2. Edie's Voice: An Example of Ideology Implied and Articulated

I am a different person now. What mattered at the beginning still matters now; relationships. Loving relationships. How did I get here, to this moment, and who were the significant people and what experiences brought me to this sense of expansiveness that I now know? It began on a gloomy day in June when I walked into a conference room at Antioch College the day after I finished my credential program and sitting on the other side of a long, wooden conference table was a man who looked more like a surfing, rock star than an administrator of a school. "Hey, I'm Mike. Mike Hagan, the

director. I'm looking for teachers for a school that doesn't exist at a place that won't be ready for a while with people I haven't hired yet. You interested? The one thing I do know is that it will be a place where children will be treated kindly and gently." Not sure what to think but sure that I wanted in. To use a cliché, this was a dream come true. What was my dream? To work with children in a loving, kind way. The journey began with a group of adults working from a place that makes our school unique; we began with us. Every day required a new level of courage and trust. Just like kids. We spent time as a community around the content of teaching. It was exciting to be a part of creating something that none of us had ever done before.

From this beginning San Roque was grounded in the concept of narrative in several ways. First of all the initial cohort of teachers formed a tightly knit group that narratized through brainstorming the means by which to develop a school that was based on kindness and gentleness. For some it was just a lip service ideology. For others it became, what Solomon would call an 'emotional intentionality'[11], a way of living or being in the world. For this group a constant link was made in the classroom to their own lives. While aware of some degree of the need to constantly demonstrate this linkage, it seems that this had always been tacit knowledge, and were not fully aware of the power of their language and overall teaching persona. Their daily classroom being became a reflective projection system of the teacher's ideology implied and articulated. It was these three points that appear to be the initial defining system. Through being totally open and honest with their students, in tandem with their explicit vocalised ideology they hoped the students would reciprocate. Apparently gradually they did. Similar to Egan's notion that' genuine communicators don't hide behind roles'[12], and instead are spontaneous, consistent in their openness and are open to all, this group of teachers revealed a great deal of their 'genuine care' through their statements and their questions. Questioning students but allowing a freedom to explore and reflect provides the base for 'genuine' interaction and openness. More importantly the students are able to see through experience that they can take risks in a risk free environment.

Table 1: Who I Am Implied



3. Jess' Voice: An Example of Ideology Implied, Articulated and Enacted

Empowering children with a voice is important in the philosophy of San Roque. Not listening is denying these children their voice. Sometimes we won't like what we hear, but it is our responsibility to interpret that language to understand what is really being said so we as facilitators can be helpful in advocating for the education they ask for.

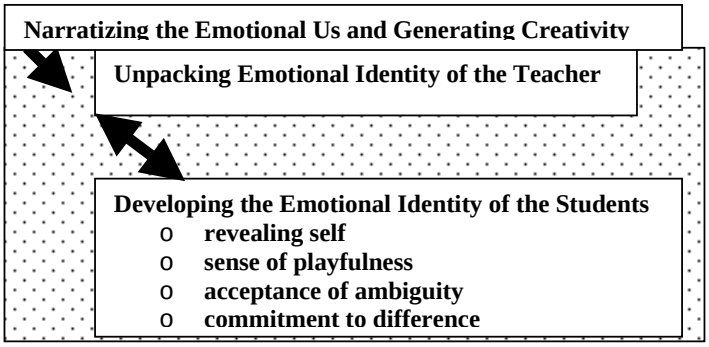
I thought I knew what it meant to advocate for something before working at San Roque. After four years of practicing, there is an emotional attachment to that word that I am still exploring. With this group of students, I believe I have discovered at least two types of advocacy, and will continues to develop that understanding as they get older and we are faced with different challenges. As I said, they are a group of kids that are greatly misunderstood. Every single child in this group has a story about some experience from another school or home that makes your childhood Neverland in comparison. Some of these students are favourites of other adults and some are despised despite what they have been taught about building relationships. Being an advocate for those children, the desirable and despised, means to allow them a safe place to share their opinions, help them process their feelings, and help them find some positive direction in how they will deal with those feelings around those people. That sounds somewhat like mediation, however, the advocacy part arrives when those adults challenged by this group ask me for help. I can use what the students have told me and give them some positive direction to take their lessons and activities.

The second type of advocacy is similar in that you listen to what the students are asking for and you make it happen by any means necessary!

reveal other students Integrally linked to the notion of genuine respect and the need to advocate for children unconditionally, these core teachers at San Roque seem to have taken the step of not just talking about their belief system of genuine care but enacted it. This revealing of self also involved a natural sense of playfulness. While taking the learning process seriously the interaction was characterized by a great deal of personal interaction, humour and the acceptance of ambiguity. Every child was treated equally in these interactions and different points of view were explored in a micro-culture of trust. Thus advocacy was linked to the notions of mutual trust, care and the constant and consistent affirmation that the teacher 'was there for each student'. This empathetic understanding as advocacy was also a challenge to each student to consistently display reciprocal qualities. Thus, not only was a the learning environment child centred and personally challenging in regard to developing optimal learning, but through the verbalising personal emotional reactions to different learning situations and foci, a collective of emotional stability was developed and a sense of genuine community. It seems that students found a sense of 'themselves' and were not

afraid to who they were. As the seminal thinker in this area of optimal learning, Paul Nash, points out, optimal reflective learning is never selfish or self centred but characterised by a "growth of freedom through social action and social responsibility." [13] To this equation we would add that an optimal environment needs emotional unpacking, the development of emotional stability and generation of'' emotional integrity.' [14](Solomon 2) However, 'emotional integrity' and the development of genuine creativity can only be established if the teacher gets close to their students, or breaks down the barriers between them.

Table 2: Who I Am Explicated



4. Our Final Voice: Possibilities and Considerations

It would appear to us that a genuinely engaging learning environment that promotes creativity is grounded in two key aspects. Firstly, creativity requires the building of an emotional bridge between the teacher and students. This requires a fundamental shift in how teachers and students interact. While the notion of engagement and its relationship to creative and critical thinking has been a critical discussion point in education for some time, in our opinion this debate has by and large ignored the role of emotional thinking, stability and emotional reactions. In the classroom environment creative thinking means to be able to become integrally involved in a passionate culture and deeply personal relationship. To harness and develop a creative sense students therefore need a sense of where they are, who they are and the freedom to explore exploring the connections between these elements. More importantly, it would appear that teachers need to decrease the 'emotional distance'[15] between themselves and their students. This means another fundamental shift in classroom practice in that teachers need to ensure a decrease of physical, emotional and social distance between themselves and the students in their care. In other words there needs to be a decrease in physical distance as well as a sharing of power in combination

with a moral understanding, personal engagement and open dialogue. Only then can creativity become a verb, and not a noun.

Notes

[1]B Cambourne, 1995. P. 183.
[2]A Hargraves, 2001, p. 1056.
[3]S Lasky and S Moore, 2000, p. 3.
[4]A Cvetkovich, p. 198.
[5]N Holt, 2003, p. 5.
[6]M Fine et al, 2000, p. 108.
[7]G Walford 2004, p. 411.
[8]M Gruppetta, 2004, p. 2.
[9]*C Ellis, 2004, p. 8.*
[10]C Ellis & A Bochner, 2000. p. 739.
[11]R.Solomon, 2007, p. 9.
[12]G Egan, 1992, p. 6.
[13]P Nash, 1966, p. 136.
[14]R Solomon, 2007, p. 2.
[15]A Hargraves, p. 1056.

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Opening the Dialogue: An Exploration of Learning Stories As a Tool for Documenting Play and Learning

Cathie Harrison

Abstract
Contemporary perspectives in early childhood education within Australia are founded in socio-constructivist perspectives and increasingly focus on making children's learning visible to themselves and to others. This paper reports results from a three year study undertaken within two community based pre-schools in NSW, Australia. The study explored the use of narrative descriptions of play and learning supported by work samples and visual images or Learning Stories as a tool for documenting, analyzing and planning for children's play and learning. In both settings Learning Stories replaced more traditional forms of documentation which focused on children's individual development. The results of the study indicated that Learning Stories opened the dialogue between children, families and educators. The use of images and work samples to support the narratives facilitated greater communication between children, families and educators resulted in greater sharing of their different perspectives and subjectivities. Learning Stories also enabled the documentation of children's own unique questions, interests and knowledge and raised awareness of the creativity and complexity of young children's thinking. Educators and families were able to work together to strengthen the creative learning opportunities provided for children in both the home and the educational settings. This subsequently increased the level of children's engagement in, and reflection on, their own learning.

Key Words: Early childhood education, observation, documentation**,** Learning Stories, families, communication

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1. Introduction

Contemporary perspectives in early childhood education within Australia are founded in socio-constructivist perspectives. This is a significant shift from developmentalist approaches (such as developmentally appropriate practice or DAP) that had characterized many early childhood programs both nationally and internationally during the 1980's and 1990's. [1] Traditional approaches typically focused on observations of the individual child, through the lens of the ages and stages associated with normative development within the different domains of physical, cognitive, perceptual, language, moral and social and emotional development. Within contemporary perspectives in early childhood education there is an increasing commitment

to collaborative relationships, evident in child initiated investigations, emergent curriculum or negotiated curriculum, and making children's learning visible to themselves and to others. [2] Over the last six to eight years early childhood educators within Australia have sought alternative approaches to observation, recording and assessing children's learning that will address these new directions in pedagogy and curriculum. Inspiration has been found in the early childhood education experiences internationally, in such places as Reggio Emilia, Italy, [3] Scandinavia[4] and the United States. [5]

Inspiration has also come from New Zealand in the form of Learning Stories. The concept of Learning Stories was initially developed within the New Zealand early childhood context by Margaret Carr and colleagues [6] in response to new directions in early childhood curriculum and pedagogy outlined above. Learning Stories are narrative descriptions of children's play and learning documented using the voice of early childhood educators, children and family members. The stories focus on children's dispositions to learning with links to belonging, well being, exploration, communication and contribution, which are the key elements within the New Zealand early childhood curriculum framework Te Whariki.[7]

Learning Stories often also include digital photographs of children engaged in the processes of play and learning, and photos and work samples which record the outcomes of play and learning such as photos of block constructions, sand and water play as well as work samples such as children's drawings, paintings and other graphic representations such as plans and diagrams. Learning Stories are subsequently used by teachers, in conjunction with children and families, as the foundation for their collaborative discussion and reflection regarding children's learning and as the basis of planning for future learning possibilities for children.

While developed for the New Zealand early childhood context the Learning Stories approach has many points of connection with early childhood policy directions in the Australian context[8]as well the implementation of socio-constructivist approaches to learning within contemporary perspectives of early childhood education both in Australia and internationally. [9],[10],[11],[12]

2. The Project

The project that informs this paper involved an exploration of Learning Stories within two early childhood settings in New South Wales, Australia. The project began in 2003 as a collaborative investigation with educators from the two community based pre-schools for children aged three to five years. Both participating settings are community based services providing care and education for thirty to forty children aged three to five within a two day or three day per week program.

The educators were guided in their practice by a state based early childhood learning framework released in 2002[13] which focused on relationships as fundamental to learning. This document directed educator's attention to the social and relational aspects of learning. As the educators began to implement the key aspects of this document they increasingly saw learning as relational and contextual – ie connected to the contexts of home, community and the broader life experiences of the children. The questions and reflections, which emerged, also fitted within a number of theoretical frameworks[14],[15],[16] which acknowledge the significance of connectedness for learning. The educators expressed the desire to implement professional practices that could honour the richness of children's authentic learning through exploration, investigation, playing and communicating as members of their learning communities. They sought ways of observing, recording and reporting which included the perspectives of families and children as well as educators. Increasing family participation and community involvement in the children's learning as evident in the state curriculum framework and supported by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model was also a priority as was the desire to strengthen children's engagement in learning. [17]

The educators within both settings are committed to child centred pedagogy and at the commencement of the project were exploring ways in which their professional skills of observation, recording, assessment and reporting of children's learning could be used more effectively to facilitate children's engagement in child initiated projects or learning through emergent or child initiated curriculum. [1819] Educators in both settings had shifted to a socio constructivist learning paradigm following the introduction of the NSW Curriculum Framework – The Practice of Relationships. They recognised that in order to implement socio-constructivist curriculum and pedagogy their professional practices needed to change. They needed to undertake documentation and assessment of children's learning that more effectively acknowledged the holistic ways in which young children learn and better reflect the integrated and collaborative ways in which they saw children playing and learning together. Methods of observing and recording needed to reflect the shift in pedagogy from the planning for the developmental needs of individual children to the co-construction of knowledge and learning shared between peers.

3. Implementing the Project

The educators were introduced and supported by the researcher to consider undertaking an exploration of the use of Learning Stories[20] within their respective settings as a way of addressing their needs and concerns. They were invited to think about shifting their practices from traditional methods of observation and reporting to parents which focused on the objective recording of children's development within specific developmental

domains, such as developmental checklists, to observe children's play more holistically and within context while acknowledging their own subjective perspective. There was some concern regarding how families would respond to these changes and how staff, particularly untrained staff, could be supported to make the necessary adjustment to long standing professional practices. In response to this concern the educators introduced 'Photo Reports' which acted as a bridge between, the pre-existing methods of reporting to parents that had focussed on each child's developmental needs, and the Learning Stories which focused on children's strengths and shared interests and reflected socio-constructivist perspectives.

The project implementation was supported by the provision of professional development workshops to the teams of educators in each preschool outlining the rationale for the use of Learning Stories and providing guidance regarding the implementation of Learning Stories. After several months the educators began to record their own stories or narrative descriptions of play and learning using the Learning Stories formats [See Figure 2] supported by work samples and visual images. The Learning Story format includes three steps:

1. Focussed observation of children's learning dispositions while engaged in child initiated play and collaborative investigations
2. Professional analysis guided by the question 'what learning do I think was happening here?
3. The planning phase- future directions or 'what next?'

The format provided cues to guide the process of observation. Section 2, 'What learning did I think was happening here?' provided a useful catalyst for collaborative discussion and the sharing of professional expertise within the team. This discussion then informed the planning phase as the respective teams explored question 'what next?' to guide their subsequent planning. The discussion of the rich examples of play and learning which had been documented provided an ideal context for professional growth and development in relation to reflection, analysis and planning for children's play and learning using a socio-constructivist theoretical framework. The format was used effectively by the Directors of each preschool to support their staff (including untrained childcare workers) to adjust and strengthen their professional practices of observation, reflection and planning.

The project continued over several years. The ongoing implementation led to further development and refinement of Learning Stories by the educators in each setting. For example the educators extended the project from the Learning Stories format involving educators recording their observations of children's play and learning, to also introducing Children's Voice which enabled the educators to record children's

perspectives supported by digital photographs, work samples etc selected by the child. In this case a child could dictate his or her own story of play and learning which was recorded by the educator. As parents became familiar with the Learning Stories process they were also invited to contribute their perspectives on their child's play and learning through the use of the Parent's Voice format which was supported by digital photos from home and family experiences. Families were also invited to share their perspectives and outline their child's responses to Learning Stories via a survey.

Educators in both settings undertook an ongoing process of reflection and evaluation of the Learning Stories documentation supported by the researcher in response to their ongoing collaborative reflection and the feedback from families. Modifications to the suggested formats were subsequently developed in response to the particular requirements of each setting and in response to the ongoing evaluation. For example educators in both settings expressed concern that the title 'Parent Voice' was limiting for families where older siblings, grandparents or other family members may have taken up the process of observing and documenting the child's play and leaning in the home context. As a result of this feedback, 'Families Voice' replaced 'Parent Voice'.

4. Results of the Project

The project facilitated the transformation of professional practice from traditional forms of observation which focused on children's individual developmental needs to observations and documentation of collaborative play and learning within authentic contexts that supported socio-constructivist pedagogy and emergent curriculum. The detailed narratives supported by digital images provided evidence of children's play and learning within authentic contexts. In comparison to developmental checklists and Photo Reports previously used the Learning Stories provided rich contextual information which facilitated reflective discussion and which educators could use when planning further learning experiences.

The children's comments that were recorded during their play and the work samples provided examples of children's thinking and symbolic representation and offered a probe that enabled educators to go deeper in their analysis of, and reflection on, children's thinking, questions and learning processes. The use of images and work samples to support the narratives enabled the documentation of children's own unique perspectives, interests and knowledge beyond the scope of traditional methods of recording of development and learning.

5. Opening the Dialogue

The results of the project indicated that as well as providing early childhood educators with an effective tool for documenting children's play

and learning; Learning Stories opened the dialogue between children, families and educators in new and deeper ways. This was evident in parent responses on the survey.

> *The Learning Story offers us time to reflect together. They help us share our son's adventures at pre-school and we can feel more a part of his world there.*

> *He sees his achievements as valued in the Learning Story. We have been able to discuss things like taking responsibility and leadership with examples from the Learning Stories. It is good to give names to these skills.*

The sharing of Learning Stories with children facilitated children's reflection on their own learning and further strengthened their level of engagement in the investigations in which they were involved. Children began to ask the educators to take photos of their work and photocopy work samples that they were proud of.

> *Isaac was keen to write more stories about himself and take photos of his play and investigations. The stories helped Isaac gain an insight into what he was doing and showed him that others valued his ideas and thinking.*

The children began to pick up on the language used by the educators such as 'we have done good work here. We worked it out together.' 'We took a long time doing this. We had to work out what to do when the water went all over the floor.' They were then keen to share their Learning Stories with their parents and family members. Some parents noted that an electronic version of the documentation was easily sent to family members overseas and provided a welcome update on the child's interests and newly acquired skills.

> *We share the Learning Stories with our extended family. An electronic version complete with photos is great to send to family members overseas and adds a richness to our long distance conversations and connections.*

The use of images to support the narratives also facilitated greater communication between families and children and educators. The visual images were readily accessible and served as strong reminders of play experiences that may have engaged children deeply during the day but may not be evident in a painting or drawing or worksheet. The images facilitated conversations with families and helped children to share their experience of

play and learning with their families. The combination of narratives, digital images and work samples also raised educator and parent awareness of the processes of learning and the creativity and complexity of young children's thinking. When used to inform decisions about planning, Learning Stories supported children's engagement in play and learning by building on their existing interests and shared experiences with peers. One parent commented:

> *My child displayed an interest in numbers and measuring. This interest has greatly expanded in the home as a result of the Learning Stories. Seeing what the educators see and knowing what they are planning helps us to foster the interest at home.*

The typical conversations about the day such as - 'What did you do today? 'Nothing much' and 'Who did you play with? – 'No one' were less frequent when children's conversations about their day were supported by images and sequences of images and detailed descriptions of who, what, where and what was going to happen next. Parents commented within surveys:

> *It's great to see how our daughter interacts with other children in play and discussion. It is like being a fly on the wall to see the day to day social interactions that you don't see at drop off and pick up time. The Learning Stories promote discussion at home. The pictures also support this.*

> *The Learning Stories give me a definite point with which to start a conversation about her days at pre-school. The Learning Stories made it easier to talk about her actual learning rather than simply a list of what she did. We can see how learning is an ongoing process…the small playful interactions are all part of a learning continuum. I can see that now.*

> *Having an introverted child the stories have provided an invaluable opportunity to communicate about his experiences. They have also given us added insights as to how to work through similar situations at home.*

Children became more active contributors to the communication process as parents shared their Learning Stories with them and sought their comments and responses. The increase in communication between children, families and educators resulted in greater sharing of the different perspectives and subjectivities and subsequently strengthened the creative learning

opportunities provided for children in both the home and the educational setting. Parents became more aware of their children's play and the contribution of play to learning. This was evident in Parent survey responses

> *We can see how they develop literacy social skills, knowledge and understanding of science and maths, art and drama in our children. It happens in play and how they extend and enrich the children's interest and curiosities. We feel empowered by this and we know that the educators do so much more that just let the kids run around.*
>
> *We can see differences form one Learning Story to the next and can see how he is developing. The Learning Stories have enhanced his self esteem.*
>
> *The Learning Stories illustrate my child's experiences within a group- sharing understanding and developing interpersonal skills and interest. This is wonderful and helps me to follow through at home.*
>
> *I consciously try to focus on the issues raised through the Learning Stories- interests, weaknesses and strengths. It's like we can work together with the educators on things that matter for our child.*

6. Conclusion

The results of this study provide evidence that Learning Stories are an effective tool for documenting play and learning. The use of rich narrative descriptions of children's play and learning supported by digital images and work samples can support the implementation of socio-constructivist curriculum in early childhood settings. This documentation can facilitate greater communication between children, families and educators which is fundamental to building relationships and the connections to children's lived experiences when planning for further learning. Learning Stories provide evidence of the complexity and creativity of young children's thinking and can be used by educators and families to implement learning opportunities that engage children and reflect their strengths, interests and capabilities.

Notes

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Novel and Engaging Versus Boring and Stagnating: How Do Pupils and Teachers Alike Perceive the State of Creativity in Secondary Schools?

Sarah Turner

Abstract
Creativity is a term that can be interpreted and related to teaching in many ways: creative teaching, creative learning and teaching for creativity.[1] However, defining creativity is complex and there are many suggestions to how it can be applied to teaching.
A case study was undertaken to investigate how teachers in England interpret and deliver 'creative teaching' at Key Stage 3 (KS3) (11-14yrs) and how pupils respond to such teaching styles. Teachers completed a 'Your Teaching Style' questionnaire[2], ten teachers were observed across a range of subjects at KS3[3] and pupils of all age groups (10-18years) participated in small group semi-structured interviews.
Analysis showed that teachers perceived 'creativity' in their subject teaching differently. The highest frequency activities of any type during the lesson observations were: giving instructions, offering assistance, pupils independently working, giving praise and interesting tasks. The results from the questionnaires showed that the most common teaching styles were: integrating pupils, questioning and opportunities. Pupil interviews concluded that pupils find some subjects more creative than others and that creative teaching methods help them to learn.

Key Words: Creativity, engagement, National Curriculum, science, teaching.

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1. Introduction

> *Creativity means 'thinking outside of the box but sensibly' (Yr 7 girl).*

Inspiring pupils with original ideas and tasks in their lessons can be paramount to engaging them. Once engaged, pupils are more likely to enjoy learning and achieve their full potential, be motivated and not misbehave. For teachers to devise varied and novel tasks in their lessons requires thought and preparation, and can present significant challenges. 'Creativity' is a complex concept, involving different aspects of creative teaching and learning.[4]

This paper reports on a case study that was undertaken to investigate how teachers in England interpret and deliver 'creative teaching' at KS3 and how pupils respond to such teaching styles. Lesson observations, teacher questionnaires and pupil interviews were carried out and the results were analysed.

2. Relevant Literature

The importance and relevance of pupils being creative at school, and acquiring surrounding skills, is highlighted in the revised National Curriculum 2008 for KS3. The National Curriculum states that:

> Creativity involves the use of imagination and intellect to generate ideas…experiencing the wonder and inspiration of human ingenuity and achievement…can spark individual enthusiasms that contribute to personal fulfilment.[5]

Today's society provides pupils with the opportunity of aspiring to a host of possible careers. Therefore it is the responsibility of the education system to equip pupils with the necessary skills to be able to be flexible, to think independently and to work with others. Pupils also require confidence to be able to work in changing times and adapt to working in the twenty first century.

Creativity can, and should, be applied to all school subjects even though it is often more commonly associated with arts subjects such as drama, music and art.[6] The misconception that creativity is the prerogative of arts subjects is a concern as it denies the place of creative teaching in science and mathematics. Creative teaching can manifest itself differently in each school subject and "should permeate the curriculum and the life of the school."[7]

Creativity can be more often associated with primary school teaching than secondary school teaching. However, to engage older pupils and help them retain information, learn key skills and enjoy lessons, there is a role for creativity at secondary school. All pupils have the capacity to be creative[8] and this will exhibit itself slightly differently in each pupil; it could be a flair for creative writing, poems, songs, thinking, questioning, drawing, creating an experiment, tackling a calculation or expressing themselves in sport. Allowing pupils to explore a topic in their own way may result in the creation of something original. It also allows pupils to create something themselves which is often the most effective way of learning; once something new is created, either entirely new or simply new to that pupil, the pupil has ownership and understanding which is deep-rooted and permanent. As Pagano comments, "In order for a child to understand something, he must construct it himself; he must re-invent it."[9]

However, for some pupils this is extremely difficult and they may initially express anxiety towards working in this way. While the Higher Order Thinking Skills[10] places 'creativity' as the highest order thinking skill, to expect all pupils to work and think at this level, which is the most difficult, is unreasonable. Yet, with guidance and patience some pupils may develop their confidence working in this area.

Having discussed the significance of pupil engagement, pupil learning and skills developed for future employment, this paper will ask why creativity is often not prominent in all subjects and often not employed for the benefit of pupils by teachers in their lessons. First of all, consideration must be made of the term 'creativity' which is complex and difficult to define. Definitions incorporate many different words – such as novel, original, inventive or imaginative and link to producing something that has never been achieved before. However, does this creation simply have to be novel to the pupil/teacher or completely new? Using their imagination, some pupils can move completely away from the focus and is this useful? A simpler interpretation, with clear guidelines, basing creativity in terms of four key characteristics, is provided by the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE):

> First, they [the characteristics of creativity] always involve thinking or behaving imaginatively. Second, overall this imaginative activity is purposeful: that is, it is directed to achieving an objective. Third, these processes must generate something original. Fourth, the outcome must be of value in relation to the objective.[11]

Creativity is often a word that can cause apprehension for some teachers because it suggests time is required to consider and develop creative resources and already "teachers are under high levels of pressure and are overburdened with excessive workloads."[12]

Some teachers may lack confidence in their own creative ability and feel they do not possess creative attributes themselves. They may therefore find it difficult to approach creative ideas and subsequently do not encourage their pupils to be creative. Moreover, curriculum constraints do not allow time for pupils to engage in creative projects.

Teachers may misunderstand creativity and feel they will lose classroom control if they adopt a creative classroom. As Robinson has pointed out,

> …[a] misconception is that creativity is to do with free expression. This is partly why there's such concern about creativity in education. Critics think of children running

> wild and knocking down the furniture: with being spontaneous and uninhibited rather than with serious academic work.[13]

Teachers may require training to help them appreciate that creativity need not involve a loss of control, and that they would benefit from sharing methods of devising creative tasks. In particular, this could be an issue with many experienced teachers; it could be a daunting task if they are expected to do something unfamiliar to them, and having heard the theory, they may lack confidence in putting the ideas into practice[14].

Amidst the complexities involved with defining creativity and the difficulties impacting on some teachers, there are benefits, which have been highlighted in this paper, for incorporating creativity at secondary schools.

3. Research Questions

In investigating creativity within the classroom, this study will centre on two key research questions:

1. How do teachers interpret creativity within their KS3 teaching?
2. How do pupils respond to different activities within the classroom?

4. Methodology

A case study was undertaken with a school in the North of England to investigate 'creative teaching' across KS3. Willing teachers participated in a questionnaire and permitted their lessons to be observed, and different age groups of pupils took part in small group semi-structured interviews.

A willing sample of eleven teachers completed a 'Your Teaching Style' questionnaire[15] which was non-subject specific. It was based around Cropley's nine-point list on fostering teachers' classroom behaviour[16]:

1. encouraging pupils to learn independently (dependence);
2. having a co-operative, socially integrative style of teaching (integration);
3. motivating their pupils (motivation);
4. delaying judging pupils' ideas until they have been thoroughly worked through and clearly formulated (judgement);
5. encouraging flexible thinking (flexibility);
6. promoting self-evaluation in pupils (evaluation);
7. taking pupils' suggestions and questions seriously (question);

8. offering pupils opportunities to work with a wide variety of materials and under different conditions (opportunities);
9. helping pupils to learn to cope with frustration and failure (frustration).

There were 45 questions, covering the above nine points equally. The scoring for each statement ranged from *6 - all the time* to *1- never*. This particular questionnaire was selected for use as it addresses a variety of contexts for the use of creativity in the classroom and requires the teacher to consider their personal teaching style.

Ten teachers (drawn from a sample of approximately sixty) were observed across a range of KS3 subjects using the behaviour category form[17]. This was selected as it was a suitable template to use for observing creative tasks and the different teacher behaviours being categorised helped the researcher. The teachers were informed that the observations would focus on aspects of creativity within the lesson and in response to this, without being asked by the researcher, teachers planned a creative lesson in line with how they interpreted the term.

A sample of pupils from each age group (40 in total out of 700 pupils in the school) participated in small group semi-structured interviews which had a list of predetermined questions. However, care was taken to maintain flexibility and a 'conversational style' approach throughout[18] to allow a comfortable atmosphere to ensure that pupils felt their responses were being listened to and considered useful and important. The questions asked were: 1) Which subjects do you think enable you to be creative? 2) Do creative tasks help you to learn? 3) What do you understand by the term 'creativity'?

5. Results

The two statistical approaches used to analyse the results were the mean and the standard deviation. The mean was selected because the researcher was observing the distribution of teacher scores from the questionnaire and requiring information on the central tendency[19]. The standard deviation provided information on the "individual deviations from the mean of the distribution."[20] When analysing the questionnaires, the mean was calculated for:

1. each teacher in each of the nine themes;
2. the overall mean for each theme of all the teachers.

In addition, for each theme, and for each individual teacher, the standard deviation was calculated.

The results from the questionnaires showed that the highest means of activities/teacher behaviours undertaken in lessons were employing a cooperative, socially integrative style of teaching (integration), taking pupils' suggestions and questions seriously (question) and offering pupils opportunities to work with a variety of materials and under different conditions (opportunities). This is encouraging as it suggests that pupils are encouraged to think and work independently. These results show that teachers perceive themselves as being able to listen to their pupils, encourage pupils to work in groups and inspire their pupils to do different things with what they have learnt. This self-perception by the teachers was observed by the researcher during the lesson observations providing further evidence.

The lowest means were in encouraging pupils to learn independently (dependence), delaying judging pupils' ideas until they have been thoroughly worked through and clearly formulated (judgement) and promoting self-evaluation in pupils (evaluation). One question in 'dependence' – 'teach students the basics and leave them to find out more' - had considerable variance (standard deviation of 1.27), demonstrating that teachers respond to this differently in their different subjects. This was also apparent in two other questions: one in the 'judgement' section ('do not give my own view immediately on students' ideas') which showed a standard deviation of 1.41 (responses varied from 1-6); and one question in the 'evaluation' section ('allow students to show one another their work before submission') which showed a standard deviation of 1.49. This suggests that teachers do not frequently use open-ended questions or allow pupils to develop their own thoughts or explore a concept/ topic on their own.

Since teachers had been advised that creativity was the research theme, all of the lessons observed contained a kind of creative task to be explored by the pupils. For example:

Encouraging mnemonics, use of picture cards and games (French)
Investigative practical (physics)
Designing generally (design and technology)
Colour coding maps (geography)
Trip outside to find inspiration for writing (English)
Poster for wall to explain a scenario (mathematics)

These examples clearly illustrate the variation in how teachers respond to the term 'creativity'. The pupils clearly enjoyed the activities that were being undertaken and enjoyed being creative in the classroom. It was good to hear many positive and engaging discussions by the pupils and in many classrooms, there was a definite 'buzz' in the atmosphere. The activities covered most often in the ten lessons observed were:

- the teacher giving instructions (often to explain the creative tasks outlined above);
- pupils having time to complete independent work;
- teachers giving praise and encouragement to the pupils during their tasks and throughout the lesson.

Pupil Interviews

Pupils in each age group were responsive and engaging to talk to about creativity in their school lessons. The general consensus amongst the pupils was that they enjoyed creative lessons. Pupils in Yr 5 and 6 felt that subjects which promoted the use of creativity were: art, history, geography, music, ICT, sport and English. Similarly, pupils in Yrs 7,8 and 9 identified design and technology, art and geography as subjects involving the most creativity. Pupils in Yrs 7-9 also mentioned that science practicals helped them to remember content. Pupils in Yrs 10-11 felt that creativity was most evident in their option subjects: art, ICT, design and technology, music, physical education as well as in writing their English essays and discussion in religious studies. This age group felt creativity was not often required in mathematics or science lessons and that there was less demand for creative learning and creative activities in these lessons. They also expressed that as they have progressed through the school, they have experienced less creative teaching and learning. Games and creative tasks helped over half of the pupils in Yrs 7-9 to learn; only a small minority did not find these methods helpful. One pupil commented that she would like more creativity in mathematics because she finds the subject hard. However, another pupil felt, regarding creativity, that he '*would like it in all subjects but not necessarily in every lesson' (Yr 9 boy).*

Pupils' understanding of the term 'creativity' certainly expressed their intuitiveness and enthusiasm:

- expressing yourself
- making things
- using your imagination
- unique
- personal thought

Sixth form pupils considered creativity to be integral to how they use their time, enabling them to adapt to the needs of a situation at school. They felt the balance of their lessons was suitable though the demands in depth of knowledge from General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) to Advanced (A) level had been difficult.

6. Conclusions and Implications

From the questionnaires, observations and pupil interviews there is evidence to show there are creative tasks carried out in many lessons. There are some subjects which appear to lend themselves to creativity more easily than others. All of the teachers had their pupils making or doing something. However, consideration as to whether following a teacher's instruction to make something and whether that is creative or not using the NACCCE definition as a guideline is in question. This case study has highlighted that teachers differ in their interpretations of the term 'creativity', and that it is applied to different teaching subjects in a variety of ways perhaps due to confusion of the term. Pupils' understanding of the term 'creativity' concurs with research of teachers' definitions of the term[21], using words such as imagination or original ideas. It has also shown that pupils enjoy creative lessons and for some it helps them to remember and learn. This could improve pupils' attitudes towards certain subjects.

Creativity can be encouraged in questioning of pupils in class discussions as well as more novel approaches such as allowing debates, fun games, quizzes, art and projects. Another way in which creativity in teaching and learning can be developed is by employing the notion of an 'open environment' which supports pupils' ideas and emotions providing a feeling of safety; without this safety pupils may act in many different ways[22] such as misbehaving or refusing to put in effort to complete the work. In this case study, teachers preferred to use closed style questioning. However, developing their use of open questioning may result in encouraging pupils to think independently around solutions. While some teachers may find this daunting, it has the potential to be a rewarding and satisfying experience for both the pupil and the teacher, enabling them to explore a difficult and original question together. Creativity in this activity involves posing unique questions and explaining its relevance to the topic being taught. Combining these elements of creativity enables pupils to draw out more use than simply reciting facts in classroom discussions[23]. This may provoke a deeper level of thinking in some pupils, enabling them to exercise their originality and independent thought[24]. From the lesson observations, although there was quite a high percentage for 'divergent questions and tasks', these were linked to the activities being set and not to the questions in discussions; questions tended to be asked of a closed nature. This could be due to maintaining pace and allowing pupils to have more time to complete the set tasks.

Teachers show different responses to creativity within their classroom. There appears to be some confusion as to which activities can be classed as creative and there are stark differences between subjects; arts subjects such as English, drama, art and design and technology were more likely to involve some imaginative and novel work. Research[25] reported that teachers of mathematics, science, technology perceived creativity in

impersonal or 'objective' terms. This is in contrast to teachers of English and creative arts subjects who interpreted creativity in more personal terms. This concurs with the observations and the types of activities undertaken; compare for instance, designing an experiment in science with a walk outside to gain inspiration for poetry in English. In the lessons observed, there was evidence of science and mathematics lessons with creative tasks but comments from the pupils show that this is perhaps more infrequent than common in practice. However, using a broad definition of the word allows creativity to be related to more than just one type of activity; it can be explored in each interaction with individual pupils through questioning or thinking.

Educating teachers that creativity relates to: teaching creatively, teaching for creativity and creative learning is imperative so that all areas are explored. Teaching creatively requires teachers being inspiring, stimulating curiosity, knowing their subject well yet also continuing to learn[26]. Many of these attributes teachers possess but perhaps do not recognise as being creative. Importantly, all teachers have the skills of being creative[27]; often all that is required is to have the confidence to try and a willingness to develop their own creative ability. As NACCCE points out,

> Teaching for creativity involves teaching creatively. Young people's creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which the teacher's creative abilities are properly engaged. To put it another way, teachers cannot develop the creative abilities of their pupils if their own creative abilities are suppressed.[28]

Within the classroom, the four key elements that could enable pupils to engage and experience creative learning in lessons, to be inspired to learn, are:

- Divergent thinking – develop pupils' imagination;
- Experiential learning – developing and accumulating pupils' own learning experiences;
- Motivation – fostering an on-task mentality where pupils want to engage and learn and explore ideas;
- Enjoyment – creative learning should be fun![29]

If teachers can foster this creative learning atmosphere, and pupils respond positively, our hope would be that pupils will enjoy their school lessons. Creative learning has the capacity to raise pupils' expectations of themselves and their learning. Pupils' enthusiasm towards learning, leading to an enjoyment of exploring topics being taught in original and novel ways, could

enable both teachers and pupils to blossom and enjoy the learning experience together.

Notes

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[15] See K Soh, *op.cit*., p. 132 -134.

[16] A J Cropley, 'Fostering creativity in the classroom: General principles', in *Creativity research handbook Vol. 1*. M A Runco (ed), Hampton Press, Cresskill, N.J., 1997, p. 83-114.
[17] See A Furman, op. cit., p. 274-277.
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[24] R A Beghetto, *op. cit*., p. 6.
[25] M Fryer and J A Collings, *op. cit*. p. 79.
[26] M Fautley and J Savage, *Creativity in Secondary Education*, Learning Matters, Exeter, 2007, p. 19-30.
[27] S Longshaw, 'Creativity in science teaching'. *School Science Review*, vol. 90(332), 2009, p. 91.
[28] See NACCCE, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
[29] M Fautley and J Savage, *op. cit*., p. 55.

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PART IV

Arts and Creativity: The Classroom and Beyond

Once Upon a Time, There Was Me: Constructing and Deconstructing Narratives to Make and Remake Knowledge, Worlds and Futures - The Role of Story Making and Design In Learning

Alexandra Antonopoulou

Abstract
This paper acknowledges the importance of self-constructed narratives in curriculum and encourages ways of learning through story making. By the term story making I mean (re) writing the stories and also (re) designing physically their medium, while applying our personal experiences in them. These self-constructed narratives might be stories that children write from the beginning or by deconstructing and reconstructing existing stories. In the second case, existing stories are brought back to life being rewritten by allowing children's input. Story making could not only be used to enhance children's learning, but also as a platform for design, while children also (re) design the medium of the story. Making/designing is used primarily as a process, helping to get ideas for the writing of the story and finally as an outcome by redesigning the story. Having entered into fantasy we are able to have a better grip of reality and realize the design possibilities. By applying their innate fantasy and creativity, children could challenge the conventional perception of 'how things look'. Story making and fantasy can then be used to design futures and come across new worlds. I will analyze workshops I have conducted; case studies from schools, which explore the interconnections of story making, learning and designing and also an outline study that I am currently working with. Through these cases, I am exploring how the role of teacher and learner, author and reader, designer and client can be reversed. This process not only might help children to acquire design and writing skills, but also fosters dialogue over children's and story's ethics. The educator/designer/researcher has a role of facilitator in order to assist them through the process.

Key Words: Children, design, education, ethics, future, identity, learning, making, narrative, story-making

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1. Introduction

In this paper I will discuss issues regarding the role of story making as a form of social reflection, the idea of (re) authoring and (re) designing existing children stories in order to establish dialogue with the story and the role of making/designing as process and outcome. To introduce you to the

theme I will use examples from workshops and tools that I have explored or currently working on as a part of my PhD research. Those are: 'Learn through the story making' (year 9 workshop), 'The story of the lonely plaster' (book), 'Ancient Greek monsters' (year 5 workshop), 'Future fairytales' and the 'Beauties and the Beasts' workshop.

2. Story Making as Form of Social Learning

Narrative is closely linked to learning. Children stories were primarily written to educate and establish ethics and social structures.

'Myths and fairy stories both answer the eternal questions: What is the world really like? How am I to live my life in it? How can I truly be myself?'[1]

Narrative is used as a tool in teaching, as stories play an important role in children's lives. 'If children are deprived of stories, you leave them unscripted anxious stutters in their actions as in their worlds'[2]. Being an illustrator and writer I was questioning the fact that children should rely on my text and illustrations, which are based on my own experiences and ethics. This conversation is achieved by allowing children to construct their own narratives (stories that children write from the beginning or by deconstructing and reconstructing existing stories) and also (re) designing physically their medium.'Myth making curriculum is sensible because children have been practicing the technique all of their lives'[3].

Jerome's Bruner's book, 'Actual minds, Possible worlds' (1986) has helped popularize within educational research a conception of the mind that gives renewed prominence to the narrative in our ways of making sense the world and experience. [4]

Bruner's ideas were validated in the year 9 'learn through the story making workshop' I undertook. The students visited the 'Blood on Paper exhibition' at the V&A, took sketches of it and were shown my work, which was exhibited there. They were then asked to write a narrative in order to 'teach' the adults. Afterwards, we constructed and illustrated books with their stories. We can see how the world is being re-described by student's poems, according to 'Ricoeur's sense of narrative, as an open interpretive structure or model for re-description of the world.[5]

'In any account of reality we can be sure that morality or moralizing impulse is present too'. [6] Children's comments on their work reveal their social concerns and morals: *'Our inspiration was the devastation and all the damage that war has brought to the world. Through the world of poetry we expressed our feelings'. We were inspired by a clip in the V&A that someone put a bomb in a book.' 'We wanted to pass the message life is hard but don't give up'. 'Our inspiration of narrative was books and trying to convince people to read more'*. Throughout the workshop, children were encouraged to think about our society, gain design skills and learn how to cooperate with

their peers. We also get a clearer view of what they would like to change in the world of the 'grown-ups'. The question that I am currently exploring through my research is how we can enable them to question their own ideas through this process.

3. Deconstructing - Reconstructing Narratives and Authorship

In the case of reconstructing and deconstructing stories, I am exploring if existing stories can be brought back to life and being rewritten by allowing children's input.

'Contemporary art tends to abolish the ownership of forms. Anything can be used'.[7] These self-made, reconstructed stories shift the authorship from the "original" writer to the children; 'The concept of the author is never more alive than when pronounced dead'.[8] There is not only one author; the story becomes space and time specific and it is dependent on subjectivity. Children can use fiction to apply their experiences to the story, make and remake knowledge, question and apprehend the meaning of the former stories.

We live in a postproduction society. This means that everything is reproduced. Making and remaking is a constant process. **'**Integrating diverse fragments of out-of-date works into a new one (…) artists use it not to "devalorize" the work of art but to utilize it'.[9] The reconstruction of existing narratives utilizes and updates their existence according to the social and personal data. Using existing stories might have an advantage over writing a story from the beginning, because they contain ethical messages to comment on. By rewriting the story, children compare their own ideas with the messages of the story. They test their ideas through dialogue and understand/question the original story.

4. Learning From Former Stories Through Reconstructing Them

Using the idea of postproduction, I have been exploring how stories can be utilized by reconstructing their text and design. The story of the lonely plaster is a children's book that I have created, through which I set up to explore the potential for both text and illustration to be reconstructed. The aim of my exploration was to enable children to interact with the text and the design. The story goes as follows: The little plaster feels alone in a drawer full of photos. Everybody makes fun of it because it wants to be clean and sterilized; they think it is a weirdo. But when a small boy needs it, it becomes a hero!'

The reader can be part of the story by being able to write parts of it and make his/her own illustrations. The book includes a CD-ROM, which contains an application that enables the user to create his/her personal illustrations. The illustrations can then be printed on sticker paper and pasted

on the pages of the book. The book also contains a box of real plasters, on which the user can draw and create his/her own unique character to run through the book. This interactive book aims to encourage children to use their own experiences throughout the story and personalize the plot. It also aims to make children familiar with both digital tools and traditional crafts and story making.

The interactions with the text in the 'lonely plaster ' story were used only in specific parts of the text, rather than deconstructing it entirely, which might be helpful for children of a very young age. Feeling that I should work more in the story development side I used this project as basis for further development. Working more with story writing was mainly attempted in the ' Ancient Greek monster' and the Beauty and the Beast workshop.

The first workshop was to rewrite the Ancient Greek monsters' stories by placing them in the children's school environment. The workshop was undertaken in the framework of "create to learn programe" with an aim to promote learning through storytelling and making in year 5 children. Inspired by Ancient Greek Mythology, each child created his/her own version of a creature. They were then asked to think of the monster's role in ancient Greece and author a space and time specific story, placing the monsters in their school environment. It is interesting that children draw their own moral conclusions from their self-created versions of the stories. For example "all monsters were bad", "what I did not like was having Sirens as a monster because she is bad". This brings up the question, can we narrativise without moralizing? ".[10] The Ancient Greek monster's workshop is based on Greek myths. Myths are referring to a certain person, in contrast to fairytales that tells us about everyman; furthermore fairytales do not give definite answers[11] which allows children to think about the morals.Therefore, I believed that using a fairytale would be easier for children to envision themselves in the place of the character as well as create better dialogue with the morals of the story.

The workshop using a fairytale was tested with the Beauty and the Beast fairytale. The workshop was part of the big draw scheme and it was initiated as an activity in a museum titled as "future fairytales". The children, had to write their own version of Beauty and the Beast story on a card, which they created themselves, and then post it back to the original heroes of the story informing them how their story could be nowadays. This explored how the reader-author relationship can be reversed by letting the children become authors and propose their own version to the initial author. What is more, it maintained the magic of the fairy-tale.

This project was based on the idea of constructing and deconstructing fairytales according to the social circumstances. Therefore, children were asked to rewrite the 'Beauty and the Beast' story according to their own lives. Each version of a fairytale depends on the social framework

it was created in, so why not shape our own fairytales according to our own experiences? Our society is very different than the times of woods, princesses and magicians. How then can the child believe in them, or understand them? According to a web conference, children are now used to 'another' reality, for example, they Google 'Santa Claus' in Wikipedia to find out if he is a mythical person. However, even though the child lives in our modern world and is aware of what exists and what is possible to happen, he/she could still use a story as a metaphor.

Both workshops' outcomes show that these stories reflect the children's perception of today's society. In one story for example, the Beast met the Beauty in a car accident. The Beast was described as such, because he was rude. In other cases, the Beast becomes good when he stops smoking, or the Beast earns Beauty's heart by buying a BMW.

Even thought the original fairytale was serving as social propaganda (to make little girls used to the idea that that they will get married to well-off older men when they grow up, as it was the norm those days), the message that the child received was to look at the inner world of a person. Even though the money was indeed the reason that the girl would get married to the Beast, the children learned that the feeling is what counts; even if it derives of social necessity, this has nothing to do with what the child receives from the story. The Beast, by buying a BMW, won the soul of the Beauty not because of his kind heart but because of his money. This is indeed a social sign and helps us to understand about the child's morals, which have of course been shaped from the social reality; it might also help advertisers and marketers to realize that they have made a good identity for BMW. But how could the child realize the real meaning of the story?

The children will then have the opportunity to rewrite and illustrate the stories to create "the Beauty and the Beast" of today. Children have come up with a new story through reconstructing and deconstructing. At that point they will also be asked if they agree with the characters or not and how they feel about their own stories.

5. The Role of Designing Making as Process

Throughout the workshops, making /designing was used as a process to assist story making. The children were not only authors but also designers of the future Beauty and Beast story. Drawing their characters in the postcards helped them to continue their stories and at the same times writing their stories helped them to develop their illustrations.

In my own practice I find the process of making mind liberating; testing ideas in practice and leaving the hand to 'speak', is what I consider appropriate before writing. Even if I want to explore a theoretical issue, it is always helpful for me to create a diagram or a structure in space in order to

understand it. The necessity of practice in thinking and theorizing is, in my opinion, elaborately explored by Paul Carter.[12] As a designer I am always going through the whole process of going into fantasy, using making as a process to understand the design problem and ending up with a design solution. If this happens to me as a designer, is it not possible therefore it happens with children becoming designers too?

6. The Role of Designing / Making as Outcome

In the latest workshops, I am exploring the use of design, not only as a process for writing, but as also as an outcome; therefore children are asked to design the illustrations and the medium that will contain their modern fairytales. In order to design the medium of the story, they will use the " story making tool for design" application I have developed. This tool is used to explore the power of using fantasy in the design process and future making. Can writing fantasy stories before designing, inspire the children to become innovators themselves? How can this process help designers that work with the children?

The application helps the children to co-write a fantasy story about the object that will contain their future stories. Children should explain though, why this object is appropriate for their stories. They can think without technological and rational limitations, creating a fantasy scenario. They write a story about how they fantasize the object they want to design, by treating it as a living character, talking about its lifestyle clothes etc. For example a girl wrote a Beauty and Beast version in a fun fair, she then designed the story to be inside a candyfloss that you could buy from the fun fair. The candyfloss narrates the story to you and then using a mini computer that the candyfloss contains, you can write your own version of the story. Using the "story making tool for design" application the girl wrote a story about the candyfloss, this enabled her to fantasize it and design it afterwards. The program gives you the option to collaborate with others or not and also gives you questions about the object to help you construct the story. Using their stories afterwards as a starting point for design solutions, they will physically construct these objects.

Children can work in groups, which enables them to get to know each other and cooperate; they can also work in groups with designers with the term designer, I define everyone that could be involved in children's story production (e.g. graphic designers, illustrators, authors). Designers not only help them during the design process but they are also inspired by children's fantasy and making. As part of the process, each child can create its own profile and trough that, data is uploaded on a website. The idea is that eventually everyone could go into the website, post comments and be inspired by the work; this would enable cooperation with other schools and dialogue between children and designers. Research would indicate that

children's ability to handle both reality and fantasy is not uncommon and that the more disposed a child is to fantasy, the more likely they are to have better grip on reality. Applying children's innate fantasy and creativity, we can challenge the conventional perception of 'how things look'. Entering into fantasy we are able to have a better grip of reality and realize the design possibilities. Moreover, the whole process of writing and physically designing helps children to think about the ethics of the stories, understand them and question them by applying their own reflective thinking over them. Their role as designers/ authors and perhaps innovators helps their own learning and also our understanding of their needs.

Notes

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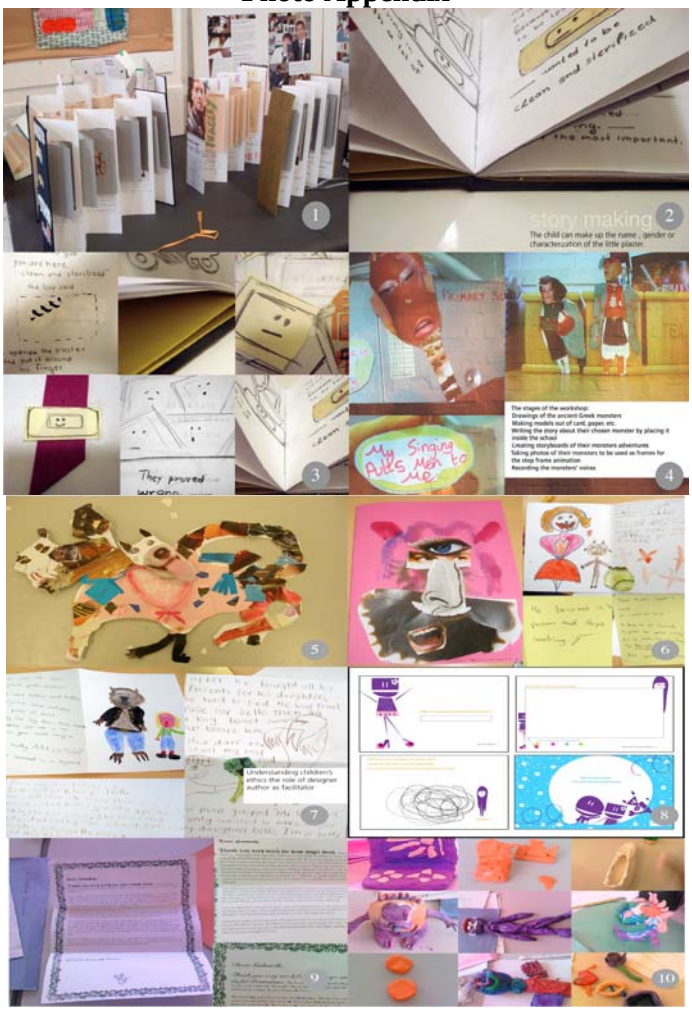
Photo Appendix



1. "Learn through story making" (year 9 workshop) **2-3.** "The story of the lonely plaster" (interactive book) **4-5.** "Ancient Greek Monsters" (animation-year 5 workshop) **6-7.** "The Future Fairytales" (Big Draw Scheme workshop) **8**. "Story-*making tool for design" (application)* **9-10.** "*Beauties and Beasts" (year 5 workshop)*

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Creative Engagement as a Tool for Social Mobilization and Development in Nigeria

Josephine Mokwunyei

Abstract
Some key reasons for low life expectancy in developing countries such as Nigeria can be attributed to basic unsatisfactory health practices, hence the need for activities that ensure improvement of quality of life for all. Having identified specific gaps in basic health practices of women and children who constitute 43% of the Nigerian population and whose concerns we must bring to the fore if we are to insure our future, this paper explores the role of creative engagement as a viable tool for social mobilization in developing societies. The methodology for the study is a combination of documentary/participatory research as well as practical realization that involves exposing and discussing researched issues and challenges with a target group of children. The practical realization involves teaching basic skills of creative dramatics through which the children become part of the problem solving process. The challenges are thereafter articulated into themes that are creatively depicted in dramatic sketches by the children and later shared with an audience of other children, women and families in the community. The result is the acquisition of valuable knowledge and skills that foster creativity while engendering cooperation, communication and improvement of enduring practices of healthy living that in turn cascades to enhance national development.

Key Words: Communication, Children's Rights, Creative Dramatics, Process, Development, HIV/AIDS, TfD (Theatre for Development)

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1. Introduction

As reported in the National Population Census life expectancy in Nigeria in 1963 was 36 years. This later increased to 48 years over the following three decades with the latest reported survey in 1991 showing a disaggregated record by gender as 52.6 years for men and 53.8 years for women. Despite all the wealth of the Nation there is worrisome evidence of poverty, poor sanitation lack of access to potable drinking water, maternal and infant mortality, poor nutrition, disease, especially HIV/AIDS and malaria particularly among the inhabitants in the rural communities. Containing the spread of HIV/AIDS for instance is a challenge of utmost national urgency with an estimated 2.6 million adult Nigerians infected, thereby placing 4th in the world after South Africa, India and Ethiopia. The

worst sufferers are women and children who constitute 43% of the population.

Despite the growing awareness of the diseases current proliferation could be attributed to some fundamental shift in behavioural practices. Therefore what is crucial as solution is to effectively affect change in behavioural practices through programmes such as stirs the thrust of this paper. The area of interest is that of developing effective strategies particularly and including more awareness building and social mobilization involving children whose future generation is under threat if nothing is done to address growing concern.

As far back as Roman times, the law treated children as parental (usually paternal) property. Within the Nigerian cultural matrix children were to be seen and not heard. The opinion of a child did not matter. In fact they were not allowed to contribute to discussions even on issues affecting them. Not until the 19th century did children begin to be recognized as requiring special attention when in 1980 a working group of Human Rights Activists began drafting a convention on the rights of the child. They drew together those existing and some new international duties and obligations into a comprehensive legal instrument binding on all nations that accept it. These key right issues for children include; rights on survival, development, protection and participation.

Key Rights

1. *Survival*- mortality and life expectancy, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, state of the health system, water and environmental sanitation, impact of cultural factors and gender bias on child survival and reproductive health and lastly poverty related threats.

2. D*evelopment*- right to literacy and education,

3. *Protection*- from exploitation, child labour and extreme cases of neglect/abuse.

4. *Participation*- deals with attitudes and practices concerning children's participation such as exclusion and seclusion

2. Theoretical Framework

Concerns about and support for the Rights of the Child has since formulation grown steadily nationally and internationally as industrialization and urbanization put traditional social fabrics under increasing and often intolerable strain. Hence, with many millions of children no longer able to count on their families for all the support they need, the Convention on the

Rights of the Child becomes the most powerful international reflection of this concern and the most determined effort yet to do something about it.

For many years, UNICEF used the triple "A" formula system of *Assessment*, *Analysis* and *Action*, to plan appropriate child friendly communication programmes in this regard based on the hypothesis that effective sharing of communication leads to effective learning. This has been expanded to ACADA (*Assessment; Communications*; *Analysis Programme Design* and *Action*) and more recently Interpersonal Communication (IC) and Theatre for Development (TfD). Suffice it to explain in a nut shell here that TfD is an interactive/participatory Theatre for collective assessment and resolution of societal problems of development.

In 1998 a collaborative research project with specialists in Theatre Arts Departments was initiated by UNICEF through a national workshop on the theme "Theatre for Development within the particular context of Child Survival, Development, Protection and Participation" (CSDPP[1]).

> In looking at theatre for the attainment of Rights, this collective action and willingness to have a "say", a Right to an opinion that is taken into account, is a fundamental way of acknowledging the Rights of the Child …to participate, as outlined in Article 14 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It states that each child has a right to express their views, obtain information, and make ideas and /or information known regardless of frontiers. Theatre allows everybody, old and young, boys and girls, to participate.

The documentation of a three day follow-up workshop programme organized in Agbor by Delta State Ministry of Information in collaboration with UNICEF is very useful for illustrating the exercise of the right of the child to participate in developmental issues concerning children. One of the strategies that worked is as in this case the creatively engagement of target groups of children from the affected population, for the amelioration of identified developmental issues through TfD.

The influence and transmission of information and knowledge in the world today is dependent on the features of its communication dynamics. This involves the shearing of ideas, skills and experiences in a convivial environment. It is thus a process of social interaction through messages; the whole idea being to give children a voice and the opportunity to participate.

The whole concept of communication therefore consists of local knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws and other capabilities and habits exhibited by members in their common experience and sharing of life. Following the established methodology of "Theatre for Development", systematically gathered information on the theme (data) is used to promote

the practice of positive behaviour by the participants in order to achieve expected results.

3. Methodology

This study is based on a practical experience of participatory research and practical realization through creative dramatics- synonymous with TfD but a preferred terminology for theatre involving children in which the process is more important than the end drama production and in which children have a say in what to do and how to do it. Since the recommended venue for this strategy is casual, the creative part of this particular programme being reported on was moved to a more relaxed location out-doors- under a canopy of trees that provided natural ventilation and shade from the hot African sun.

Also, the setting, props and costume as for TfD are improvised where absolutely necessary, otherwise the emphasis is more focussed on the creative ingenuity of the process.

The group is split in three to address various issues through different presentations in full view of a simulated audience of the entire group of children and resource persons who stood "in locum parentis[2]". In the style of development theatre a post mortem of the presentation is made with questions and answers from either side that are reflected in the next session[3].

Workshop Programme

Theme**:** The use of TFD around 10 KHHP[4], AI[5] prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

Aim**:** The aim of the workshop is to teach the children theatre techniques and the craft of acting as an effective method for persuasive and credible communication.

Purpose: The purpose of the workshop is for children from 6 focus communities in Nigeria to acquire knowledge and skills to dramatize health issues in their localities.

Participants: Children from six UNICEF focus communities of rural towns and villages between the school age[6] of 12 - 18

Content

*Introduction to playwriting and performance
*Building a character and basic model making techniques
*Fundamentals of dynamic movement for the stage/creative dramatics

Programme

Day 1: Arrival and registration formalities

Day 2: a) Seminar presentations by resource persons on identified health issues and challenges on the theme. (17/12/08)

b) Teaching of basic techniques for acquisition of skills for interpersonal communication. The introduction was carried out with utmost care not to loose the interest of the participants (17/12/08)

Day 3: a) Interactive session and group assignments to ensure that the children grasped enough information as the basis for the creative sessions that followed. (18/12/08)

b) Practical realization and dramatization (18/12/08)

Creative Engagement

Guided by qualified resource persons, specific issues/challenges and problems were identified and articulated into sub-themes which were creatively fleshed out by the children themselves into ideas, workable plots and storylines, using familiar language and idioms from their respective locations. From these ideas creative scenarios emerged with accurate messages which the children had apparently clearly garnered from the initial seminars (children's sample stories in appendix). It is upon such story lines containing specific messages and attitudinal influence that the practical realization and dramatization is couched.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The observation before the creative sessions is that at the beginning the children were shy, timid and reserved. By the end of the workshop the children were better informed and more interactive. They were able to create short stories on the themes from which a selection was collectively made for rehearsal and performance.

It is amazing to find that the seminars and preliminary sessions were well understood by children. The resultant effect is the acquisition of valuable information and knowledge of prevalent health issues as well as skills for communicating solution to target communities by participants. In other words they had become equipped to become part of the problem solving agenda as agents of social mobilization and national development. The implication is that the acceptance of the host communities who are the end users is enhanced because the agents of information and societal coercion

are also members of their community who though children can now be seen and heard.

Whereas the creative engagement which is the primary interest of this paper was assured, the result of the ripple effect on the target communities is however a matter for further study. A follow-up is therefore recommended to evaluate the effect of the strategy on the larger target population reflected in the plots for which the messages are addressed for impact.

Notes

[1] CSDPP is an acronym for Child Survival, Development, Protection and Participation.
[2] Standing in for the parents or more appropriately for the community
[3] The process involves a series of modified sessions according to the collective reasoning and involvement each new session reflecting suggestions adopted as appropriate to address and portray intentions.
[4] KHHP stands for key house hold practices
[5] AI stands for Avian Influenza
[6] While expected secondary school (high school) age ranges between 12 and 18 in Nigeria, the real age of school children depends on their parental background and opportunity. While the children of privileged middle and upper classes enrol as early as 9 years, children of average and low class enrol later (whenever their parents are able to save up enough to pay school fees). For this reason the secondary school age may be up to early 20s.

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Storycomposing: An Interactive and Creative Way to Express One's Own Musical Inventions

Hanna Hakomäki

Abstract
Storycomposing is a new model of musical way of interaction. It provides an opportunity to express feelings and experiences that have significance for individuals. No musical talent or prior studies of music are needed. Storycomposing is suitable for people of all ages from 3 upwards and also for people with learning disabilities and special needs. What distinguishes Storycomposing from other music improvisation/music therapy models is the manner in which notation can be used to fix the improvised musical creations of pupils/clients so that the material can be revisited and performed to selected groups of people.
My experience as a music therapist rises from my training as a piano teacher and from my work with people with developmental disabilities. The idea of Storycomposing rose up while I was working with children under school age in a Finnish day nursery. After that I have developed Storycomposing through practical work with different kinds of groups: small children, piano pupils, pupils with special needs, children and adults with learning disabilities and in music therapy with children and adolescents and their families. I introduce Storycomposing as a new music therapy model and its practice in my masters thesis which was completed at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland 2005.
The latest storycomposers come from the field of wellbeing at work and from a group of elderly people suffering from dementia. Many other professionals from the fields of child nursery, music education and music therapy have taken their training to use this method. The idea of this method connects with child centred research and has to deal with the knowledge children have constructed. Through this method children can create the culture of their own and the wisdom of children has helped to create the therapeutic method which can be used with people of all ages.

Key Words: Children, creativity, Figurenotes, music education, music therapy, research with children, special music education, Storycomposing, Storycrafting.

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1. Music Education in Finland with Children Under School Age

In Finland is a uniquely wide music school system which consists of music institutes and conservatories starting with music playschools. In music

playschools rich and goal-oriented early-age music education is provided. The aim is to support the child's holistic development, build up a good relation to music and create possibilities for probable future studies in music. This all can start in baby music playschools in age groups from 3 months till the school age which is 7 years in Finland.

This kind of systematic playschool system is quite unique. In Finnish music playschools children learn basic musical skills and the lessons support the children's cognitive, emotional, motor, and social development.[1] Lessons usually take place once a week in the evening or afternoon and last 30 to 90 minutes. They do not include any basic child care. Many Finnish music playschools receive significant financial aid from government and also municipal aid. There are also private music playschools and ones that are maintained by different organisations and congregations. In spite of that, parents still have to pay if their children take part in music playschool education.

The Ministry of Education directs Finnish educational and cultural policy.[2] It provides an extracurricular art education for children and young people with music, art, dance, arts and crafts and other institutes. Basic education in the arts is goal-oriented, progressing from one level to other. It teaches children skills in self-expression and capabilities needed for vocational, polytechnic and university education in their chosen art form. Participation is voluntary and the education providers may charge moderate fees.

Parents choose if they want to use music playschool services as well as they choose if they want to use day care services.[3] About half of the parents choose to have day care services for their children. Finnish early childhood education and care system includes various systems and possibilities to arrange family affairs, for example municipal day care centre, family day care or private child care allowance. Children permanently living in Finland have the right to participate in voluntary pre-primary education during the year preceding compulsory schooling. Nearly all 6-year-olds do so. Pre-primary education is free.

There is the National Curriculum on Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Finland which gives the main principles and guidelines for the service for children from 1 to 6 years, and the family.[4] The principal target of ECEC is to promote the child's well-being and to ensure the best possible conditions for growth, learning and development. For this ECEC provides a national tool for guiding early childhood education and care. Finnish day care includes both education and care and the staffs are also multidisciplinary. There can also be music education in day care services.

Basic education in the arts is guided in Finland by Finnish law.[5] It is goal-oriented education primarily given to children and young people and it progresses from one level to another. In music education it is possible to

make reasonable adjustments to curriculum and teaching methods for pupils with special needs. Education has still goals in music but it is progressing from pupil's own level to another. Experiencing with music is then one of the main goals.

2. Music Education Project with Therapeutic Elements

After 9 years of experience as a piano teacher and a music therapist I started as a piano teacher in a day care centre in Espoo, Finland in autumn 1999. Tanja Kyllönen followed the lessons for a year for her music play school teacher studies.[6] The music lessons were part of a music education project that included therapeutic elements. Children were in groups of two to three and also children with special needs participated to this project. The lessons lasted 20 minutes and took place once a week. In the beginning of the project the activity was conventional adult guided situation. I did choose the music and decided the instruments that were used. I was doing a lot of preparing for the lessons a day before I came to work with the children. The schedule for the activity was following the guidelines giving by the ordinary timetable of the day care centre in question. The project I was working with was to test and develop the possibilities of notation system called Figurenotes with children under school-age and especially when playing the piano.

Figurenotes is a notation system developed by a Finnish music therapist Kaarlo Uusitalo.[7] It is based on colours and figures and music can be notated in its diversity. The original purpose of this system was to help people with developmental disabilities to learn systematically to play instruments and to help them benefit from the music therapy. Figurenotes has made it possible for many new groups of people to take music lessons and to develop their musical skills. In Finland this notation system is used in music schools which are specially planned for individuals with different kinds of special needs, in music therapy, in schools and with everyone who wants to learn to play easily. The knowledge of the system has spread abroad as well.

When using Figurenotes each note has a different colour[8]: C is always red, D is brown, E is grey, F is blue, G is black, A is yellow and H or B is green. The shape of the figure determines the octave. There are four octaves in Figurenotes. Notes in Great Octave are indicated with crosses, in Small Octave with squares, in One-Line Octave with circles and in Two-Line Octaves with triangles. You put this kind of stickers on your instrument to the right places. The length of the figure in notation indicates the length of the note. Sharps and flats are indicated by arrows. Accompaniment chords are coloured according to the root note. Figurenotes are suitable for keyboards, drums, guitar, bass, accordion, violin, cello and many melodic percussion instruments.

First my project was following the earlier projects on Figurenotes in the same day care unit. [9] According to the reports of those projects the music

making had been based on group activities and the target had been to learn the basic knowledge of music. During the lessons there had also been place for individual expressions and improvisations. The music activities were planned and guided by the teachers and the lessons had a same structure every time. The main instruments were percussions and xylophones. According to the reports the following year children were learning to read the music with Figurenotes and they were practising to use both hands at the same time and in turns.

3. Developing Together with Children

My first winter in that child care centre was time of trials and errors. In the beginning of my project the lessons were like music playschool lessons in a small group. One child at the time was playing the piano and others were playing percussion instruments and we all were playing and singing. Instead of strict piano teaching I wanted to give time for playing and fun in music making. But children were not always so very fascinated about the music I had chosen and sometimes I had to discipline the children's behaviour more than I found comfortable.

In the spring I got an idea to give every child a piano lesson of their own, one by one. That one day I had taken with me traditional piano pieces written with Figurenotes and I started the lessons. Quite soon I found out that children were not very interested in playing those pieces and that kind of piano lessons were not reasonable either.

Then 3-year-old Tessa came to her lesson and to guide me.[10] She came to that room and said immediately: "I would really like to play those stars at the piano". She meant those notes which are marked with crosses in Figurenotes - they are Great Octave notes. She played those notes and I asked her, do they sound like stars. Tessa said:" No, they sound like a wolf". And then she played and sung a song of wolf:" A wolf was howling so, auu, watching the moon that glows, auu." I wrote the piece down with Figurenotes so that Tessa could play it again and I understood that now happened something remarkable. After that I gave the same opportunity to other children as well and they created many more songs of their own. That day was 17th of April 2000.

First I was a bit astonished in front of the children's wish to play the songs they named and I didn't know. Quite soon when I heard the same request from different children - they want to play the piece of their own - I did understand. Children did change my way of understanding. I was ready for child-led activity. This project was not a research project in the beginning. But it became a child-led development and research project and the result of it was a new musical activity called Storycomposing.

According to Delgado youth-led research has five beliefs.[11] He has said that young people have abilities for developing and implementing a

research project. They bring to a project a unique perspective or voice that you can not find by questioning. Their participation in the research is essential. Young people can transfer the knowledge and skills they achieve through active participation in a research project to other fields of their lives. They can also help broaden and revitalize old-fashioned and narrow-minded activities. All this happened in Storycomposing project.

I describe the project in my thesis.[12] After the significant day, April 17, 2000, all the music I was using in that day care centre with children was made by them. I found out that children really could and wanted to create their own musical stories. Children were happy, interested, motivated, good at cooperation and proud of their works. I started to call the pieces "storycompositions."

All children could participate equally in Storycomposing in spite of their special needs. Shy and quiet children became brave and were easily encouraged to participate. Children with concentration difficulties were able to concentrate much better. Children could cooperate very well together, even the youngest ones. Adults found new aptitudes and areas of interest in the children and all children learnt to express themselves creatively. This kind of working method made children active participants in their music lessons and the benefits for children's behaviors were so enormous that I decided to try this method with music therapy clients as well - with good consequences.

An adult was capable to follow children's ideas and suggestions and they found together something new and unique. After the day of the birth of the Storycomposing idea I worked for two more years in that day care centre with this Storycomposing method. During that time I wrote down approximately one hundred storycompositions made by children. The pieces were all unique in the genres of songs, musical stories, compositions and musical games.

4. Principles of Storycomposing®

Storycomposing is a working method which is already in use on different fields: in day care, with people with developmental disabilities, in music education, in music therapy and when using the therapeutic elements of music with people of different ages. In Finland there are about hundred professionals who have been trained to use this method.[13] The training in Storycomposing, which I have established, has been running from the year 2006. Storycomposing basics course, 2 ECTS, takes about three months and a second level course, 10 ECTS, takes a whole year. A study book in Storycomposing, Tarinasäveltämisen taito, was published in Finnish in 2007 and it will be available in English as well.[14]

Storycomposing can be applied for many purposes. In my ongoing PhD research I'm forming the theory for Storycomposing.

There are four elements that always exist when talking about Storycomposing. These principles are: 1. Musical expression, 2. Interaction, 3. Notation, 4. A concert.

1. Storycomposing provides the opportunity to express one's ideas, thoughts, matters and experiences in a musical way. When you are Storycomposing you don't need any musical talents or prior studies in music and a piece may appear without supervising or teaching.
2. There is always interaction in Storycomposing. There is a storycomposer and a co-storycomposer who is listening and writing the piece down. A storycomposition can be for example a song, a composition, a play or a musical story.
3. The storycomposition is always written down. In Storycomposing you use a form of notation with which the storycomposer can play the piece again. It can be Figurenotes, traditional notation, drawings or photos. A storycomposition is important in a cultural way, as educational material and as material for process in music therapy.
4. Storycomposing always includes a concert. It is an event where a storycomposition is played to significant others. The concert can take place for instance in a day care unit, in a music school, at home, in therapy process or in a hospital. The audience can be family members, friends, a peer group, a teacher or a therapist.[15]

When I found out the idea for making music with children based on their few note melodies and some words I was a bit confused. Is this kind of working method wise enough? Does anyone believe children have made these pieces themselves? Why am I doing this? The last question was easiest to answer. Children were extremely motivated working this way. They were so happy and proud of their storycompositions. They could co-operate perfectly with each others. Both the shyest children and the most lively ones did concentrate on Storycomposing. Children with developmentally disabilities and special needs could participate equally. And through the benefits of this activity adults found new strength to encourage children in their other activities as well.

Answers for my many other questions I found when I did get to know a Storycrafting method.[16] This is a Finnish social innovation based on a premise that we all have something say. Through this method it is possible to anyone to put own thoughts into words in a story, formed together with an engaged listener. Storycrafting method was developed by a psychologist

Monika Riihelä together with children while working in a school in the 1980s.

In Storycrafting method the listener needs only a pen and a paper and these words to encourage a becoming narrator to express him/herself: "Tell a story that you want. I will write it down just as you will tell it. When the story is ready I will read it aloud. And then if you want you can correct or make any changes." [17] This instruction fits very well together with the principles of Storycomposing. No questions, no guidance, no teaching, no evaluation. This makes both of these methods suitable for all kinds of people, including individuals with special needs, developmental disabilities and almost any kind of disabilities.

The theory of Storycrafting method has been developed over many years. In her own PhD research the developer Monika Riihelä wanted to find out how professionals deal with children's questions and what are the goals and purposes of them in their interaction with children[18]. Riihelä had found out in her work as a school psychologist that children's own thoughts are easily left in the shadow of professional questions and tests of adults. In her research Riihelä was searching alternative ways of interaction to individual-centred problem solving and was inquiring after the obstacles and possibilities of schools to developing group learning; on the other hand she wanted to enhance every child's own thinking and learning by finding new ways to introduce the subject they were learning.

The technique of Storycrafting is easily adapted by the professionals who want to find new ways for interaction with children. From the theoretical point of view Storycomposing and Storycrafting are quite similar to each others. Storycrafting method has been in use for many years and the development of the method has been continuing in many projects. [19] One of the main projects was the Storyride project which began in Finland in Autumn 1995, organized by The National Institute for Health and Welfare.

When Storycrafting is a continuing activity it brings out its best efforts. Through children's narrative culture children and adults as well have been able to learn in a new way. According to Riihelä[20] the method appears to suit everybody: shy children are encouraged to tell their own stories, coltish children found their own way to express themselves through their stories, linguistically disabled children were able to tell their stories as they speak with missing letters or corrected if they wanted so. The effects of Storycomposing have been very similar to effects of Storycrafting method.

5. The Benefits of Storycomposing

Storycomposing is a new way of teaching, also pupils with special needs. It is a way to teach playing an instrument and music and also a way to improve cognitive skills. It is an opportunity to learn to know and to give names to one's thoughts and feelings. When storycomposing takes place in a

group, it is a way to interact with other people and it can improve collaboration skills. With creative musical expression, a storycomposer can rule his/her own experiences and when playing with others, a storycomposer gets an experience of him/herself as in a relationship with other people and his/her environment.

Storycomposing improves eye-to-hand cooperation and teaches one to follow a written text. Storycomposing strengthens the understanding of what you have heard and seen. A clear picture of notes helps to see shapes and to distinguish similarities and differences. One can also practice social skills when storycomposing together: how to discuss matters, how to wait for one's turn, how to be flexible, and how to be responsible. By composing stories, children can create visible and audible shapes and forms to their feelings and thoughts. Concrete and multi-sensory works can make one's experiences more clear. When the work is shared with others, it gives an opportunity to interact with other people in a world of possibilities created by music.

Storycomposing includes playing and singing, which are also physical actions. While Storycomposing, individuals, including those with special needs, can get experiences that influence their whole body and physical memory. Playing an instrument is a motivating way to practise to control your whole body or just some parts of it. Everyone can choose the most suitable way to use one's own talent. When acting in a meaningful and tolerant way, one can also test the limits of one's own abilities and can perhaps be able to develop them further.

Storycomposing gives the teacher unique opportunity to learn how a pupil learns and thinks. The pupils with special needs, and also the pupils with special talents, develop creative answers to the problems. It is the responsibility of the teacher to support, to guide, and act as a supervisor to the pupils. Learning results improve when the teaching method affects the pupil's life. First of all, every pupil can feel accepted as he/ she is.

The development of Storycomposing started in a project that was about to explore the possibilities of Figurenotes with children under school-age, also with children with special needs, and especially when playing the piano. By now Storycomposing has become one of the music therapy methods. [21] It is used in Finland especially with children in different kinds of rehabilitation and treatment processes. Even just in few sessions it is possible to achieve individual goals or goals for group behaviour, a family or a peer group. When working like this Storycomposing is normally as a part of a larger rehabilitation process. The method is suitable for long music psychotherapy processes as well. The principles of the method make it possible in a unique way to combine the therapy process of a child and his/her family. In a concert of Storycomposing it is possible to share feelings and discuss in a musical way. This can make it possible to express things

which are difficult or don't have any other means of expression. The method is suitable also with children with special needs and makes psychotherapeutic processes possible when needed.

Storycomposing has made it possible for adults who have not been trained in music to express themselves in a totally new way - musically. It has opened up new kind of creativity and helped for example processes in supervision at working places. For elderly people suffering from dementia Storycomposing has made it possible to learn something new, to play an instrument and compose. Through storycompositions elderly people have been able to share memories and thoughts with their significant others in meaningful ways. The method creates a place for music and meeting in their community of care.

The Finnish Medical Society Duodecim conferred the Culture Award 2008 on me for developing the Storycomposing method. The Award is granted to a person or a team, who has remarkably promoted understanding of the connection between health, sickness and culture in the society.

Notes

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[21] Hakomäki, *Tarinasäveltäminen – uusi musiikkiterapian malli ja käytännöt*, pp. 52-57.

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Festival and Festival Outreach: A Model for Children's Creative Engagement

Rebecca Bartlett

Abstract
This paper explores the role that Arts Festival progammes and Festival outreach activity in schools and with parents plays in the creative engagement experienced by children exposed to quality artistic experience. Firstly: how do arts Festivals, specially designed for children, nurture a culture of creativity and secondly how do they foster an understanding of that culture in an out–of-the-school context? Investigative considerations of the distinctive pedagogy that arts education requires have moved us far beyond simple definitions of the dynamic of the relationship between teacher and student, student and peers and student and the art from. It is my contention that performance (with the young person both as audience and as workshop participant) extends that understanding even further. That quality performance, framed (and this is crucial) within a carefully designed and worked context, will extend not just that understanding but the depth of the arts event experience as a sustainable aesthetic encounter for the young audience. This paper provides examples of how Festival Outreach programmes then bring artist, teacher and child, or artist, parent and child together in the transference of that experience of theatre, dance, music, visual arts or exhibition, back into the classroom and beyond that into the ordinary lives of young people. It sets a number of practical case study experiences within a theoretical context. It utilises expertise gained: as teacher, artistic director and as educational consultant defining policy and strategy for national and regional agencies in their arts programmes for children and young people. This paper also draws on my role as Chairperson of *Baboró*, [1] Ireland's leading arts Festival for children as well as my work as a professional playwright.

Key Words: arts, children, creativity, culture.

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1 Nurturing A Culture of Creativity

In the T2 supplement of the London *Times* January 29th 2006 actress Juliet Stevenson described an experience she had as a six-year old child. She was standing halfway down the stairs of her home in Malta when she heard a piece of music being played in a room below. This piece of music brought this six year old child to a standstill. She described the experience thus:

> The melody rises and falls, sings out, reaches up, drops away. It is filling me up, I can't seem to move, nothing must happen to stop it. An immense sadness is in the music, but I don't want to cry. I want to be it. I am the music in some way and it is me.
> Nothing I have heard before has affected me as this does. My heart is suddenly full of musts, must hear it again, must know what it is, must learn to play it myself.

Later Ms Stevenson learned that this piece of music is the slow movement of Mozart's clarinet concerto in A. Reflecting back on this experience now after forty years she tries to look for what had happened in those moments:

> That first encounter with the clarinet concerto has come to exist in my memory as a quantum leap, one of those moments that occur sporadically in childhood and adolescence when something huge is suddenly revealed or understood or some profound connection made.
>
> But what was yielded up by the adagio to my six-year-old self? What could have happened to me in my contented and well-loved existence that I should know of such things? Probably nothing of that scale, but would it be misguided to think that it is experience alone that gives birth to feeling? Perhaps we are born with all passions already within us and then wait for life to deliver the events that will unleash them.
>
> In that case the melancholy expressed in the slow movement may have opened a door, and intuitive knowledge was allowed to slip in, find its place. From working with words I know that rhythm has meaning far beyond the reach of literal sense. Maybe music speaks to us not of what we know, but of what we will know. At 6, in Mozart, I recognized something I hadn't yet met. The landscape in the music offering a glimpse of horizons not yet seen, but intuitively reached for.

Here so eloquently described is the quality artistic and imaginative experience: a classic creative engagement. Juliet Stevenson as a child of six experiences the wonder of the music, the opening up of sensory and

emotional awareness. She struggled to create an image around the instrument because at six she did not know the clarinet. What she didn't struggle with, was the sound it made and as young as she was, was moved by it. She says it "opened a door" and "intuitive knowledge" was allowed to slip in.

Perhaps we have all had these moments, and some of us recognise them for what they are and others never even think of them or are never given the opportunity to recognise their significance. Arts Festivals offer opportunities for children and the adults they are with on a daily basis, to share in the same creative and imaginative stimulus. They actively encourage the adults sharing those opportunities to act as senders and receivers of the children's responses, affirming, highlighting, empathizing and interpreting what the children are learning and transposing that back into the daily environments of home, school and play space. Thus creative engagement for an organization like Baboró Arts Festival for Children, is the visual, sensory, emotional and intellectual connection which children and young people make when exposed to quality artistic experience. But how do you make that happen?

Baboró grew out of the need to provide artistic work of quality and excellence specifically for children. From the beginning its Founder Director[2] and her board recognised the need not just to bring the best international companies to Ireland but to find opportunities to learn from them by exposing local artists to the skills and artistic practice of the individuals who lead and inspire those companies. They sought to provide those local artists with opportunities to interrogate that work and to articulate and negotiate the challenges they face in Ireland, in making work for and with children. It was important too, they recognised, to expose local teachers to the learning opportunities offered by inviting these artists into their schools to work with their children.

While the situation in Ireland today is somewhat different (though I would have to say still far from perfect), in the past, children's work struggled to compete with adult arts forms. There was a failure to recognise that children are in many ways a more exacting audience, sophisticated receptors who understand that the world is "an astonishing, scary and magical place"[3] and who are entitled to expect work which is critically acclaimed and equally funded.

So for Baboró in those early days, the need to mentor and to nurture those local artists through such intercultural and creative development quickly became evident. This mentoring and nurturing work has undoubtedly provided its own rewards. The Festival now has a team of artists creatively and imaginatively equipped to work for, and with, children. What is significant is their enthusiasm to do so. More significant still is the recognition these practitioners are giving to the facts that work for and with children has inspired them to develop their own artistic practice in new ways.

2. Fostering An Understanding

As Stevenson has recognized it: it is the child's capacity to be open to "The landscape in the music offering a glimpse of horizons not yet seen, but intuitively reached for". In the case of a child as audience member at a Festival production, we constantly ask ourselves of what is that landscape composed? How is the child accessing that landscape? And what might you expect the child to carry away and be able to transpose into other areas of his/her life?

We can sometimes answer this in terms of a child's newly developed vocabulary, both verbal and physical; we can answer it in terms of simple story-lines and the children's capacity later to re-invent for themselves, through play, incidents or characters they have encountered and enjoyed; we can answer it in terms of the child's ability to play the role of critic and engage in discussion as to his/her own opinions of the production seen or workshops in which they have participated; such discussion demonstrates the empowering nature of a Festival event to the children who are its audience.

In addition, Baboró's unique Artistic Team (lead and mentored by the Festival's Programme Director Lali Morris) has created an educational methodology based initially on the Lincoln Center Institute'sTechniques.[4] This is a team that has over the last number of years, generated its own particular working practices and provided developmental ideology which connects the Festival directly with the child's personal aesthetic. "I am the music in some way and it is me."

3. A 'Fairy Tale For Baboró' A Study In Active Creative Engagement

A case study of a Festival project best illustrates this methodology: Through negotiated partnerships with schools and arts facilitators, Baboró's Artistic Team expored workshop methods using artist/teacher teams and mixed media approach to aesthetic education. The theme for this exploration was fairy tales. Children were encouraged to explore the processes of storymaking and introduced to the idea of developing their own stories through different art forms.

Through these workshops Baboró expected the expansion of young people's aesthetic understanding to cross over into their encounters with Baboró's Festival, performance and visual arts programming, and to inform their powers of reflective consideration and critical thinking.

It was intended that the results/materials collected as well as the learning gained from workshops would be the basis for creating a number of related products: first, more detailed teachers' resource packs to accompany Festival perfromances and second, a Festival commission where the stimulus

material, including stories, poems and art work produced by the children would inform and inspire the creative work for a piece of art which it was anticipated would be part of the next Baboró Festival.

Four artists, two drama and two visual, worked on the Fairy Tale for Baboró Project from June 2005 when each class in each school had a 'storyday' (allowing children to construct their own characters, their own situations and plotlines) through September 2005 when there were weekly workshops provided by each of the artisits.

The photographic, video (of drama work) and paper work (drawings, poems) produced by the children during this project then became the stimulus for a commission for the following year's Festival. The artisitc material was put on display in the Festival offices and through the Festival website, artists were invited to view the work and offer their ideas for an artistic commission which would both validate the work of the children and be inspired by it.

"Iontas"[5] a sculpture in glass and stone was created by artist Ceara Conway and sculptor Mick Wilkinson and was unveiled in Oct 2008. The glass plates in the stone sculpture carry representations of the children's own work. So successful has this creative project been that another Baboró residencey has taken place in a local school by professional Artist Sharon Lynch. She took as her starting point a film installation entitled Waves (created by professional Artist Marie Jo Lafontaine) on exhibition in Galway Arts Centre and two other pieces from the Collection of IMMA, The Irish Museum of Modern Art. Ms Lynch's children's workshop explorations were designed around the theme "What is Art?" The culmination of the residency was an exhibition of the children's work in response to Waves.

"Athas"[6] a second sculpture is being created, again using the children's exhibited work as stimulus. Once more the use of the children's work as inspiration is affirming the veracity of their artistic responses and providing the artisit with a new depth and breadth of their own work.

It is innovative projects like this, involving artist, school, child, artistic organisation and in the later case also a National Cultural Institution (The Irish Museum for Modern Art) and a local authority[7], that allow Baboró to hold the position of leading arts Festival for children in Ireland. It is projects such as these which bring the outreach work of the Festival full circle. Artist has dialogue with teacher. Artist meets and has conversation with the children. Artist sources suitable stimulus material. Artist chooses a theme and designs workshops. Children participate in the workshops. Children engage in and develop their own pieces of artistc work. An exhibition gives that work imaginative and artistc validation. This public accreditation of the work raises the individual child's self esteem and the group's sense of creative empowerment. The creation of a piece of public art by a professional artist, stimulated and inspired by the children's creations,

brings the dynamic and the breadth of such a project physically and sustainably into the public arena.

Let us go back at this point to Juliet Stevenson's story:

> Listening to it now more than 40 years later I try to look for what happened. That first encounter with the clarinet concerto has come to exist in my memory as a quantum leap, one of those moments that occur sporadically in childhood and adolescence when something huge is suddenly revealed or understood or some profound connection made.

If what Ms Stevenson claims here is true, and I believe that it is, then if we want to work successfully with children and the arts; if, as parents or teachers, we want (or need) to be enablers of those experiences; then there is a responsibility on us to be open to the ways in which our own emotional and experiential memory connects with those moments in time and place where children may find themselves. There is a need to consciously seek out those moments which provide us with the stimulus, sensual or otherwise, which enable us to really empathise with our children in those magic moments when for them, something new happens. When there occurs: "A combination of reason feeling, intuition and sensory activity on an individual or a collective basis.[8]

4. Out of that Childhood Country

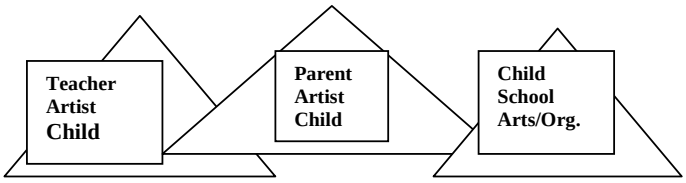
So a commitment to best practice in outreach work has necessitated the active and informed participation not just of artists and teachers but also of parents. They already book for and bring their children to Festival events but Baboró has begun to work towards and to expect a more informed approach to that participation.

In furtherance of that particular objective, Baboró ran an event called "Out Of That Childhood Country". Aimed at parents, this was intended to allow them to witness the evocation of the memories of personalities well known to them (a comedian, an actress, a novelist a scriptwriter and a children's author).

These four well-known artists were interviewed about their first memories and experiences of the arts in the expectation that such memories would evoke conversation and response in the audience of parents. One of the panel described how her father would of a Sunday night act out, in the kitchen of their very rural west of Ireland home, key scenes in the film he and his wife had been to see that evening in the local cinema. She talked about the excitement of seeing her father take on the persona of someone else, his

voice, gestures, his way of walking, all eliciting in his children the thrill of live performance. The sheriff come to warn them against the no good dude who had just ridden into town or the funny guy who walks like a wobbly clown and smokes a cigar and wants them all to go to the opera. Here again it is the connectedness that is important; the then child, now parent, recognizing in his /her life one of those magic moments of creative engagement and is given the opportunity to reflect on that experience and to store up some of the learning from it. So, subsequent to this event, Baboró initiated a series of workshops for parents and children where a facilitator explored practical suggestions for hands-on experience of designing creative play sessions and thus providing ways to translate those parents' own learning into active creative partnerships with their children.

At this point in time then, this Festival and its team have developed a series of mutual learning triangles: Teacher, Artist, Child working in a school environment. Parent, Artist, Child working in Festival outreach workshops; and finally the child, his school and the arts organization (the Festival) the latter aiming to design projects around the creative and aesthetic appetite of the child and the capacity of the school to facilitate creative and imaginative exploration.



Speaking at a UNESCO Conference On Arts Education in 2007 Antonio Damasio[9] (Portuguese cognitive scientist) spoke of the dual ways of brain processing, fast (information exchange multitasking etc) and slow (emotional and reflective).

Reflecting on Mr Damasio's paper Eric Booth[10] commented: "so his major point was that the arts are the optimum place where young people can learn to balance and understand their inner lives to create citizens who can make a better world." Perhaps at this point we could also add with some confidence, that the arts are also a conduit for children's understanding of their own emotional lives.

In summarizing The Role Of Festival And Festival Outreach As A Model For Children's Creative Engagement, Festival must primarily act as an enabler of quality artistic experiences so that it can:

- Encourage through outreach work in schools, that unique combination of individual intelligence with social and creative interaction.
- Work with parents to bring an awareness of how their child's creative engagement can be sustained beyond the artistic event itself
- Constantly explore and document the understandings of how that combination occurs when young people are exposed to different art forms within the Festival environment and to use that understanding in the commissioning of new work.
- Develop critical thinking in the children themselves.
-Find ways to validate the creative and imaginative work of children through outreach activity and bring quality and excellence to any exposition of the children's own work.

5. In Conclusion

Let me conclude as I began with actress Juliet Stevenson:

> I was six years old and standing halfway down the stairs of our house in Malta. A piece of music seeping from behind a closed door has brought me to a standstill. A melody of extraordinary beauty and poignancy is filling the cool stone hallway. The melody rises and falls, sings out, reaches up, drops away. It is filling me up, I can't seem to move, nothing must happen to stop it. An immense sadness is in the music, but I don't want to cry. I want to be it. I am the music in some way and it is me.

It is a worthy objective for us all to look for the re-creation of such experiences for our young people

Notes

[1] Baboró's Mission Statement: To Inspire Children to Engage With the World Through Their Experience of the Arts
http://www.baboro.ie/

[2] Patricia Forde: Author, Playwright and Founder of Baboró International Arts Festival for Children.

[3] Lyn Gardiner: Critical Perspective, published in "Theatre First" Autumn Issue 1998.

[4] Lincoln Centre Institute for the Arts in Education: www.lcinstitute.org/wps/myportal/!ut/p/kcxml/0wcA1NLTeQ
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[6] Athas: The Irish word for joy.
[7] Galway City Council.
[8] Ciaran Benson: The Place of the Arts in Irish Education, Report of the Working party appointed by the Irish Arts Council: Ciaran Benson, Sean O' Tuama. 1979.
[9] Damasio, A. (1999). The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness. New York, New York, Harcourt.
[10] Eric Booth is on the faculty of Juilliard and The Kennedy Center, and works with arts organizations, schools, conservatories, businesses around the U.S. as teacher, consultant, program and conference designer and is one of the most frequent keynote speakers in the nation. He is also the founding editor of the Teaching Artist Journal and author of the award-winning book "The Everyday Work of Art".

Rebecca Bartlett is a regular contributor to BBC Radio 4 Drama. Her credits include "The Curragh Wrens", "Stone Memories" and "Dazzled by the Dark". Rebecca also wrote the award winning stage play "Shalom Belfast".

Culturia: Intercultural Learning by Designing Games

Timo Göttel

Abstract
According to the German PISA studies, the percentage of pupils with a migratory background in Hamburg stands currently at 34.6 %. It is assumed that this rate will continue to rise. This illustrates the vital importance of intercultural education for schools. In fact, the school curricula are urged to address intercultural education on an interdisciplinary level in all subjects. In this context, this paper proposes the use of participatory game design due to the interdisciplinary qualities entailed therein. In this way, students are enabled to invent meaningful games and stories. Moreover, it encourages the development of computer games that are not only fun to play but also introduce foreign cultures and values in a playful way.
An interview with a teacher about conventional intercultural education at schools in Hamburg is presented in order to emphasize the need for an alternative approach in intercultural learning. Following that, two case studies with pupils are described. The studies are centered on designing games that deal with intercultural contents. The graphical programming language *Scratch* was chosen to develop the games.
This paper shows how *Scratch* is an appropriate fast prototyping tool for working with kids. In addition the paper suggests why the environment can often be inappropriate in supporting the participatory design of large games. Supporting tools and approaches are therefore offered to avoid such issues.
More importantly, the case studies document the fact that students are highly motivated by game design for educational reasons. They want to be involved in designing scenarios that transport values important for their everyday life. For example, they often experience intercultural problems without having the opportunity to reflect on them in their own way. Games play an important role in the lives of students. Therefore, game design seems to be a promising method of enhancing these considerations.

Key Words: computers, intercultural learning, participatory game design, programming.

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1. Introduction

According to the German PISA studies, schools in Hamburg (Germany) have 34.6 % of pupils with a migratory background[1]. It is assumed that this rate will continue to rise. Schools are urged to address intercultural education interdisciplinarily in all subjects in their curricula.

Young people often encounter intercultural conflicts in everyday life, but are not able to reflect on them. Therefore, it appears to be important to support such reflections at schools using media that are favored by a majority of juveniles: computer and video games. Hence, game design can be a very promising way to address intercultural cross-subject education.

Unfortunately, by and large teachers seem to avoid computer games. Therefore, it would be important to support kids in the development of their own games that are exciting, amusing, and attractive as well as dealing with cultural differences that concern them.

As a common objection, it is often stated that computer games may create or emphasize gender issues, since they appear to be more appealing to boys. However, there are many girls who play games that offer opportunities for telling and experiencing stories[2].

2. Related Work

Designing with children has a multitude of aspects. It is important to find suitable approaches to game design in a short amount of time. This poses a major challenge for selecting a decent programming environment for young novices.

Letting kids themselves participate in the creation of games seems to be quite favorable[3]. The author of this statement furthermore states that kids are often trying to emulate commercial games or edutainment products. This might be disadvantageous, since these products are mainly developed by adults without involving children in the actual design process. She hopes that in the future kids will become more involved in the software development process. In addition, she stresses that youths are highly motivated to develop learning environments for other kids.

Various similar projects focus on teaching programming or abstract mathematical knowledge. It is often stated that computer games are easily accessible for kids, and therefore typical school tasks are wrapped in game design processes[4]. However, this approach could be daunting for children because it clearly is from the field of an engineering science. This might be especially inappropriate for reaching the majority of female kids.

There is a need for *User Centered Design* (*UCD*) techniques in the very beginning of game design[5]. The authors introduce a way of *UCD* in game design for senior citizens involving them *ab initio*. It led to an adapted gameplay for this target group. This should be a further motivation to let participate target groups in game design.

Yet another promising way appears to be the use of some practices of *Extreme Programming* (*XP*) for game design with kids. *XP* is widely used in professional software engineering[6]. It is based on a list of values that are apparently suitable to be used with kids. Namely, these values are: communication, respect, courage, feedback and simplicity. *XP* proposes

several practices for meeting these values in software engineering. In particular, there are four practices in *XP* which seem to be important in designing with children:

- *Pair Programming (PP)* means that software development is always done in pairs (on a shared computer). It helps software engineers to discuss the program and find appropriate solutions.
- *Standup Meetings* are held every morning to brief all team members on the actual state of affairs and the problems a pair experienced and solved in the past.
- *Informative Workspaces* are providing posters and sketches to the whole team. They are mainly used to present development processes.
- *Stories* are written to document completed and upcoming assignments. They are presented at *Informative Workspaces*.

3. Fast Prototyping Tools for Game Design

Squeak[7] is an environment that is designed for a younger audience. It is an implementation of the object-oriented programming language *Smalltalk*[8]. The idea of *Squeak* is to enable the designing of software without knowledge of conventional metaphors in programming. An introduction to *Squeak* for fast prototyping is very difficult for programming novices.

Greenfoot[9] is aiming at high school pupils. It is a framework that facilitates the creation of two-dimensional scenarios in *Java*. It provides all the basic elements of a development environment. Importance is attached to visual feedback: Objects are easily created and assigned to a two-dimensional grid. The intended use of *Greenfoot* at schools is based on the idea that teachers provide several microworlds[10] that are used in class.

Scratch[11] is based on the idea of building bricks to illustrate programming units. The user can assign programming blocks to several self-made sprites. It is very easy to share the projects via the *Scratch* website. *Scratch* is mainly utilized as a tool that enables a casual development of two-dimensional mini games. Frequently, it is offered at computer clubhouses to foster the creativity of young children[12]. *Scratch* is highly appropriate for kids who are designing their first games.

None of the aforementioned tools provide extensive support for project or group work. These tools more or less offer an option for sharing projects online and for merging projects. This may not be enough to assist young people in group work. Therefore, it is useful to offer them a web-based community system as additional support. We used *CommSy*[13], because our university provides an efficient infrastructure for it. *CommSy* allows users to apply for membership in virtual project rooms. All members can share

materials, start discussions, write announcements and make appointments. *CommSy* is widely used at the University of Hamburg, and the authors found it suitable for supporting all kinds of courses. However, it had not been observed if *CommSy* would be appropriate to facilitate the cooperative design processes of kids.

As shown, there are many tools that can enable participatory game design with children. These tools offer great opportunities for enabling access to juvenile communication, which constitutes also a great chance for schools to connect with their pupils. On the other hand, it might be too difficult for teachers to become acquainted with the tools and to prepare adequate lessons using the tools. There are almost no publications that focus on user guidelines for teachers who want to carry out similar projects. This paper is trying to contribute in this context by describing two case studies with pupils.

4. Vision

We see a tremendous need for valuable games that are designed by kids for kids. There are almost no examples of participatory game design focusing on intercultural topics. This is surprising, since it is reasonable to say that computer games are accessible and - more importantly - most attractive to all social groups independent of color of skin or family income[14].

There are numerous tools that allow teachers and pupils to learn programming as a matter of priority. However, we fear that most tools are only used as a method to teach conventional school matters. This would be fine if we could provide further use cases where kids are getting the great interdisciplinary opportunity of designing their own games. This means that kids are introduced to a 'learning by doing' approach – an approach that strongly appeals to today's young people[15].

5. Interview with a Teacher

An unstructured interview was done to understand usual intercultural education at schools. The interviewee was a teacher responsible for intercultural education at a school in Hamburg (Germany). The school teaches approximately 750 children. Close to 30 different nationalities are represented at this school. There are three large communities present at the school: About 400 pupils are German, 250 are Turkish, and 50 are Albanian. Yet, many of the German pupils have migratory background as well.

The teacher reported that intercultural education is becoming more and more important, because of the increasing number of pupils with a migratory background. He claimed that sadly there are many approaches to intercultural education that appear to be boring to pupils. For example, such a lesson may start with a task that includes reading about different religions. Afterwards, the differences between the religions must be written down and compared. Only at the end of the lesson, pupils are asked to think about their

religion and their feelings. Normally, at this time it is too late for exciting discussions of the topic: The kids are already bored and tired of intercultural issues. The teacher stressed that juveniles could become very interested in intercultural values by offering approaches that do include their everyday life from the beginning. In this case, a positive example would be to ask pupils about their beliefs about common intercultural problems and to encourage them to discuss these with the others. In this context, it is beneficial to refer to topics that are appealing to young people.

6. Projects with Pupils

We report on two case studies with pupils. Each project lasted one week. The pupils volunteered for the projects. Participation was rewarded with a certificate of attendance.

The first case study took place at the University of Hamburg. It was offered to pupils in the 16 to 18 year age range. The participants could choose intercultural game design out of five project offers. The actual project work consisted of an approximate sum of ten working hours. On the last day, all participants had to present their work.

The second case study was accomplished during a project week at the school of the interviewee. The participants of the second case study were between 12 and 17 years old. The actual sum of working hours was about 16. On the last day of the project week, all pupils presented their results of this week to visitors (teachers, parents and other kids).

Each project was kicked off playing games with the goal of getting to know each other. Furthermore, the attendees were asked to introduce themselves in front of everyone and to name a computer game they hated or liked.

We decided to introduce the *XP* values at the beginning of each project and to propose the use of some *XP* techniques in our projects: *Standup Meetings*, *PP*, *Stories* and *Informative Workspace*. The pupils were not obliged to follow these rules exactly, apart from the *Standup Meeting*. The other shown techniques were more offered as a set of well-meant hints. This was done to uncover the behavior of kids in game design and compare it to the ideal of *XP*.

Afterwards a *Scratch* walkthrough was given to introduce all basic programming units. A little game scenario was developed step by step. We intentionally decided to leave out any intercultural setting, since we did not want to lead the pupils in any particular direction.

Another part consisted of brainstorming sessions to find reasonable intercultural game scenarios. One question was presented at the start of a brainstorming session: When is intercultural diversity important?

Next, it was pointed out that the kids should have created a prototype of a game scenario that in some way is related to intercultural

values at the end of the week. The kids were freely allowed to organize their remaining working hours. They could always ask for help on *Scratch*, theoretical issues, image editing, group interaction and group coordination.

During the projects, we suggested the use of *CommSy*. At the end of the projects, the participants were asked to participate in an informal evaluation. The evaluation gave them the opportunity to make general comments and to answer four questions that could be outlined as two concerns:

- Why are games with intercultural topics interesting or boring?
- What do you like or dislike about *Scratch*?

7. Observations from the First Project

Most of the pupils believed they were going to study informatics. They had previous knowledge of programming languages (*C*), and databases (*MySQL*). Therefore, they seemed to be slightly disappointed with *Scratch*, which they perceived as rather simple. Nonetheless, at a second glance most participants realized that *Scratch* enabled them to design complex actions.

One group that consisted of four pupils (one female, three male) created a quiz that covered intercultural knowledge. They kept their *Informative Workspace* updated. They wrote down *Stories* to illustrate the course of the quiz. Furthermore, they used a poster to talk about their plan on the day at the *Standup Meeting*. Yet, they did not like the idea of *PP* and often tried to bypass it by assigning roles to group members according to their sense of professional game design. They finished some of the work separately at home in the evenings.

The second group started with four participants as well (one female, three male). On the second day, one male team member was absent. The other two boys were very engaged in *PP*, but did not give the girl a chance to participate in the game design. In fact, it was even difficult to get into contact with this double team as tutor! They did not follow the frequent requests to involve the third team member. Therefore, on the second day we decided to assign the girl to the third group. The remaining team (on the third day the absent pupil returned and was able to connect with the former double team) focused on a street conflict that had to be resolved peacefully. The game is about a boy who is bullied by another person. The player (a female character) is required to act as a mediator. Of course, you can try to beat the aggressor, but the only way to solve the conflict is to convince him with words that he is not right. It must be pointed out that selecting the right sentences leading to a victory is not as easy as it may appear. In fact, there are numerous ways to lose, but only one way to win the game or rather to solve the conflict. The group did hardly use their *Informative Workspace*. At the *Standup Meetings*, they did not explain their plan in detail. It was difficult to keep up-to-date on

their actual process status. However, they did not have problems in developing a working prototype.

The third group started with three pupils, but ended up having four participants (two female, two male). They designed several mini games. The mini games were linked by a story about an intercultural conflict. A boy is bullied because of his foreign looks. In this group's opinion, activities like playing mini games and having fun together independently of the players' ethnic backgrounds can help to resolve this conflict. They used *PP*, but did rarely switch teams. The girls were mostly involved in creating the story around the mini games that were then designed by the boys. In the end, they merged the games.

Of course, all groups had to deal with basic programming issues at some time to get ahead with their games. For example, they had to find out how to define active areas to trigger certain actions. They also had to understand the idea of sending messages and responding to them. Sometimes, they had to handle collision and wall detection. They often solved such problems using trial and error. Only if they did not succeed, they asked the tutors for help.

In general, the *Standup Meetings* seemed to be confusing at the beginning, but the participants became more and more used to them and began to appreciate the meetings in the course of the week. The *Informative Workspace* worked well for two groups and seemed to help them to talk about their ideas and problems concerning the game.

The handling of *CommSy* was adopted fast by the participants. It was used to exchange *Scratch* projects and pictures.

The informal evaluation using *CommSy* revealed that two pupils were somewhat disappointed with *Scratch*, because to them it looks like it is geared to children. Yet, they also mentioned that they understood the need to use a tool that also enables people without previous knowledge to participate in game design. One attendee did not like the idea of being forced to focus on intercultural matters. Another participant stated that he liked the idea of intercultural learning. External staff did a rather general formal evaluation: The project provided a good insight into informatics. Games were identified as an interesting branch of informatics.

8. Observations of the Second Project

In contrast to the first study, the members of the second study were not focused on becoming informatics students. Five male pupils joined the project. Of course, they had attended basic computing courses at school (word processing, image editing and the like). The older participants (16 and 17 years) took basic courses in *C* and *HTML*. All of them loved to play computer games.

The team decided to design one game together. After the first day, they were enthusiastic about their idea to have a game that consists of rooms representing different cultures. In each virtual room, they created typical tasks or questions that were to be solved to reach the next room. It became soon obvious to them they needed a German, a Chinese, and an Afghan room, because the team members were of these three nationalities. They took pictures of each other and put those in the game to lead the player through the quests. Their game is called Culturia and is available on the *Scratch* website[16].

The player always starts in a virtual classroom. He or she is introduced to the game and is able to go to other virtual rooms. In each room, the player is welcomed by another pupil. For example, in the German room, the host asks for help in preparing a typical German meal. In the Chinese room, the player is asked to find an item that is put on the pillows of children on the night before Chinese Spring Festival. In the Afghan room, the player has to select a typical Afghan dress.

The team members were very supportive of each other. Most of the individual problems were solved in collaboration with other team members.

Most of the time, they programmed in pairs. The *Informative Workspace* was utilized to document the course of events and the virtual rooms of the game. However, it was only updated once a day and they did not use it to support the *Standup Meetings*. The *Standup Meetings* were appreciated for asking questions regarding the day's schedule and to announce project goals.

CommSy was used similarly as in the first case study: It was mainly utilized to share *Scratch* projects and pictures.

As mentioned, on the last day of the project week, the game was shown to visitors who were asked to leave comments. Out of 27 comments, there was only one negative comment regarding the game. Most of the feedback attested that the game scenario was a great idea. However, most of the visitors did not like the quality of the graphics.

The evaluation using *CommSy* displays that one member wanted better interconnectivity of *Scratch*. Another attendee stated that *Scratch* provides good access to game design, but does not support the design of games comparable to those commercial games that are state of the art.

All participants of the second project were highly motivated to continue designing computer games that deal with intercultural values.

9. Conclusion

Both projects clarified that kids are highly interested in participating in game design. They often mentioned that intercultural values are a rather boring topic at first sight. Creating a game about this seemed to be fun to

them. The pupils liked the idea of being a part of the game: They created tasks on their migratory backgrounds and took pictures of personal items.

As for gender issues: The only distinguishable difference between boys and girls was that girls attached more importance to storytelling than boys. Vice versa, boys often cared for underlying mathematical issues. None of the girls was disappointed in the project. This illustrates that boys and girls could be equally addressed with game design using *Scratch*. The presentation of the second case study showed that many female visitors were very interested in playing computer games. They made suggestions how to continue the story. *Scratch* is a good prototyping tool to begin with. Yet, it became clear that youths who have previous knowledge in programming are easily dismissive about the children-oriented interface of *Scratch.*

Especially in the second case study, it became apparent that *Scratch* is not very helpful for merging large projects. It was very difficult to design three virtual rooms simultaneously and merge them at the end of the project. Most of the time, errors had to be detected by checking each single command block of each sprite. Since children at that age do not know much about distributed development, *Scratch* should offer better support for this process.

Overall, the practices of *XP* appeared to be very helpful in coordinating group work with kids. *PP* appears to be strange to pupils at first, but it was widely appreciated in the long run.

One important aspect is that after the second case study many teachers at the school were enthusiastic about valuable computer games. They highly encouraged the project members to continue with game design to provide materials that could be used during regular lessons.

For schools, it can be stated that participatory game design is a great vehicle for addressing intercultural education in a youthful way. It would be important to offer introductions to game design during project weeks and later on refer to the results in different subjects.

10. Future Work

At present, *Scratch* is offering a built-in tool to import other *Scratch* projects. Editing multiple projects and merging them by this tool is the only way to work together on one project. Hence, in terms of using *Scratch* at schools, we are planning to design additional embedded extensions that support collaborative work. This is meaningful because it became apparent in both projects that reasonable computer-supported cooperation is a very important aspect of game design with kids. In particular, it becomes important when dealing with intercultural values that often evolve from group work. The use of *CommSy* as a shared space for media was helpful, but a built-in solution would be handier. However, the pupils did not use further features of *CommSy*. Therefore, it is important to analyze why the additional

features were not adopted. It is apparent that the *XP* methods should be more explicitly connected with the use of *CommSy* in the future.

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PART V

Well Being and the Child-Creative Ways Of Connecting

The Voice of Children on their Experience of Well-Being

Luigina Mortari & Valentina Mazzoni

Abstract

At the end of the 60s, serious attempts were made to develop major research about people's happiness or satisfaction with life. A significant difference emerged from these studies between an "objective" and a "subjective" well-being[1]: material conditions may not indicate anything about people's real worries and needs; what is important is how people experience their own conditions.

In our research we tackle children's subjective well-being, which means knowing the children's experience of welfare, (the meaning beyond their material conditions): what is essential for them? What do they consider essential for a good life? Why are these elements considered essential?

In order to answer these questions we developed a research with children, in which creativity was a vital component. In order to understand the meaning constructed by children in their daily contexts, we improved a qualitative research project, creating in particular new research tools and questions, to set up "effective strategies able to react to the children and follow their guidelines[2]. Our findings illustrate how children have sufficient competence to articulate their ideas, using a wide range of innovative research-friendly activities and multiple languages.

The goal of this presentation is to show how children formed their views about their quality of life, and what significance some elements acquire in their views. The aim of a voiced research is to access "the voices from inside", exploring meaning and intention, as we want to show the children's experience of wellbeing from their perspective and in their own words.

Key Words: care relationship, children, essential questions, research with children, thinking, wellbeing.

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1. The Faculty of Thinking

The present research fits in a framework in which the researcher intends to cultivate children's thinking, since in our perspective researching with children means to care for their thoughts[3]. Our study, in fact, aims at promoting the faculty of thinking, by analysing how children express their own judgment about vital issues.

Thinking is an important ability and, above all, it differs from the faculty of knowing. According to Arendt[4], thinking is the faculty of investigating the essential questions of our life and it is also related to the

search for meaning. Since thinking concerns the necessity of understanding our world, it represents the possibility of flourishing our own humanity. Thus, education must promote the capacity of thinking.

Researching on the human beings' essential questions is a challenge for studying the quality of human thinking, because such interrogatives have no definitive answers. Attending to such questions implies an important effort in thinking, namely to care for our thoughts, since, as also Socrates affirms, 'the unexamined life is not worth living'. In fact, living without thinking means not to experience; only that mind which thinks about the meaning of life enables the individual to authentically live his time[5].

As a result of this, from the educative point of view, we should cultivate as well as care for our children's thinking. If thinking means pursuing answers to the essential questions, then it is worthwhile to make children think about the heart of the matter, opening our research project with one of these essential question: "what is essential to a good life?".

2. Structure of the Educative Experience

In order to educate children to develop the capacity of thinking we carried out a research *with* children[6] and we chose the school environment as research context. Accordingly, to elicit children to express their ideas we found a peculiar way of talking with them: we used, indeed the tools usually applied by teachers in their daily work, but in more creative way (i.e. pictures, stories, collage, written reflections and oral discussions).

Afterwards, we combined different research tools in order to set up effective strategies, which could both react to the children's feedback and follow their guidelines[7].

We conducted the research in 21 primary schools, interviewing 30 different classes and more than 500 pupils, from 8 to 10 years old. We firstly kept in contact with the teachers, describing the goals and the structure of the research. We all agreed on the timetable and on the activities to do, as previously illustrated.

In order to introduce the subject of the life quality, the first activity we proposed was a friendly-exercises.

During the second encounter, instead, we talked with children about the elements characterising their wellbeing, making reference to what the pupils themselves had stated formerly. Such a dialogue aimed at clarifying on the one hand the reason for our interlocutors' answering choices; on the other hand, the way they experienced such concepts as relevant for the quality of life.

The third and forth activities we promoted encouraged children to express their own view of the place they live in, as an important factor to take into account with regard to their idea of wellbeing.

Finally, we also decided to organize a further, conclusive meeting, in order to compose a piece of poetry. This ending activity aimed at enabling children to retain a memory of the research work we did together.

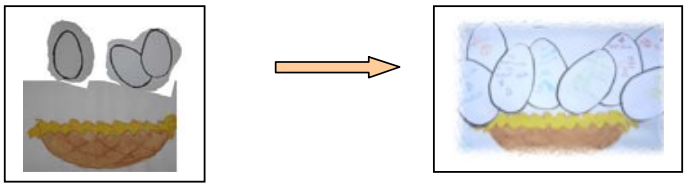
The aim of the investigation we carried out was to reflect upon both the processes and the outcomes of our approach. Accordingly, the structure of the present paper shows on the one hand the heuristic devices we conceived and, on the other hand, a brief summary of such devices effect on children, in terms of product-of-thinking.

3. Using Research-Friendly Activities

In order to acknowledge children's idea of wellbeing, our task was to outline a way of communicating with them, close to their patterns and their daily activities. Our first vocation was to adapt the core question –'what is essential to a good life?'- for children's context and familiar patterns. Thus, we played on the 'good life' topic in order to find out a way which could permit children to access the theme, and thinking from their own perspective.

As researchers, we spent a long time just thinking about suitable ideas for developing an interesting questionnaire or interview and, finally, we attained our purpose.

'The Life Quality Nest' and 'The Little Bird's Short Story' were the subjects we eventually chose for approaching children to the research theme, in order to arouse their interest and elicit their point of view. We then gave to each pupil his/her own nest and also some eggs – how many he/she wanted – where to write their own 'wellbeing ingredients'.



This activity was useful and successful, because, differently from the traditional research methods – often alienating and far from children's real interests – it implied drawing, writing and collage, of course attracting pupils' attention.

Researches therefore have to devise and construct research methods that open opportunities to involve children in different – and we would add, more familiar – 'ways'.

Furthermore, 'The Life Quality Nest' represented a good warm-up activity for children, because it also enabled them to establish a friendlier

relationship with the adult researchers. At the 'first appointment' with children, it is indeed important to suggest research-friendly activities which can promote creativity and fun as well as encourage a real, active involvement.

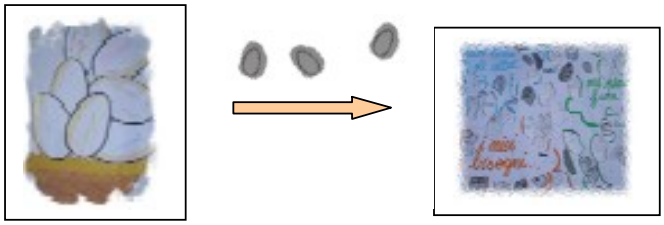
The activity described revealed what children's priorities were with regard to their idea of wellbeing. Moreover, it also clarified the way children felt such comfortable elements.

4. Giving Children a Personal Space to Think About Themselves From Themselves

To learn thinking means both silently dialoguing with ourselves - according to the Platonic point of view– and sharing our opinions with other people. Indeed thinking is both an intra-subjective and an inter-subjective activity.

Starting from this premise we took into consideration both the dialogue between 'me and myself' and the one between 'me and the others'. Accordingly, the second activity we proposed aimed at creating a 'special space' in which children could first think from their own perspectives and, afterwards, start thinking together, to develop multiple perspectives. Yet, although the class-environment undoubtedly constitutes a rich resource for the thoughts developing process - since it encourages the interaction among children – it can also sets limits to the actual development of the single point of view, in favour of the common thought.

The dynamics described so far characterise the different parts of the second activity we promoted: 'The Children's Life Quality Poster'.



In order to create the poster of their 'Life Quality' children had to stick their own "eggs" on a worksheet. We let each child have personal space to do that, acknowledging his/her personal point of view before taking part to the dialogue with the classmates.

Thus, the first part of the activity aimed at supporting the child's self-analysis (intra-subjective) in relation to his/her own opinion about wellbeing basic elements; the second part, on the contrary, concerned the guided

dialogue among children (inter-subjective) and focussed on the reasons for their answers about the idea of life quality.

Thus, the poster included each personal account, according to the ethical principle that no view must be left behind. The poster, therefore, resulted from the composition of all the children's thoughts. Moreover, it represented the starting point for a common debate focused on the following questions: 'What did children consider as wellbeing fundamental constituents?' and 'Which meanings did they attribute to such constituents?'

Findings

These activities improved our understanding of children's lives with particular reference to some elements which, according to our interlocutors, seem to increase their sense of wellbeing.

Family

> Lucia[8]: "Family is important, because relatives feel affection for us"
> Riccardo: "They help you"
> Elia: "When you have to do your homework!"
> Lucia: "I need their help, however"
> R: "When do you need to be assisted?"
> Beatrice: "When I'm sad!!"
> Elia: "When you go to the hospital, because of a trauma!"
> Rita: "My relatives can comprehend my thoughts".

Children stressed that families are important because their relatives provide the support they need to face their daily life, which is both a material and an emotional backing.

The feature emerged from these conversations, therefore, was represented by a very close connection between material and emotional needs.

> Elisabetta: "Your parents give you their love and as Giulia says they help you. For example, yesterday I had to study Julius Caesar's life. I studied it and then I was tested by my father. Thus, he paid me attention to me!"

On the one hand children consider the material help (such as helping them to do homework) as the affective support they need (my father give his attention to me). On the other hand the emotional support seems to be the solution for their material need:

Luca: “when you have stomach-ache, your relatives cuddle you”.

Friendship

In children’s words friends are people who support you in very different circumstances. In particular for them, friendship was an amazing antidote to loneliness.

Luca: When you quarrel with your friends, you can break off your friendship
Giovanni: and then you feel cheerless.
Giuseppe: .. alone, you are alone!
R. When do you feel alone?
Luca. When your friends leave you
Maria: When you don’t have any friends.
R. Have you ever felt alone? If yes, when?
Edoardo: Yes, on holiday I wake up later, at 9:30 am., and my relatives are already at work. So, I’m alone. I wake up, I have my breakfast and then… I do nothing and I feel alone!
Giovanni: I told I feel lonely. It’s like, it's like, a good friend is worth his weight in gold... when you loose a friend, you lose everything'
Federico: You become a “poor man”.

As it is possible to see, the fear of loneliness affects all the children interviewed, since solitude may also mean 'to be left out'. In particular, we noticed that when they play together and someone is cut off from the game, he/she immediately feels alone..

Edoardo: When I’m playing and I commit a foul, the referee whistles for it
R. What does it mean?
Edoardo: It means I feel alone.
R. And why do you feel alone?
Edoardo: Because I can't play anymore. The referee sends me off.
Federico: Once, I just played during the first half of the match.

For children, being alone means being cut off from any situation, in particular from games. Thus, friendship is important for their wellbeing: having friends means belonging to a group, feeling comfortable in any circumstance. At this age, friendship does not imply either intimacy or reciprocal understanding. A friend is, above all, a person who does not leave you alone.

> R: Who want to give us an example?
> Sofia: Some years ago, at school during the pastime, I couldn't play because I was punished and Raffaella was with me.
> Angelo: 'In the past, I was sick and so I couldn't go out, but Giuseppe was with me.

5. Communicating by Using Multiple Languages

From a phenomenological perspective, as Heidegger affirms in his *Letter on Humanism*, 'language is the house of Being' in the sense that just through words an individual can discover him/herself. Consequently, according to the phenomenological method, the relationship between people and language requires a change: 'the researcher should look for an idiom to which the other gives his/her approval'.

Usually, in the research field, oral language is one of the most comfortable ways to gather data (interviews, conversations, focus groups, etc.), but researching with children is different. Often, children find easier to communicate through mediums which differ from the verbal exchange. In the light of this fact, it makes therefore sense to find out other forms of communication, such as practical tasks, photos, drawing and stories. We chose to combine these different languages in order to elicit children to express their own trustworthiness.

An example of this effort was the poster 'A Daily Trip in My City'. We therefore asked children to describe a daily journey (from home to school; from their home to the one of their best friend). This activity aimed at making children think about the space they live in, because we believed that they did not pay attention to the physical elements characterising the external environment around them, such as streets, squares, corners and leisure centres

The researcher told the children about a trip she made in a city, also showing them a photographic poster on the tour. Then, she asked the children to do the same, thinking about the journey they usually take.

The visual image was worked as an “evocative stimulus” and a “reflective tool”, since the use of visualization helped children much more than the mere verbal interaction to explore and represent their perspectives. Thus, the findings were very articulated.

6. Findings

What children produced was a wide perspective of their city and of the elements which characterized it. As we could observe, children do not consider their city as a merely physical place (houses, parks, streets, squares, monuments, etc.); on the contrary, they also describe it as a network defined by different kinds of connections (shops, people working, doing their activities or wasting time). The liveability of the city is, therefore, influenced by both physical and social elements: among them, children had pointed out:

Feelings and behaviours

In their descriptions children stressed the presence of feelings and behaviours, which characterise their city:

> Robert: When I walk around my city I can see happiness all around, because people smile at me.
> Sara: Today people would be more joyful, because usually they are gloomy and sometimes even impolite.
> Riccardo: On the playground close to my house, where many children are used to go, I often see the oldest ones bullying and hurting each others. So doing, they set a bad example for younger people.

Green places and relationships

The constant feature of what children describe refers to an environment where social and physical factors are intertwined, as illustrated in the following lines:

> Lucia*:* Playgrounds are so much beautiful places, because there are green spaces where you can find children of different ages who play games and run. I'd like if there were

more playground in my city, because I'd surely go there more often, instead of staying at home and watching TV.
Carlo: Playgrounds are extremely important places, because children meet their friends while mummies chat with other people. These meetings bring happiness into my city.

As we could see, the presence (or absence) of people as well as the quality of their social relationships determine the liking rating of a place (i.e. streets, gardens, squares) both at an aesthetic level (mainly regarding taste: it is/it is not a likeable, inviting place, etc.) and at a more practical one (concerning concreteness and decisions: it is/it is not a place where to live in, to play in, etc.).

Children revealed that cities are both physical and social spaces, where tidiness and beauty are as relevant as health and good civil behaviour.

7. Giving Children their Time

The 'problem of time' represents another relevant theme to deal with. The period of time necessary to conclude a work differs from child to child (someone can be quicker or slower than someone else). For a researcher, respecting children's point of view also means to be able to wait: Consequently, children are the ones who decide the timetable, not the researcher. The first ethical principle, in fact, is 'to accept the rhythm of the others, rather than to impose our rhythm on them'.

During the development of the process, the researcher needs to spend time in order to establish a trusty relationship with children. Asking for a drawing, engaging children to help the researcher arrange the tools used during the activities or inviting them to write some impressions about what they have done, these are example of techniques which a researcher should request of the quicker children or to the ones who find the activities unpleasant.

Indeed, the research process is offered as an event to share, rather than as a procedure to apply by following a rigid timetable. The researcher should be interested in cultivating the relationship with the class and not in observing formal guidelines. For instance, the piece of poetry realised during the last activities with children was not collected as a data: it was retained by them in memory of our work. Someone could judge it a loss of time, while our aim was to communicate to children that the time spent together and the work done attained a common good.

In the light of the ethic of care[9], a care relationship with children is the primary condition to create a fertile ground being able to generate reliable data. Taking time to build a trusty relationship with children is, therefore, the first effort for researching with children.

8. A Matter of Relationship

In Clandinin and Connelly's work[10] on an ethic for collaborative research. they claim that relationships represent more than a mere application of procedures and principles, and more than the negotiation of practices. Collaborative research is, indeed, what constitutes a relationship.

The researcher is a caring person who is responsible for his/her participants rather than a technician. In fact, we researchers know children better when we are both united by a deep relationship, which enables us to develop our understanding at the level of personal interaction.

In this framework acquiring data represents a very active and creative process, thanks to which the researcher can construct research tools aiming at promoting children's own expressions. Consequently, creativity becomes an essential feature of his/her specific role.

Notes

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[2] S. Punch, 'Research with children. The same or different from research with adults?', *Childhood*, Vol. 9, 2002, pp. 321–341.

[3] L. Mortari, *Aver cura della vita della mente*, LaNuovaItalia, Firenze, 2002.

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[7] W.A. Corsaro, *Friendship and culture in the early years*, Ablex Publishing Company, Norwood, New Jersey, 1985.

[8] We decide not to translate the names of children, while R. means the researcher.

[9] 1) L. Mortari, 'The ethic of delicacy, a phenomenological research', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being*, 3(1), 2007, pp. 3-17. 2) N. Noddings, *Caring*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984.

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Experiments in Living

Robert Jack

Abstract
Experiments in living are a way of activating students by making their everyday lives a part of the school curriculum. An important tool in the method proposed is the experiment sheet.
The reason for proposing the method is a deficiency I perceive in the school system: a lack of, (a) connection to the student's life, (b) reflection on life as it is and can be lived, and (c) character development.
Experiments in living help to increase mindfulness, creativity, and understanding of real life situations. The student does experiments on her practices of everyday life or her attitudes concerning, (1) her environment (e.g. love physical things), (2) other people (e.g. forgive), and (3) herself (e.g. love of your body). The experiment is done with the help of an experiment sheet which has four parts: procedures, hypothesis, actions, and conclusions. The experiment sheet promotes focus, objectivity, increased awareness, and provides easy evaluation for the teacher.

Key Words: Ancient philosophy, doing, experiment sheet, experiments in living, Michel Foucault, Pierre Hadot, quality of understanding, thinking, wisdom.

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1. Introduction

Experiments in living is a method for teaching which is aimed at increasing the student's grasp of reality and her understanding of herself, others, and the environment. The reason for proposing the method is a deficiency I perceive in the school system: a lack of, (a) connection to the student's life, (b) reflection on life as it is and can be lived, and (c) character development. I believe the method can be developed for most student groups and ages. The method has been developed through philosophy and with a significant idea coming from physics teaching, but I believe it can be used in all subjects that want to increase mindfulness, creativity, and understanding of real life situations. An important tool for the teaching method is the Experiment Sheet which guides the experiment.

2. Doing and Thinking

As a philosophy teacher I have conducted dialogues and other thought exercises to stimulate students to think. There are a number of methods that are helpful in this respect. Many of them having been developed in the last century, the most widely used dialogue method probably being Matthew Lipman's community of inquiry.

As important as dialogue and thinking are, it has gradually been dawning on philosophers that more is needed than thinking. Practice is also important and we see this in all sorts of practical approaches to philosophy and in philosophy on the good life.

Recently Pierre Hadot and Michel Foucault among others have proposed that ancient philosophy was more about leading a good life than usually has been maintained. For them philosophy was not only about thinking about things good and bad, true and false, but about leading life in accordance with the life you think is best.

In this connection Hadot and Foucault have talked about exercises, techniques, experiments, and practices that the ancient philosophers carried out for their benefit and to transform themselves. In all of this it is important to care for both, reflection and action, to think about what you are doing and to do as you say. The former can be seen in the Stoic exercise of mindfulness, which is mental focus on what you are doing and constant reflection on whether it is good or bad. The latter is exemplified in the character of Socrates who in accordance with what he says leads a life of courage and care for the soul.

3. Wisdom

It is well known that education strives for understanding, you could even say it is the number one goal of education. Mostly people have argued about the content of understanding, i.e. what to teach. Although this paper promotes a certain type of content having to do with everyday actions and attitudes about how to lead life, the method itself has more to do with the quality of understanding. The experiments in living here proposed are aimed at making the person more wise about her life, to help her gain more understanding and control of it. I see three degrees or levels of understanding, (1) secondhand understanding, (2) experiential understanding, and (3) wisdom.

Secondhand understanding is something you have learned from others, whether seen or heard. This is the most common kind of understanding you will have in school and elsewhere. This doesn't mean it's bad, just that it is not gained by personal experience, research, or much thinking about the subject matter. An example: the teacher tells you two plus two equals four.

Experiential understanding is gained by doing something. This kind of understanding is more valuable, but less frequent. It is more advanced than secondhand understanding. You see better what is involved and are more likely to be able to explain things. The math example: you have found out, using cubes, that if you put two and two together you will have four.

What I call *wisdom* is the highest and most sophisticated level of understanding and therefore it is less frequent than the other two levels, but much more valuable. Wisdom not only includes experience of the subject matter but also some general thoughts on its consequences and importance. Our example: you understand not only that two plus two equals four but that there are general principles involved which have important consequences for life in general.

It seems to me all of these levels are necessary and important, but that the highest level is what we should be striving for, even though you will always have more secondhand understanding than wisdom. This also applies to a different example like going swimming. If you had never gone swimming and someone told you it was nice to do so, that wouldn't tell you very much about how it feels and what it could mean to you. But actually doing it is another matter. It is easy to sense the difference between these two levels of understanding. And then the third level, wisdom, adds something extra about swimming and your life which can only be gained by thinking about what you have experienced and its wider implications. This is what experiments in living strive for.

I also believe that creativity thrives in this atmosphere of mindfulness and action. Creativity is a lot about being open to different things and seeing how they can be connected together. This is exactly what you do in a successful experiment in living. You see something new in the interaction between thinking about the experiment and doing it.

4. Content

As the name implies „experiments in living" are about everyday practices, behaviors, attitudes, and thoughts. They are not only about acquiring new skills, as was implied in the example about swimming, but probably more about increasing the quality of things that are in place. All of the experiments are aimed at increasing understanding of some kind, of the self, others, or the environment. Here are a few examples of possible experiments.

Greet strangers; be thankful; do not use the phone; be nice to yourself; trust no one; be like a dog; love physical things; stay calm; go swimming; pray or meditate; give; be the other sex; forgive; be silent.

Although simple in themselves, most or all of these experiments need explanation before they are carried out. Firstly, it may not be clear to the student *what* is meant by concepts like "stranger", "being nice", "trust",

"love", "calmness", "prayer", "meditation", and "forgiveness". It is therefore advisable to have a discussion or some other form of introduction to them before the experiment is carried out.

Secondly, it strengthens the experiment to help students think about *how* these things can be carried out. How do you introduce yourself to someone you have never talked to before? Where can I go swimming, and do I need to take a course? How do I go about meditating? What or how much should I give?

Thirdly, limits have to be worked out, so that the experiment won't be too hard, or even dangerous, and you know *how much* to do. If I'm not to use the phone, how about emergency phone calls? What can't I do as the other sex? Where and how long should I be silent?

It is thus important to prepare the student well and that the instructions are precise and clear so that she knows exactly what to do.

5. The Experiment Sheet

An experiment can be done in different ways. It can for example be based on strict guidelines from the teacher, be chosen by the student herself, or be the outcome of discussions in the classroom. The experiment can be simple and take a short period of time, be a complicated long-term project, or anything in-between. It can be aimed at developing the individual first and foremost, the synergy of the group, etc. And it is important to experiment with the experiments.

A helpful tool in doing experiments in living as a teaching method is the experiment sheet. The idea comes from physics teaching and does well to guide the process for the student. The experiment sheet is divided into for parts: procedure, hypothesis, actions, and conclusions. **Table 1** is an example of such a sheet. It is an experiment I did with my 15 year old students. Because these students were generally not willing to write much I decided to leave only little space for them to write in (although it was more than in the table below).

1. The *procedure* is what to do, how to do it, and how much to do. It is important that the instructions are clear so that time and energy is not spent on wondering how to do the experiment. This is especially important when the student has only secondhand understanding of the subject of the experiment. In the case in **Table 1** we talked about what it meant to do good before the experiment was done. I decided to specify that you had to aim at benifiting others because some of the students suggested you could also do good for yourself.

2. The *hypothesis* are predictions and expectations about the outcome of the experiment. It is not good to be too sure of how the experiment will turn out, because that is either a sign of close-mindedness and a lack of will to change, or an indication that the experiment isn't

challenging enough. But to think about the possibilities before doing the experiment will open the mind up to the different aspects of it and help to increase its benefits. Inasmuch as thinking is experience the student will here not only gain secondhand but also experiential understanding.

3. The *actions* is a record or a short diary of the highlights of the work done on the experiment. It is good to jot down interesting occurrences or characteristic examples of how it was to do the experiment. These should show as many aspects of the experiment as possible. This part is about the direct experiences the student has doing the experiment and will enhance her experiential understanding as well as opening up the possibility of more profound understanding. Examples of answers from the experiment of doing good were, "babysitting for my aunt" and "helping mother with the laundry".

4. The *conclusions* are thoughts on the effects and usefulness of the experiment. Although the experiment may only have been a short-term project it is useful to think about the possible long-term effects of doing it. General reflections on its effects on other parts of your life, other people, and the environment make the experiment more profound and increase the possibility of wisdom. Everything doesn't have to be worked out though, questions and reflections are fine.

6. Benefits of the Experiment Sheet

An experiment sheet is a flexible tool and has a number of benefits, especially when the teacher presents the experiment to his students. Firstly, it sets a clear frame which increases the student's *focus* on what to do and the likelihood of the experiment being understood and executed effectively.

Secondly, the scientific format creates a certain distance and *objectivity* which should work against disturbing emotions, such as shyness, for example when greeting strangers: "it is just an experiment, a scientific homework, and therefore I don't have to be so sensitive about the outcome."

Thirdly, recording the experiment *increases awareness* of what is going on within oneself, with others, and in the environment. The increased awareness will make it more likely that you will notice important things and learn from them. Afterwards this can be utilized in discussions among students who have done the same experiment or in doing further projects on the theme.

Fourthly, the experiment sheet makes the student's otherwise subjective experience capable of *easy evaluation* by the teacher. Because experiments on actions and attitudes concerning how to lead life will always be of a different nature than experiments done in the natural sciences, the criterions will obviously be different. But it is precisely because of this difference that it is important to find some way of objectifying this type of learning, which is what the experiment sheet aims to do.

Experiment Sheet

Experiment name: Doing good

Time frame and return date: One week, friday, October 10

1. Procedure: Do one good deed. Do something you think will be of real benefit to the person you intend to do good. Make sure it is something that benefits him/her and not only you.

2. Hypothesis: How do you think doing good will affect you?

3. Actions: What did you do?

4. Conclusions: Did the good deed accomplish anything? For you? For the one you intended to do good?

Table 1. Experiment sheet for an experiment on doing good with 15 year old student.

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What a Hospital Should Be

Judy A. Rollins

Abstract
Among the many features of childhood is children's sense of powerlessness and lack of control over what happens to them. Perhaps under no other circumstance is this reality more evident than when children are hospitalized. In an effort to explore children's needs, wants, wishes, desires, and hopes when hospitalized, a paediatric artists-in-residence program spearheaded a month-long project for approximately 40 children and young people ages 4 to 20 years (31 currently hospitalized and 9 outpatients) that asked them to design features of their ideal hospital and create art – drawings, paintings, collages, prints, sculpture, stories, poetry, dance, music – to depict their ideas. The project, funded in part by the LEGO Children's Fund,[1] culminated in a celebratory event and presentation of the children's work. Analysis of their creative products, observations, and interviews revealed children's recognition of the importance of (a) physical/material features, (b) caring relationships, (c) stimulating/peaceful atmosphere, (d) empowerment, and (e) wishes/hope as contributing to what a hospital should be. Focusing on more than the design features and other physical elements of the hospital environment, children perceived their ideal hospital to be a place where their families and friends are welcome; hospital staff members are kind, understanding, and connected; the hospital atmosphere is one that offers the choice of stimulation or calm; there are opportunities for children and young people to be in control, courageous, and empowered; and children are supported in their efforts to keep hope alive. Although the hospital's physical elements are important and support other crucial psychosocial issues for hospitalized children, children in this study also gave voice to the significant contribution of their parents and the people who work within the walls of the institution. The children seemed to acknowledge their own personal strength and optimism as important elements in what a hospital should be.

Key Words: Children, creativity, art, hospitalization, psychosocial, environment, relationships.

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1. Hospitalization Issues for Children

Hospitalization has long been recognized as a stressful experience for everyone, but research indicates that it is especially difficult for the developing child.[2] Rarely are children permitted to refuse treatments, medications, and procedures, and "things" are constantly being "done" to

them. They are asked to "hold still" for painful procedures that they often may not understand, and may be left feeling powerless and confused. Being placed in passive roles with limited opportunities to make meaningful choices, children's emotions are often intense and confusing.[3]

The hospital environment itself seethes with the unfamiliar. Children see many strangers, typically over 50 in their first 24 hours of hospitalization.[4] There are other strange sights, sounds, smells, and tastes – any of which can be frightening if you do not know what they are. Touch in the hospital, while sometimes comforting, also can be a source of discomfort and confusion, especially when children are poked in areas they have been told to never let strangers touch.[5]

In recent years dignity of hospitalized children has become a topic of discussion in the literature, even though a clear definition of the term is lacking: "Dignity is a slippery concept most easily understood when it has been lost."[6] However, research confirms that children's privacy and dignity are not always respected in hospitals,[7] which for some children might be the most difficult stressor of all.

2. Children's Voices

Children have strong feelings about, reactions to, and the right to full participation in events in their lives. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children should be encouraged and enabled to make their views known on the issues that affect them.[8]

Certainly, for children who are hospitalized, the hospital is one of these issues. As healthcare systems have begun to focus on patient-centred care - care that considers individuals' cultural traditions, their personal preferences and values, their family situations, and their lifestyles - many hospitals have moved from wondering what children think about the hospital to asking them. A growing number of hospitals have children's advisory boards, typically composed of "frequent flyers," children with chronic conditions who tend to have multiple hospitalizations, to capture their perspectives on a variety of hospital issues.

Children also are often active participants in designing new facilities, for example, asked to create dioramas in shoeboxes of what they see as the ideal hospital or patient room.[9] Two recent studies have examined children's opinions about art and design elements in hospitals. In the first, Eisen and colleagues studied the art preferences of 5- to 17-year-old hospitalized children.[10] In the second study, Coad and Coad examined children and young people's preference of thematic design and colour for the hospital environment.[11] The researchers in this study took the unique tack of forming an advisory group of young people (10 to 17 years) as co-researchers to develop data collection tools, conduct interviews with other children and young people, contribute to data analysis, and verify findings.

Other researchers have focused on asking children about perceptions of their hospital experience with the goal of improving care. For example, Lindeke, Nakai, and Johnson asked children to describe the best and worst things about their hospitalization and to make recommendations for change. [12]

Although increasingly researchers are asking children for their perceptions about their hospital experience to better understand hospitalized children's needs, few studies have examined wishes, desires, and hopes of all that a hospital could be from the perspectives of children with life threatening conditions. In March 2009, Studio G, an artists-in residence program at Georgetown University Medical Center,[13] initiated a project call "What a Hospital Should Be." The aim of the project was to provide an opportunity for children at the hospital to creatively express their opinions.

3. Method

A focused ethnographic study was conducted to explore children's responses to the question, "What should a hospital be?" To provide an opportunity for a greater number of children to participate in the project, art therapists from the Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Clinic at Georgetown's Lombardi Cancer Center and child life specialists on the paediatric inpatient units also were invited to facilitate artwork with the children. The project culminated with a celebratory exhibit and presentation of the children's work the end of March

Approximately 40 children and young people ages 4 to 20 years participated in the project, with 31 from the hospitalized population and the remaining 9 from the paediatric haematology/oncology clinic. Although the children in the outpatient clinic were not hospitalized at the time, all of them have been hospitalized during the course of their treatment and thus could draw on those experiences. Diagnoses for the hospitalized children were, with few exceptions, cancer or pre- or post-bowel and liver transplant (BLT). All of the children from the outpatient clinic had a diagnosis of cancer.

Over the course of the first three weeks in March, all children who were physically able were invited to participate. Due to the acuity of children's conditions and/or the need to be in isolation to protect a fragile immune system, nearly all of the hospitalized children created their artwork in their rooms. Children who were able to come to the playroom helped to create a group project – a sculpture they named Tyrannosaurus Rx. Outpatient children created their artwork in the clinic during their regular clinic appointments.

Regarding facilitating the activities, children who are hospitalized are, first and above all else, children. In most respects they are ordinary children in an extraordinary situation. However, hospitalized children often regress and have lower energy levels than their healthy peers. Other considerations include infection control, which is an important issue in all

hospitals but was especially critical with the group of children targeted for this study; a compromised immune system is common for children with cancer or BLT. If the child was at increased risk for infection, only new previously unopened supplies or supplies cleaned with special disinfectants were used. If the child was in isolation because of a weak immune system, the artist wore protective clothing such as a gown, gloves, and mask.

During the fourth week in March, all visual artwork was framed. The poet used beautiful paper and wrote out the children's poems in calligraphy. The children's stories were typed up, enlarged, and framed. The event was held from 3 to 5 pm on the last Saturday in March.

The author interviewed the artists, art therapists, child life specialists, parents, and children attending the event regarding their experiences, and conducted observations as both a participant and non-participant observer throughout the project period. All work exhibited was photographed, as well as the event activities. Content of field notes from interviews and observations, visual images, and words in visual artwork, poetry, and stories were analyzed for themes.

4. Findings

A total of 33 expressive products were presented at the event: 7 paintings, 15 collages, 4 poems, 5 stories, and 2 dances. In some instances (collages, dances) children had worked together to create a product. Data analysis yielded five broad themes: (1) physical/material features, (2) caring relationships, (3) stimulating/peaceful atmosphere, (4) empowerment, (5) and wishes/hope.

The theme most often represented was *physical and material features*. This theme includes features in the environment that add beauty, colour, comfort, social interaction, and privacy. Several children mentioned that a hospital should be a "beautiful place" or a "colourful place." Others wanted their pets or their Teddies. Some children were concerned about sounds and smells as well as space issues and sights. Over a third (35%) of the instances in this category were related to food. A 13-year-old girl with moyamoya, a rare vascular disease, wanted "Flowers at the window so you can smell them, an IV that doesn't hurt, chairs that turn around, the bed a little fluffy." Other examples illustrating this theme include:

> A hospital should be a place where I have a comfortable bed, a seat cushion, a lot more of my own space, a bigger hospital room, refrigerator, television, DVD player, a <u>not shared</u> bathroom, a private bright and sunny room. (7- and 13-year-old girls, cancer)

> A self-drying bed because when I get a fever I sweat so much, and an IV that turns into lemonade with a straw attached so you can drink it. (9-year-old boy, pneumonia, collapsed lung)
>
> There is a bathroom spa, an escalator slide to the bed, the blue thing hanging from the ceiling is a plasma screen TV and a Jacuzzi is on the right (healing purposes only) and a kitchen on the left (your parents can cook you good food). (12-year-old girl, BLT) (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1. A Beautiful Place

Although represented less often that the physical/material aspect of the environment, indicators of the second theme, *caring relationships*, seemed in some instances more thoughtful and developed. Many ideas also were related to the physical aspects of the environment. Two girls thought the ideal hospital would have to have "…a bed for my mom or dad to stay or sleep on or for visitors to sit and talk with me," while a 12-year old girl wished for "…hearts on the floor so I know everybody loves me."

The following story written by a 4-year old girl post BLT after several weeks in isolation illustrates the importance of a parent in the life of a young hospitalized child:

> Once upon a time there was a boo-boo, and it hurt. The doctors hurt it. Then a little girl hit it. So they stuck a needle in it and it made the little girl go to sleep. When she woke up she was crying because the boo-boo hurt. Then the boo-

> boo turned into a beautiful pink butterfly. It flew all the way to the sky, with a glove. It dropped the glove in the park, where Mommy found it. She looked up and saw the butterfly and caught it in a net. She took it home to love forever and ever. And they all lived happily ever after.

Through their work, children also expressed appreciation for the hospital staff, commenting that staff is another family when theirs is not around. Three children mentioned one oncologist, in particular. An 8-year-old girl with cancer created a mosaic to depict the doctor. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 2. "Every hospital needs a Dr. Shad."

The third theme addressed *atmosphere*. Indicators fit into one of two categories: "stimulating" or "peaceful", with the greater number (69%) identified as stimulating. A girl wished for "Caring monkeys to make you laugh." A boy spoke of "a self-driving wheel chair – it's so hard to walk and run, books – mostly novels that are not boring, a bumper car ring – bumper cars with lasers and static shock launchers."

On the other hand, children believed that the hospital also should be a place to rest peacefully, which includes a place where children can fall asleep and stay asleep without a lot of noise. A 9-year-old boy with a diagnosis of cancer said a hospital should be "an oasis with no worries."

Theme number four, *empowerment*, included issues personal to the child such as the need for control or a sense of courage. Although children pointed out material items such as remotes to enable them control of TVs and DVDs, other children dealt with the issues of inner strength and empowerment: "Be undaunted by new experiences and adventure. Say 'BRING IT ON!'" said a 9-year-old boy with cancer. In "Mattie's Story," a story written by a 7-year-old boy with cancer to accompany the LEGO hospital he built, there are references to personal empowerment, with Mattie

saving the day: “Luckily the hospital had Mattie, the engineer, who was able to fix the ambulance.”

Wishes/hope was the final theme. Children offered escape themes such as wishes for a warm beach, swimming pool, park, or hotel. They used images of stars to wish upon. Yet, through all variations of creative work, children used words and phrases such as “life” and “living this magnificent day” that seemed to reflect hope and an appreciation and longing for life.

At the celebratory event, a violinist and guitarist played while dancers re-created the hopefulness described in a poem by a 20-year-old girl with cancer. She wrote about a hospital gown of royal purple silk “…to wrap in survival – the train, majestic, to follow where I walk. The mood is yellow as sunshine shining on stained glass windows...” (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3. Hospital Gown Dance

5. Discussion

It is predictable that many children would focus on the physical aspects of the hospital. Children live according to the information provided by their senses and remember places and sensations more than they remember people.[14] Therefore, they are likely more sensitive to their surroundings than are adults, and may be affected deeply and for a long time by details of which adults are unaware.

Findings reflect children’s intuitive understanding of the importance of psychosocial issues of hospitalization of concern to environmental psychologists: (a) control, (b) privacy and social interaction, (c) personal space, (d) territoriality, and (e) comfort and safety.[15] For example, children recognized the need for privacy as well as socialization when hospitalized. Hospital environments that provide a balance of social interaction and

privacy along with hospital policies that support these conditions best meet children's unique needs and coping styles.[16]

Relationships with family and hospital staff were important to the children. Separation from parents is an enormous stressor, particularly for young children.[17] We have long been aware that seriously ill children benefit from strong relationships with their doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals who provide their care.[18] Connected relationships may develop when the child and health care professional have either been together long enough for the relationship to have evolved, or the process is accelerated because of the patient's extreme need.[19] In such a relationship, the healthcare professional sees the child as a person first and as a patient second. Because of the lengthy and frequent hospitalizations many children at Georgetown experience, evidence of these connected relationships is reflected in the findings.

Children's expressions regarding the hospital atmosphere point to the need for the provision of stimulating activities as well as privacy and quiet for children to engage in peaceful, quiet activities. Research on coping behaviour reveals the wide range of coping strategies children use to deal with stress, from aggressive activities to isolating activities.[20] A thoughtfully designed hospital, appropriate policies and procedures, and a knowledgeable and caring staff can support these strategies.

In a hospital situation where children have little control, experiencing control vicariously through creative expression can provide some of the same good feelings and sense of empowerment as if it actually occurred. Asking children what a hospital should be allowed children to explore what they bring to the hospital setting (e.g., courage) and a chance to "act as if," taking on the mindset of what one wishes to become and allowing (or encouraging) behaviours to follow. If practiced long enough, "acting as if" is no longer acting when the person realizes he or she has rightly grown into a new role.[21]

With nearly all of the participants having life-threatening conditions, it was not surprising that a theme would address wishes and hope. Their words, phrases, and images such as stars to wish upon all seemed to indicate that many of these children were very much aware of their vulnerability. Keeping the spirit alive becomes a priority for many children with life threatening conditions, and one strategy to help accomplish this is by holding on to the belief of getting through it.[22] Research tells us that having a feeling of hope is important in dealing with such experiences.[23] Further, children need to perceive themselves as resilient, resourceful, and adaptable,[24] and participating in this project let them choose to explore this possibility.

Children seemed to appreciate the precious opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings about matters of importance to them, and were truly creative in the process. According to Maslow:[25]

> The creative person, in the inspirational phase of the creative furor, loses his past and his future and lives only in the moment. He is all there, totally immersed, fascinated and absorbed in the present, in the current situation, in the here-now, with the matter-in-hand.

Through the illness and fatigue, if one looked closely, the "creative furor" was there for all to see. These very sick children, living in the moment, shared with us what they know about their world.

Notes

[1] This support does not necessarily imply endorsement by the LEGO Systems, Inc. or LEGO Children's Fund of research conclusions.
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PART VI

Children and Nature-Encountering the Physicality of Being

Children's Self-Assessments of Play in Connection with the Philosophy of Physical Being (*Leiblichkeit*)

Eva Marsal and Takara Dobashi

Abstract
This paper will make a case for the use of play as a reason-centered experience of the body in the school curriculum. The theoretical argument comes from the philosophy of *Leiblichkeit*, which emphasizes the role played by the *animated body* in acquisition and construction of the world. Here the concept *body* (*Leib*) is not constructed in opposition to the concept *reason*; instead it presumes a mutual penetration of the two concepts. So, together with Schiller, Nietzsche, and other philosophers, we see play as humanity's creative answer to the contingency of life. This philosophical attitude causes life to appear as play even when it consists of internal or external compulsions which would seem to no longer allow for play: in this way one can also understand Schiller's famous statement that humans are "only fully human when at play" or, in other words, when guided not just by mere necessity. The philosophical considerations will be related to children's conduct and theories of play, determined as empirical data in a pilot study with children aged 10 of the Hebel School in Karlsruhe, Germany.

Key Words: children's self-assessments, empirical inquiry, Nietzsche, physical being (*Leiblichkeit*), play, Schiller.

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1. The New Physicality as Critique of a Reductive Concept of Reason

In opposition to the spirit of his time, Nietzsche inverted the value relationship between body and mind. He redefined what was considered the great reason of rational awareness as "a little instrument and toy of the great reason" of the body, of the animated corpus. In so doing, Nietzsche called for a radical reorientation of attitudes toward the body. No longer should the body be a servant to the soul, as the idealistic tradition would have it, but instead should represent "the principle of productivity and creation."[1] Nietzsche subordinated the spirit, or consciousness, to the body; and with this, as little reason, it steps back behind the great reason of the body. The little reason is equated with spirit or the consciousness that makes humans capable of saying 'I'; the great reason is equated with the self that stands behind thoughts and feelings and is identified as the reason of the body.

To summarize, we can say that Nietzsche's predominant thought in the 1880s was that the free spirit, though of necessity intellectual, could only

become alive and aesthetic in alliance with its sensuality. Only in sensuality, in the sense of the earth, does all creation have a cosmic, geological, and biological function. For Nietzsche, the great reason of the body must always accompany the little reason of *ratio*. We can only unlock our intellect in a really productive way if we find our way back to our physical being, through which we are able to grasp ourselves as elements of life. This concept of a new physicality was taken up by Edmund Husserl, Helmuth Plessner, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Gesa Lindemann, among others.[2]

Helmuth Plessner intended to challenge Descartes' dichotomy between *body* and *spirit* with his concept of *positionality*, which indicated the reciprocal connection between exterior and interior, and illuminated the body's relationship to the world around it and to its own qualities, or in other words, to its exterior world, its inner world, and its contemporaneous world. In this relational definition, humans occupy the highest plane, for not only do they *have* bodies, they also *are* (lived) bodies.

Through its *centric* positionality, the physical body is constrained by its relatively circumscribed place in space and time. The *lived body*, by contrast, has *excentric* positionality. As an animated body with consciousness, it reaches beyond its own boundaries and places itself in a here and now that cannot be relativized. Humans alone are possessed of a double character: both having a physical body and being a lived body.

> 'I am, but I do not have myself' characterizes the human situation in its physical being. Speaking, acting, and variously shaping things all involve the mastery of one's own body which must be learned and constantly regulated. This distance within myself and toward myself first gives me the possibility to overcome it. It does not mean a fissuring and splitting of my basically undivided self, but is rather precisely the precondition of becoming autonomous. When it is a question of mastering purely physical accomplishments requiring special skills, not only does manipulating the turn from being a body to having a body bring about the overcoming of distance, this is also its goal, is its object. [3]

In this field of tension between *being a body* and *having a body*, a person must aim to strike a balance through his or her actions. Only a human can act independently vis-à-vis the milieu, of which the lived body is a part and shape his or her life in the sense of *being a body*. With *excentric positionality* Plessner tries to grasp the special situation of humans in their humanity. According to Friedrich Schiller, humanity can only be fully

developed in play, a view culminating in his statement "A human is only fully human while at play."

2. Experience of the Lived Body as Enigmatic Text

In play marked by direct experience of the body, the great reason of the lived body is united with the little reason of the spirit, especially in active play or role-playing. The body serves as informant for becoming aware of and expressing one's own inner world of feelings, thoughts, and emotions, and also for an empathetic exploration of the world of others.

Self-reported play behavior, based on self-observation recorded over a two-week period, indicated a preference in games voluntarily chosen by children and young people for two play categories requiring direct physical experience: active games at 78.4 % for boys and 54.5 % for girls, and role-playing games at 31.9% for boys and 29.2 % for girls.

Philosophizing is regulated speaking or, as expressed in Nietzsche's words, "Rational thinking is interpretation according to a schema we cannot cast off."[4] The body as experienced from within in play and as constructed by attribution from without thus becomes, through language, an enigmatic text which the children must decode through the activity of philosophizing. As an example we will describe an interactive game that can be used to introduce the theme of the teaching units 'Who am I?, Partnership, Tolerance, or Foreign Cultures'. The game is called "Distance and Closeness." In it the class is divided into two groups, lined up in pairs in two rows about 2 meters apart. One partner slowly approaches the other and stops at the point where either party seems to begin to feel uncomfortable. The game was evaluated afterward using the framework of the five-finger method: phenomenological, hermeneutical, analytical, dialectical und speculative. To illustrate, here are some excerpts from the dialogues.

On the phenomenological level, the children talked about their observations:

> K16: I was laughing a little, and so was my partner.
> K17: I paid attention, like, to how my partner's expression looked and how she had her mouth.
> K 18: That you look your partner in the face, and how it looks and what he does.
> K 19: I was always looking into my partner's eyes, and I really liked that. It was a lot of fun.

The players primarily observed their partners. They were most interested in the partner's facial expression, which they tried to read, and not the body posture. In the second step, self-perception and perception of the other was developed hermeneutically. This second method is supposed to

help the children develop a reliable, valid access to their own private inner world and minimize self-delusion or the inability to achieve such access. Insight through participation in one's own process, through the act of distancing and the interchange of perspectives, makes possible an access to the private worlds of others.

Central here is the question concerning the reasons for feelings experienced during the game. Two explanations predominated, one interactive: "I thought it was fun because you looked at your partner" (K 34), and the other situational: "I liked it that you did something you never did before" (K 37). Most of the children prefer to explain their positive feelings through the social experience; they interpret the friendly facial expression as permission to come closer:

> K 69: I could tell by the expression on my partner's face that he was saying ok, I could come closer.
> K 70: So when you look someone in the eye, you have the feeling you can tell if he wants it or not.
> K 75: Because his eyes had a friendly expression, and it looked to me as if I could come closer.
> K 78: When my partner laughed I knew right away I could go one more step.
> K 88: (takes this interpretation to be a general norm and applies it to her own situation) I haven't known Jana for very long yet because she skipped a grade, she skipped second grade, and I knew I could go further anyway because she laughed and then I laughed too, and then…

The children who attribute the way they feel to the situational aspect either feel animated by the new experience, "I thought it was fun too, because we never did that, and then we laughed some too" (K 72), or else they feel unsure of themselves:

> K 85: Because you never did this before, and then it's kind of strange.
> K 86: You feel a little unsure of yourself sometimes. Should you go ahead or should you stop.
> K 87: And because you feel nervous.

Since thinking and speaking are closely related, an important goal of philosophizing with children is the promotion of language ability. Because many of the children felt nervous, they worked out the range of meanings for this state of mind with the help of their experience. For example:

K 112: Sometimes it depends on how nervous you feel. It could be that you're nervous, that you're happy. For example Maike and I, we're in ballet, and we have a performance on Saturday, and we already did that last year, and we are happy, too, and nervous.
K 116: With stage fright, you're mostly nervous and mostly afraid about whether you'll do it right or wrong.
K 118: You don't know if you should go a little closer or not, if the other person wants you to or….
K 120: You're kind of excited, too.
K 122: You think… uh oh, should I go one step farther? What is the other person thinking? Should I go now?

Together the children consider in what other contexts they could use the concept "nervous":

K 126: So for example, when you're at a funeral you're kind of nervous and sad, somehow.
K 128: I went to see a film yesterday with my friends. While I was waiting for them I was nervous that they wouldn't be coming any more, because it was already five minutes before it was supposed to start.
K 142: Sometimes I'm nervous because, like when it's my parents' birthday, what I want to give them.
K 144: Before an exam you're nervous, too.

The children came up with a wide spectrum for the concept "nervous". The insecurity that is the basic feeling underlying the concept "nervous" refers to qualities of experience with uncertain outcome or which can be designated as "hope for something" or "fear of something."

With the help of the dialectic method, the palette of various opinions, positions, and states of mind can be surveyed.

K 155: Some children, they think no, I don't want that, and others, like Johanna and me, we got pretty close, and some have a bigger distance, because they think no, I don't want to go any farther.
K 156: I didn't get so close because I thought my partner didn't want me to come any nearer.
K 158: I got really close because I've already known Maike for a long time.
K 159: Since my partner was grinning so much I went farther.
K 161: My partner was about this far away and then I whispered to him, You can come closer … but he stayed where he was.

Almost all the reasons given for choosing a given distance relate to the relationship level between the play partners. The signals received regulate the distance. However, some children don't respond to non-verbal or even verbal (K 161) exchanges, but only pay attention to their own inner state of mind.

The speculative method offers a multitude of impulses; for example, the transfer to the future:

> K 163: Maybe I would take look, if I think, yes, she looks pretty nice, and then maybe I'd talk to her.
> K 188: For someone who doesn't look so friendly, I'd ask if he…it could be that he's having a bad day, or if he…
> K 192: If the person looking so angry, if he's a tough guy or something.
> K 196: I'd wait first and se how he is or something. I'd see how he is in the schoolyard, if he fights with other children, then I wouldn't talk to him.
> K 197: If maybe he's having a day when he thinks it's stupid, first I'd wait til the next day to see how he looks at me then.
> K 203: If you have a friend that you've known for a long time and know she's a good friend, she can't look so nice and friendly all the time.
> K 205: It could also be that the other person is really mad at you or someone else, and then I'd ask if it's because of me or if I can do something to make things better.
> K 207: Well if I got sent off to camp and didn't have any friends there, and I'd see someone sitting there all alone with no friends, I'd go up to her and ask what her name is and so on.

The most important learning experience the children gained from this game was reflecting about the other person's state of mind. For one thing, it became clear to them that one can draw conclusions from the facial expressions of others about their willingness to be approached, but that the opposite conclusion should not be generalized. A "closed-off" expression would not necessarily indicate personal rejection, but could result from many other circumstances. The game encouraged the children to discuss in a differentiated way the topic of approaching a play partner.

3. The Statements of Children About the Significance of the Game

Play is so deeply involved in the lives of children that they cannot imagine life without it. And so it is not difficult for them to describe with discernment the feelings that characterize such a life. In texts written on the theme "A magician casts a spell on the world. There is no more play," the

children portray such a world as *debilitating*, *gray*, and *boring*. The children there don't know how they should occupy themselves; time seems to *stand still*. Rosalinde makes an effort to define this feeling more closely. She writes: "Sonja was soon bothered by boredom, but what could she do? She felt strange. She couldn't describe this feeling, but it was awful." As a result of the ban on games, the zest for life diminishes to a complete lack of energy. Thus Annalise notes, "After a week, we have hardly any energy left."

In order to put an end to this situation, the children are willing to accept personal disadvantages such as *pretended losses*. To illustrate, we cite the text written by Julian:

> Player Tricks
> It's the beginning of summer and we're playing handball against the Chancellor. We win, and the Chancellor gets angry and says, "I'm making a new law. From now on there are no more games, and whoever doesn't follow the law will be put behind bars."
> It's really terrible that there aren't any more games. No more fun ever. And what should I do with all my toys? After a few weeks I've had enough. Suddenly I get an idea.
> I challenge the Chancellor to one more game of handball. I say right to his face, "If we win again, everything stays the way it is, but if you win, we'll be allowed to play again. OK?" He agrees.
> Of course, we let the Chancellor win. You can probably imagine what happened.[5]

The topic *Winning – Losing* occupies a central place in a class discussion of *the meaning of play*. The children suppose that losing is caused by *a lack of effort*, and that it results in a *loss of enjoyment*, and with that a *loss of meaning in play*. The most important thing, though, is not the victory, but rather the participation in the *game* as such. From this the moral imperative is derived that *losing* should not lead to breaking off the game. The loser should instead be happy for the winner.

> K 70: It really isn't so important, but if you always lose, then somehow…, then it isn't so much fun any more.
> K 71: So really, when you play, it doesn't matter if you win or lose, because, well, the important thing is playing. And it's fun anyway.
> K 73: The main thing is that it's fun, because always winning the way Luise says isn't so much fun and, well, the most important thing in a game is to always have fun.

K 74: Actually it's the same with races; too, being in the race is the important thing.
K 75: You should also be happy for the other person, for example when your friend wins.
K 76: You shouldn't say, "Oh, now you've won; now I don't like you any more." That's mean.
K 77: Then playing isn't fun any more, if your friend says, "Oh, now you've won. Now I'm going to sulk." Then it's no fun to win any more.

In addition to pleasant emotions, such as those evoked by innocent scenarios like role-playing the family dog, anxieties can also be produced by other scenarios. These broaden the spectrum of experience and satisfy the children's sense of adventure in risk-free ways. Through these role-playing games the children feel bigger and more important, and their body sense is changed by the game:

K 135: So when my sister and I play dog, or a friend of mine and me, that's fun, and then you feel as if you really had a dog. Then I feel happy.
K 137: Sometimes I've played dog with my sister too, and then I always said "sit," and then she really sat down, and then I said "give me your paw" and she really gave me her hand and everything, and it was fun.
K 126: Sometimes it's fun, but sometimes you can play dangerous things, too, and then you can get scared.
K 130: No, then you feel so weird and it's exciting, somehow.
K 131: You feel bigger, too.
K 132: Scared.
K 133: Mysterious, because you have secrets.
K 142: I like to play fantasy games in the yard with friends from my child-care group, like with secret agents and big dinosaurs and things like that.
K 143: I often play with my friend that we are leopards or something, and then we jump around on the sofa or jump onto the table.
K 144: Sometimes I play caveman, and then I make holes with sticks, and then I get different things and put them into a hole and then I mix it up somehow with a stick.
K 145: And sometimes I play scientist in my room, then I make myself a tent with blankets and plastic tubes and then I get food from the kitchen, ketchup, then I made it like rhinoceros blood, I mixed in some water and then I tested it.

The stimulus "How does your body feel in fantasy role play, or when playing sports? Does it feel different than when you are taking a mathematics exam?" is supposed to encourage the children to take a more intensive look at their feelings and physical perceptions. The children identify the chief difference between *play* and *exam* as the *stress factor*.

> K 146: You feel freer, because with a math test, you sit there feeling the stress. Because – if you don't know anything you start to sweat and then you think, oh, what was that again?
> K 147: And you're under time pressure because – with normal games you can take your time, but with a math test, for example, now you don't have so much time, I think.
> K 148: When you're playing you take more risks than with arithmetic, actually, because you always think, I don't know that now, I'll skip over it, and when you're playing sometimes you think, I don't know if I should jump down now, but then you think, yes I'm going to do it.

The children went into great detail when asked whether a person could grow through playing. They were of the opinion that games broadened their cognitive, social, and emotional framework because games allowed them to enter into different or future worlds. Also, children believe that *playing* causes physical changes in themselves. For example, they assume that their brains grow larger through playing.

> K 158: You can also grow by thinking.
> K 159: So, when you play grown-up you feel like one, and when you go to work, when you play "going to work," then you think you have a bigger brain.
> K 160: You don't just get bigger with your body, also the nerve cells and the brain get bigger and bigger with experience.
> K 162: And for example if you win a chess tournament you feel bigger too, because you think, oh, I won against all of them.
> K 164: Playing ball, too, for example playing dodgeball! If you always catch the balls and the others can't do it, you feel so great and you're the only good one, and then you can save the team or something like that.
> K 166: And then you feel proud, too, and you're glad you did it. And then maybe people-, then maybe the others say, yes, that was super, and things like that.

Through the focus on the feeling of inner growth derived from winning, the problem of *losing* also came up again. In their definition the

children differentiated between bad and good losers. The *bad losers* can't accept failure; they behave with aggression toward the winner and attribute their defeat either to the winner's dishonest manipulations or to their own claim of unpreparedness. When *bad losers* win they make fun of the other players. Good losers, on the other hand, enjoy the game as such, are happy for the winner, and hope for their own success the next time around.

> K 167: So there are bad losers and good losers. The bad losers get really upset and the good losers, they say: It was only a game. It's ok that you won.
> K 168: Once we lost in a dodgeball game against our parallel class, and they made fun of us, and then we won and then they were all upset and got angry. They couldn't take losing, and we, we just ignored them.
> K 169: Bad losers, they also say: Yes, but I wasn't even trying and I let you win. And it isn't even true.
> K 172: You can't get upset about everything. You can say it's only a game, it's good that you've won, now we can play again.
> K 175: In my free hour I won against someone like that, too. He kept saying, "I'm still in the first level, I'm still in the first level." And then when he lost, "I was playing badly on purpose against girls" and things like that, because he didn't want to admit that he'd lost.

Being a good loser counts as a high qualification for a player. In general, the children were greatly interested in the topic *play*. They spoke with great concentration and focus about their experiences and the thoughts they connect with *play*.

4. Conclusion

In philosophy and ethics instruction, play, through the act of primary, active appropriation of the world, offers the opportunity to utilize all the anthropological potential relevant to judgment formation. Recognition and implementation of personally experienced and reflected values or norms is also promoted by the integration of intellect, emotion, and physical being encountered in the play experience. The chance for a critique of reason which philosophy discovered in the new physicality should also not remain unused on the didactic level, all the more so because the general dynamics of play, according to Frederick J. J. Buytendijk, connect with the needs of children and young people and offer them an obvious tool for testing their ethical decisions in a reflective deployment of their own bodies.

Especially noteworthy from a cultural point of view is the differentiated attitude the empirical study reveals toward the phenomenon

winning – losing. Victory, especially frequent victory, as shown by their own play experience, does not necessarily promise an increase in the sum of happiness, since it carries with it a social risk. There is a danger, namely, that the play partner who loses will abandon the field and thereby bring the game to an end.

Play, however, signifies joy of living, energy, and personal growth. And so the most relevant point in playing is not the antagonism *winning-losing*, but rather the continuation of the game, the game as such. A good balance between winning and losing promises the greatest satisfaction. This attitude could prove to be a meaningful future variable, since it implies balanced justice and thus promotes a democratic frame of mind. For this reason John Dewey, like Nietzsche, attributed great significance to play. Dewey recognized the fundamental intellectual and social function of play. For through having an appropriate space for investigation, experiments, and learning from experience, the individual can grow and develop a free attitude. So together with Schiller, Nietzsche, and other philosophers, we view play as humanity's creative answer to life's contingency. This philosophical attitude causes life to appear as play even when it is made up of internal or external compulsions which would no longer seem to allow for play; in light of this one can also understand Schiller's well-known assertion that humans are "only fully human when at play" or in other words, when guided not only by mere necessity.

Notes

[1] V Gerhardt, *Friedrich Nietzsche*, Beck, München, 2000, p. 123.

[2] E Marsal and T Dobashi, 'Das Spiel. Die kreative Erwiderung des Menschen auf die Zufälligkeit', in *Der Mensch – ein kreatives Wesen? Kunst-Technik-Innovation*, H Schmidinger and C Sedmak (eds), Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 2008, pp. 33-54.

[3] H Plessner, *Mit anderen Augen. Aspekte einer philosophischen Anthropologie*, Reclam, Stuttgart, 1982, p. 63.

[4] F Nietzsche, 'Nachlaß 1885-1887', in *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe (KSA)*, G Colli und M Montinari (eds), De Gruyter, Berlin/New York, 1980, vol 12, 5 [22], p. 193.

[5] E Marsal and M Wilke, 'Welche Bedeutung messen Kinder dem Spiel zu? Eine empirische Untersuchung in einer 4. Grundschulklasse', in *Das Spiel als Kulturtechnik des ethischen Lernens*, E Marsal and T Dobashi (eds), Lit-Verlag, Münster, 2005, p 263.

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PhiNa: Aspects of Creative Philosophising with Children About Nature

Anna Hausberg and Kristina Calvert

Abstract
PhiNa started in the form of a pilot project at the beginning of August 2007. The seminar aims to teach "philosophising about natural science themes also as an instrument for the integrated encouragement of highly-talented children".
The educational training is accompanied by teachers trying out the aspects of nature-related learning in their school lessons with their classes and small groups. PhiNa functions in this way as a teaching principle for themes related to natural-scientific thinking:
- in pre school
- in primary school (scientific education)
- in natural science lessons for children in the 5th or 6th years (11 to 12 years)
- and as an instrument for the development and encouragement of highly-gifted children.
Creative philosophising with children about nature gives creative thinking an independent role in philosophical discourse. Creative thinking is performed verbally in metaphors and in activities in the course of PhiNa which encourage artistic, imaginative or embodied forms of creativity. These include inventing a "device for reading someone else's thoughts", drawing "thought processes", or "enacting a thought in the form of a living sculpture".

Key Words: Creativity, discoursive and presentative symbols, metaphors, PhiNa—Philosophising about Nature, Philosophising with children, Symbols.

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1. Discoursive and Presentative Symbols

The objective of this approach is to counteract the confinement of the understanding of rationality to linear, discursive terms when discussing philosophy with children. The symbolic philosophy paradigm in the tradition of Ernst Cassirer and the idea of the presentative symbol in the tradition of Susann Langer already accurately encompass this potential.

In order to focus on creative thinking, it is worth explaining the didactical concept behind it:

In *Menon*, Plato's dialogue, Socrates, the philosopher discusses virtue with the young Thessalic nobleman Menon, who is visiting Athens with his entourage. Socrates is not interested in the idea of "virtue" as it is

defined by someone at any particular point in time; he is interested in the nature of virtue – virtue in and of itself.

Primary school-children are not only interested in how things in their directly perceived surroundings work, they also ask questions about and beyond meaning, such as questions regarding the nature of death, God, and happiness. They ask about the nature of the thing "in and of itself."

Children learn quickly how a bicycle works. School helps by presenting information prepared in a methodological-didactic fashion. However, the question of *what makes a bicycle a bicycle* is a philosophical question, just like the question regarding the nature of happiness or God. "Philosophising with Children" begins with the last two questions.

The direction that "Children's Philosophy" has taken world-wide is known as "Philosophy for Children" or "P4C". Philosophy for children has designed its own scientific canon of the philosophical content to be taught. This canon is presented a priori, where the fundamental philosophical way of reasoning is defined as synthetic reasoning, meaning the ability to reason in logical-discursive terms:

- Analytical reasoning: reduction of opinions, concepts into fundamental modules
- Creative reasoning: combination of the reduced module into new thought processes
- Self-correcting reasoning: testing the results and methods of the reasoning
- Synthetic reasoning: The smaller units produced by the analytical thought processes are to be combined by creative thought processes into new ideas, arguments and opinions which represent, in contrast to the original thought, a high complexity and generality and thus represent a so-called furthering of thought.

2. Philosophising with Children

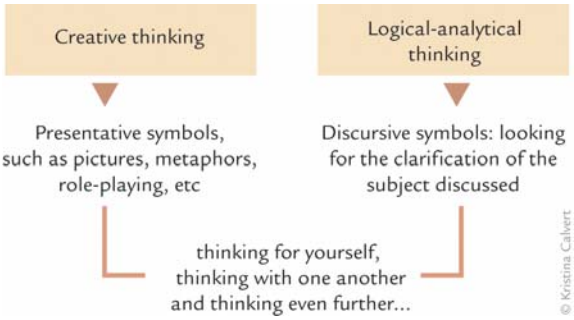
Creative Philosophising with Children grants creative thinking an independent role in philosophical discourse. The focus is on creative thinking, in addition to an introduction to logical-argumentative thought. Granting creative thinking an independent role in the philosophical context of the teaching-process means extending the traditional understanding of philosophy as the clarification of concepts in discursive, clear statements. The basic premise here is that creative thinking produces presentative statements with a multiplicity of meanings, which provides the children with another form of expressing philosophical ideas.

Up to now, while creative thinking, mythic thinking or aesthetic thinking were considered to be modes of expression for philosophical thought, they were viewed only as a means to an end, the end being the development of synthetic thought.

Based on the study of transcripts of philosophy lessons, one quickly recognises that children draw particularly on logical analogies, such as the metaphor "the soul is the inside of thought," for the independent expression of their philosophical thoughts. Philosophers such as Ernst Cassirer, Susan Langer (Langer, 1965) and Ricoeur (Ricoeur, 1986) show clearly that there are indications that logical analogies, which Langer refers to as presentative symbols, also belong in the realm of philosophy.

Based on the dialogical-pragmatic didactic of philosophy for practising philosophising with children, the concept of discussing philosophy is assumed to be a symbol-building process. Since the reality of human beings is not directly accessible, according to Langer and Cassirer, human beings transform the world into symbols. Cassirer groups these symbols into the symbolic systems of myth, religion, art, science and language. Language within this framework occupies a special position, for it is the only medium for expression, presentation and meaning for all the sign and symbol systems. Langer and Cassirer show that philosophical thought as an incomplete process of assigning meaning does not only take place in discoursive signs, but also in presentative ones. Consequently, philosophy is not another symbolic form in addition to those already mentioned. Rather it is a function that makes understanding and/or meaning possible.

The philosophical paradigm of Philosophising with Children



3. Creativity in the Context of PhiNa

In his book *Values for Thinking*, Robert Fisher describes the following creative thinking skills: "to generate ideas, suggest hypotheses, apply criteria in evaluation and use imagination in looking for alternative and innovative outcomes." [1]

In 1984 Erika Landau, an expert in creativity research, said that the whole point of every creative engagement is to enable any individual person, to fully exploit its potential. PhiNa also aims to give every child this freedom. In *Kreatives Erleben* (Creative Experiences), Landau demonstrates how children should be educated: "to autonomous thinking, to proper interrogation, to searching for various and interdisciplinary answers." [2]

These aspects are the basis for enabling creativity within PhiNa. In his book *Creativity. Challenges for school, science and society*, Klaus Urban, a Professor for highly-gifted children from Hannover University defines creativity as: perception and processing of new experiences, expressions and information by activating different domains in the brain, saved thought-patterns and experience treasures connect with new impressions, whereas novel restructuring and combinations will arise. These new structures constitute a new product, which can manifest itself in different ways and has a multiplicity of meanings. With communication, these products can be experienced, embraced and reviewed by other children In PhiNa we refer to all these aspects of creativity

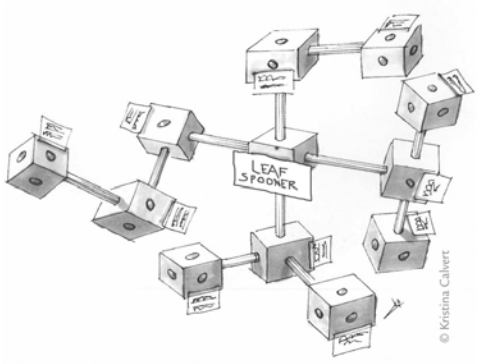
4. The "Leafspooner Exercise"

This exercise is based on Urban´s definition of creativity. The children were asked to create a new hybrid consisting of a leaf and a spoon – something entirely new and never seen before – as far as we know!

First of all, the children were required to philosophise on the subject of a spoon, its features and typical/unique qualities.

> In a tidy household, all spoons appear to be the same. But wait! What kind of differences can we discover? Do they really all look alike? Hasn´t your spoon got a small red dot on it? And mine smells so strange. What makes a spoon a spoon? Or to put it differently: What makes a spoon unique? What distinguishes it from a fork? [3]

This is where the process of philosophising takes place. Together, the children have a closer look at the spoons and write down their typical and unique characteristics onto cards. These cards are then pinned onto our concept-molecule-model, "invented" about ten years ago by Kristina Calvert and an integral component of Philosophising with Children ever since!



> During the construction of the three-dimensional concept-molecule-model, the children realise that their thinking isn't just a linear process from one point to another. The philosophical molecule-model is a clarification of complex thinking and multiple meanings. One can see what is essential for the philosophical discourse: an iterative, never-ending search for meanings. The more you philosophise, the more you will produce and discover meanings. [4]

The spoon's characteristics discovered by the children were: the moulded form at the front, the handle, tough material. The children were then asked to observe the leaves and describe them with regards to their common features, typical characteristics, uniqueness and spontaneous associations. The leaf's characteristics discovered by the children were: colour, stem, veins, specific, morph, non-geometric.

The leafspooner picture below was created by an eight-year-old boy.

Based on this picture, we would like to explain which creative competences can be acquired, consolidated and expanded with this exercise, and how philosophising and creativity correlate:

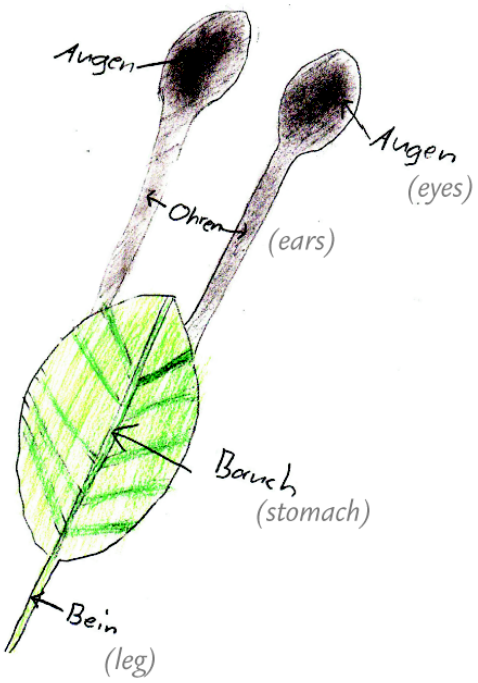
- analysis and synthetic reasoning have to be applied, because you first have to analyse the spoon and leaf, then put it together to make something new
- you have to distinguish essential from non-essential, because you should fulfil the specific characteristics of spoon and leaf. The question "What is essential?" is the question of philosophy!
- you could get into the so-called "flow" by Mihalyi Czikscentmahalyi, because you work very concentrated
- you have to be innovative in order to create something new and functional
- you have to think aesthetically, because you have to perceive precisely
- your sense of humour and wit can be vitalised, because you are drawing a funny-looking leafspooner and you can create a storyline
- you have to examine and inspect very closely in order to know what is essential
- you have to express thoughts and arguments graphically, and that is the synthesis in a picture

These are possible creative competences which children can and do explore while philosophising – especially when participating in the "Leafspooner Exercise".

The following pictures are a selection of other pictures created in the same "leafspooner session" as the last picture. All pictures demonstrate and accentuate the creativity, imagination, innovation and uniqueness of the children´s discovery and engagement with the task given to them.

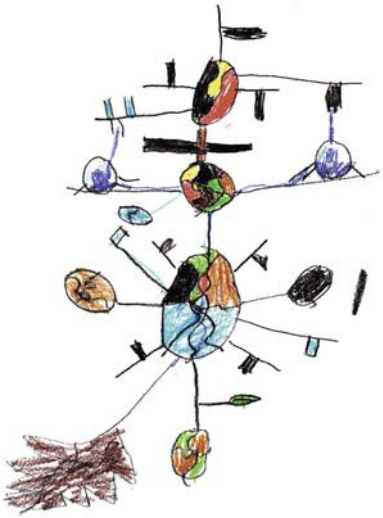
So the next time you see a leaf or a spoon…

One is almost tempted to ask "What makes a leafspooner a leafspooner?



In this interpretation, the leaf functions as the "torso" with the spoons and their various characteristics taking care of the rest! Particularly interesting is the use of the spoons as eyes and the leafspooner only having one leg!

This leafspooner was named as the species: "Leafspoonerinus Solckodospooner." A solid and robust spoon is combined with a soft and sensitive leaf – the result is a dynamic and aggressive leafspooner!



This leafspooner was described as having its own watering-system!

Notes

[1] R. Fisher, *Values for Thinking*, Nash Pollock Publishing, Oxford, 2001, p. 33.
[2] E. Landau, *Kreatives Erleben*, München, Reinhardt, 1984, p. 39.
[3] The opening adult dialogue to start the "leafspooner exercise".
[4] K. Calvert, *Philosophieren mit Fabeln*, Dieck Verlag, p. 20.

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Anna Hausberg is currently studying for her PhD in Teaching Biology at Hamburg University. Her first state examination for this subject had the title:"Can animals talk? The development of a module for philosophising with primary school children about nature" Anna has worked on many school projects in this field. For her PhD, she is currently researching on the subject of creativity in Philosophising with Children.

Kristina Calvert, PhD. has been working for almost 20 years in the field of Philosophising with Children in German-speaking countries and communities such as Germany, Switzerland and Belgium as a teacher, author and lecturer. Her work includes leading philosophical discussions in primary and secondary schools as well as lecturing and educating teachers in Philosophising with Children. She also works in close co-operation with the German Society for highly-talented children. One aspect of which she is particularly proud is the successful integration of Philosophising with Children as a subject into the curriculum of more than a hundred schools in different parts of Germany – almost unthinkable twenty years ago!

The Child and Nature: Dogs, Bogs and Honeysuckle

Wendy C. Turgeon

Abstract: In what ways does nature serve children as a matrix of becoming human ? Are children impoverished who lack this mode of experience with and within nature? Are children's imaginations hobbled in some foundational way by the eruption of technology into the lived matrix of nature and human interaction? This paper will explore how children's experiences of the natural world shape their view of what is real, assist them in meaning-making and offer them models of valuing. We will suggest educational strategies to reconnect children to their birthright as beings, sentient and reflective in the world, and describe how that natural environment, serves to promote their humanity. Through their authentic engagement with nature children construct and interpret the great binary concepts of good/evil, alive/inert, human/nature.

Key Words: children, nature, imagination, philosophy

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1. Introduction: The Kingdom of the Dunes

Robert Pyle[1] speaks about nature and children and asks his listeners if they can recall a special place they had as a child. He reports that the vast majority raise their hands, vividly recollecting some adventure in the natural world. When he follows up by asking how many can visit that place today, the hands go down and the audience graphically note the decreased opportunities to experience nature. My own childhood summers were spent running free at the end of Eastern Long Island in New York State. My encounters with the ocean, the dunes, my beloved pets, the wild plants in a small town were formative in ways only realized in adult reflection.

Where is that world today? Today's children live with scheduled play dates and fully organized lives. Each family has its own set of play equipment. The yards are sprayed for bugs, weeds and fenced in for protection and privacy. In the city children are never allowed outside without mom or a nanny (more often the latter) and parks seem to have more rules than fun.

This paper will invite us to examine the role of nature in the experience of children and introduce a number of theorists who argue for a necessary presence of nature in children's lives as foundational for later adult creativity in the arts and other areas. If we are eager to promote ecological awareness and care for the earth, we will find warnings from scientists who link a stewardship and intellectual passion for nature, animate and inanimate,

to the types of encounters in which the young child engages. Finally we consider the implications for education, both familial and formal, of these arguments. All of this leads us to the larger question: in what ways does an experience of nature promote, make possible, the philosophical attitude of the child in the world? The paper end with some proposed directions in which we might wish to proceed.

2. The Dangers of the Modern Social Experience: Voices of Concern

There remains the danger of recollecting one's own youth in glowing nostalgia even as we speak disparagingly of "younger generation." In contemporary society, newer and more technological is always deemed better. Technology has reshaped our shared cultural experiences and has transformed the educational system. Children today have a vast amount of information available to them with the click of a mouse—more information than ever imagined in the past! And websites can take us around the natural world in 80 seconds with amazing visuals to astonish us. Do we still need a first hand experience of nature?

Possibly yes. There are a growing number of critiques of how we approach nature and control our children's access to it. David W. Orr[2] offers a cogent review of current social problems that he claims have been exacerbated by a shift from a holistic view of being human towards a model dominated by economics. We find issues as diverse as health concerns (from obesity to chemicals in food), information overload in schools and at home through the Internet, poorly funded schools shaped by consumerism, an ever-growing worship of technology and serious environmental concerns on a global scale. He locates the sources of these social problems in a paradigm shift towards a vision of the world as commoditized, driven by cost-benefit analysis applied to everything, "rampant materialism"[3] and a naïve confidence in science to solve all problems with technology. He charts these influences on children by noting the shift from a prior direct, tactile encounter with the world of nature and animals to an indirect, mediated knowledge, filtered too often through a technology, video games, TV, movies.[4]

Orr presents these shifts as a sign of waning humanism and invites us to attend to and redirect our path towards a more consciously and conscientiously grounded life. Joining voices with Robert Michael Pyle, he cautions us against a complacency to refuse to take seriously these losses of direct and meaningful contact with nature and animals. Petting Zoos and nature farms cannot substitute for the collective experience of children negotiating their way around their locales and in doing so, developing their own degree of "nature literacy." In "Wild Child"[5] Tim Lougheed argues that free play in nature helps children come to terms with an alien, open-ended,

even chaotic, environment. In doing this, they learn to situate themselves in the world and value nature on its own terms. The future of ecological concern depends upon a genuine and developed sense of engagement with the world, not a formal course of study in the classroom on rainforests or whales. Although wild places are fast disappearing and the older models of a childhood full of local roaming between dawn and dusk have virtually vanished in today's paranoid society, Lougheed suggests that even an open recess experience can help children find their place in the natural world—if we allow them the freedom and opportunities to do so[6]. But why is this encounter deemed so vital?

3. Edith Cobb and Louise Chawla: Imagination, Memory, Self, Nature

Perhaps the most referenced study on the relationship between children and nature is that of Edith Cobb in her work, *The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood.* Originally published in 1977, with an introduction by her friend Margaret Mead, this text was met initially with little interest, but its influence has subsequently grown and inspired many others. She introduced the idea that childhood experiences of nature are vital for the development of human thought, especially artistic genius. Cobb uses the poem by Walt Whitman as an inspiration for her philosophical framework of childhood relationship to the natural world:[7]

> There was a child went forth every day,
> And the first object he looked upon, that object he became,
> And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part of the day
> Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

Focusing on the child's sense of wonder, Cobb articulates a living ecology, a reciprocity of living systems: child and nature. As the infants and growing children encounter novelty, they innately need and desire to organize the world into patterns of meaning. "For the young child, the eternal questioning of the nature of the real is largely a wordless dialectic between self and world."[8] The givenness of the natural world, the very "pull of gravity"[9] offers the child a vivid and immediate immersion in being and the opportunity to articulate a center of non-being (self—in this case) in the dialectic of consciousness and world. From perceptual immersion, the child engages in an intuitive sensibility that both constructs and is constructed by intellectual intent. As she explores her world, she maps it into recognizable territories. Curiosity, exploration, wonderment—these primal experiences are foundational for the human being and yield the urge towards narrative. "The

life history of a child is an ascension out of biological history into the world imagery of his particular culture and the language of his particular era."[10]

This ongoing process of child as explorer of world and co-constructor of self flourishes in middle childhood where Cobb claims the seeds of artistic genius are planted. We nurture our creative voice by returning to the source of all creativity as we have experienced it: the natural world. She credits Wordsworth's poetry as helping John Stuart Mill re-integrate with his childhood and overcome his depression. "Man needs to sense a bio-cultural continuity with nature in order to tap the sources of energy that motivate his own power of creative synthesis."[11] She analyzes the role of nature in the lives of the Bronte children and their fabrication of wildly imaginary and detailed kingdoms. The Bronte women, unfortunately, never emerged out of middle childhood, representing a failure of imaginative development. One's experience of one's culture must hit up against, merge with, build upon and yet also challenge one's experience of nature for full human potential to flourish. Artists are those among us who have retained the acute awareness of their connection with the earth, even as they have bonded with the human consciousness.

Cobb expands upon her thesis of child/nature nexus of meaning when she explores the realm of memoires. Artists often recall some obscure experience of heightened awareness, a memory of a vision which captures "the mosaic of immediate sensory experience of the natural world on the one hand, and on the other a sudden exultation and delighted sense of freedom in the vastness of open spaces, namely time."[12] More recent studies have substantiated her claims by interviews in which individuals can recall now extraordinary important experiences wherein a seemingly insignificant encounter with nature led to as astonishing realization of self-in-the-world and self-as-not-the-world. Cobb insists that the child links the biological roots of being human through his direct immersive experience of nature with the cultural development of his world as human-suffused. Nature and culture go hand in hand in the development of the human person.

She mentions the 12th century perspective on nature as indicative of a new consciousness. Hildegarde von Bingen, a philosopher who most likely was not known to Cobb, represents this juxtaposition of nature and culture as she formulated her theory of human being in the world and humanity's relationship to the ineffable through botanical metaphors. As we continue to seek an understanding of what it is to be human, we must acknowledge the answer lies in plumbing the depths of our biological kinship with the world around us. To cut ourselves off from that is to destroy the very matrix of our imaginative potential, to "kill the roots," as it were, of our creativity.

Cobb ends her study with a plea for the recognition of "compassionate intelligence," an intelligence which acknowledges our immersion in the natural and cultural worlds as concrete, real, and related—

not an abstraction or a focus on pure individuality. We must strive to identify, more than differentiate. Differentiation means distancing while identification yields connection, appreciation and the chance for understanding. If we recollect the origins of our thought within a nexus of environments, cultural and natural, we recognize the vital importance of the other in being a self. We learn through the agency of the other brushing up against us and asking us to acknowledge and respond. Nature does not bend itself to be what we choose for it. It asks that we acknowledge it and explore its infinite possibilities and in doing so, we come to realize our own. Cobb concludes that creativity as the essence of being aware can only emerge in an ongoing encounter with nature.

In her 1994 work, *In the First Country of Places*, Louise Chawla takes Cobb's thesis on the role of nature in birthing artistic creativity and tests it through an ingenious study of five contemporary poets and their childhood recollections. Chawla challenges Cobb's claims for the essential presence of nature for adult creative genius as her interviews with five contemporary urban American poets did not reveal this intense and luminous encounter with nature. But at the same time, Chawla discovers that the childhood recollections of the five poets did generate some important observations on memory, childhood and nature. She offers a "hermeneutics of memory" which extends and enriches the arguments found in Cobb's earlier work.

Chawla reports that nature does factor into human experience in ways different from those charted by Cobb but no less profound. She acknowledges, in contemporary times we are acutely aware of the importance of early childhood memories, experiences, even as we dismiss the attitudinal perspective of the child within the experience. She points out that children report a sense of an "animated, dynamically interactive universe [which] conforms to adult worlds of the romantic, Renaissance, or Medieval eras." This exact world view has been discarded in the contemporary mind and therein lies the tension writ large among cultures but lived small within each one of us. Her solution is to visit other models of human development that might offer alternatives to the strictly geometric progression of theorists such as Jean Piaget. She discovers a powerful model in the Swiss psychologist Jean Gebser as stated in his foundational work, *The Ever Present Origin* (1949, 1953.)[13]

Borrowing from Gebser, Chawla suggests that one can re-connect the childhood to adulthood by recognizing and affirming experiences as genuine, revelatory and as coming from a state of interconnectedness with the world and self. If we allow ourselves to expand our paradigms of experiential understanding and engagement with the world, we realize that intellectuality is but one way to apprehend self/world. Gebser details five *Gestalten* or perspectives that he claims can represent eras of human evolutionary

progress. They are not structured as hierarchies but are present within each of us: the archaic, the magical, the mythic, the mental and finally, the integral. Each perspective enriches our grasp of reality and reveals the world from another angle of rich access, situating the individual in relationship with surrounding nature. Following Gebser, Chawla asserts the importance and legitimacy of childhood experience, both intrinsically on its own merit but also for the "good of" the adult self. "Integral intelligence" offers us a freedom to revel in the power of these modes and manners of apprehending the world. "This freedom remains open to archaic pre-temporality, magic timelessness, the cyclical nature of myth and mental measured time, seeking through each an understanding of how to act for the good of the whole."[14]

Chawla concludes that our foundational identifications with nature find fruition in language, the nurturing of empathy, and models of care. Through language we can observe, explore, articulate and reveal our relationship to the natural world around us. We can uncover our organic kinship with the world as given and in doing so, avoid the bifurcation of the Cartesian self from body/world. Through an intense act of perception we can tease out the sameness that bonds the self to world thereby regain some of that early empathic oneness with nature that we have lost in the cerebral separation from and di-mystification of world-as-matter. But this primitive empathy must develop towards an active sympathy which can nurture children and adults towards adopting attitudes of responsibility towards the natural world. This entails a passionately active stance towards issues of environmental concern but also suggests a new model for scientific understanding, one inspired by a feminist critique of hegemonic attitudes towards nature. Chawla leaves us with the belief that childhood experiences of nature can be vitally important but must be acknowledged, explored under new ways of seeing, listening, thinking and finally must inform our appreciation of and understanding of one another in community. The dialogic challenge of the 21st century is reconnecting with others and the natural world and childhood may offer us a key towards both goals.

4. Educational Directions/Philosophical Implications

We have discovered that some genuine and immediate experience of nature may be essential for our development as humans and as individuals. A number of important questions emerge:

- Should we construct another model for play which emphasizes unfettered, exploratory and communal child play over organized, adult driven models?
- Can children's experience of nature invite us to construct a phenomenology of self/world articulation and better

understand how that shapes who we are and who we become?

- What avenues for educational reform and innovative programs can we explore?
- Can a deeper attention to the child's encounters with the natural world be essential if we wish to achieve global awareness of and commitment to ecological action?

Each of these could yield a direction for reflection but for our purposes here, we will focus on two educational response proposals: the possibility of active and open engagement with nature during the school day and a dialogical engagement in a communal reflection on nature.

David Sobel has taken up the challenge to return authenticity to children's experiences of the natural world by suggesting opportunities to create special places wherein the children determine the rules and structure of their shared experiences with others. He details seven key actions that schools and families can facilitate for children: the crafting of "forts" and special places by children for themselves, playing hunting and gathering games, shaping small worlds (habitats for pets, school ground gardens or enclaves), developing friendships with animals, constructing adventures (the troop of boys or girls and their clubhouses in the woods), living and nurturing fantasies (my dune kingdom, Terabithia[15] worlds) and the simple following of paths, creating shortcuts to school, home, the woods or corner lot out there.[16] Echoing the work of Edith Cobb, Sobel stresses the vital importance of a "free play of the imagination" that unstructured encounters with the natural world can offer the child. In a culture where so much of the work of the imagination is done up front for children[17], nature still invites them to construct, develop, amend actively their grasp of the world in its actuality and its possibility. Schools can maintain open playgrounds with space for nature to flourish. Even in urban areas, parks and lots can be transformed into opportunities for children to play freely and build worlds of their imagining.

Sobel also underscores the vital importance of children directly engaging with animals. For most of human history we have lived, worked and played next to a non-human sentient world. Yet today, many children only experience animals on videos, as cyber-pets or as fashion accessories which too often become 'throw-aways' when the dog or cat outgrows its cuteness and fails the Disney test.[18] We live in a Cartesian world where animals are functional and mechanical. The young child knows differently as we see in their early fascination with dogs, cats, animals in general and their fierce identification with them. But even as children's literature is full of animals and stuffed toy animals come in every possible species, they still appear not as themselves but as furry children, humans with cuter faces and

soft fur. So are these early connections with animals based on a fallacy of identification? In fact, this connection/divide functions to problematize both our understanding of children and of animals.[19] Do we allow children to experience animals as they truly are? Of course, I write this as an inhabitant of an urban/suburban culture. Those who live in rural areas might have a much better understanding of and relationship to the animal world. But even there, Cartesian mechanism threatens to divorce humans from the animal world in ways that are harmful to both parties.

What schools and families can do in this regard is to counteract the cultural dismissal of the animal world as either "dirty/unhygienic" or as "darling Disney." We can also shift our focus from "save the whales" or "pandas" or other animals exotic and foreign to animals in our own region. Domestic or wild—animals can offer children valuable opportunities to learn the borders of self and other and what respect entails. Children can build a deeper sense of what it is to be human as well as acquire an understanding of and appreciation for animals' experiences of the world. Animals offer children the opportunity to develop caring relationships with others who are clearly different and yet can respond to nurture. Indeed, one's relationships with animals can take the form of intense friendships and can serve to acquaint children with the parameters of care and concern for the other and the reciprocity of friendship. The stories of children and their beloved pets echo again and again the intimacy and critical role that these domestic members of our families can play in our lives. Their natural empathy for the animal world intensifies the value of the experience, facilitating later constructions of human friendships and continuing friendships with animals.

The above suggestions center around the role of physical and emotional engagement with nature. I would like to close with a proposal not yet referenced in the literature. Perhaps we need to invite children themselves to reflect on nature in its own right, their place within it and nature's own role in helping the human self articulate a "lifeworld" that can embrace the human and the other. Much has been written about the potential for children to reflect philosophically about their experiences and the world around them.[20] Children display thinking that is clearly metaphysical, ethical, aesthetical. To consciously construct opportunities for them to communally share their ideas about nature, animals, imagination, fantasy will enrich their individual and collective experiences of the world outside themselves and their classrooms.

In a "community of inquiry" children can gather and explore ideas about the status of the natural world in its ontic and axiological sense. They can construct and deconstruct such ideas as "natural," the difference between humans and other animals, animal consciousness, responsibility and rationality, emotions and action, growth and value, meaning of self as given/as achieved. In reflecting upon nature, they can continue the process of coming to recognize the borders of self and world. The aesthetic sensibilities

will be nourished by attention to a world of beauty that is not man-made but that presents itself for our consideration and appreciation, inviting action and response. As Kieran Egan has argued, children grasp the binary concepts of existence[21]: good/evil, beauty/ugliness, just/unjust, one/many in ways that adults too often dismiss or simply miss. Dialogues about nature, animals, our position in the world can invite children to articulate these intuitive ideas, examine their potency and failings and engage in genuine philosophical wonderment through imaginative, critical and caring thinking. Stories can invite them to imaginatively connect nature with the human and the ensuing discussions can immerse them in reflective engagement which can be foundational and transformative as they continue their journey as humans in the world.

In conclusion, we can hope that a more attentive gaze on the role of nature in our lives and the lives of our children will lead to a more intentional experience for all as we find ourselves thrust into the world in its terrifying and astonishing majesty, beauty and otherness.

Notes

[1] Robert Michael Pyle, "Eden in a Vacant Lot" in Peter Kahn, Jr and Stephen R.Kellert,. (eds), *Children and Nature*, MIT Press, 2002.
[2] See David W. Orr, "Political Economy and the Ecology of Childhood" in Kellert and Kahn, *Children and Nature*.
[3] David W. Orr, *op. cit*., p. 288.
[4] Ibid., p. 291.
[5] Lougheed, Tim. "Wild Child- Guiding the Young Back to Nature," *Environmental Health Perspectives*, Vo. 116, No. 10, October 2008.
[6] These critics echo and extend the arguments of Stephen Kellert, a psychologist who has written extensively on the value of nature experience for human development; see his essays in Peter Kahn, Jr. and Stephen Kellert, *Children and Nature*, MIT Press, 2002.
[7] Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, 1900.
[8] Cobb, *op.cit*., p. 31.
[9] Ibid. p. 42.
[10] Ibid. ,p. 50.
[11] Ibid., p. 80.
[12] Ibid., p. 87.
[13] Jean Gebser, *The Ever-Present Origin,* (1949 and 1953) translated by Noel Barsted with Algis Mickunas, Ohio University Press, 1985.
[14] Ibid., p. 183.
[15] The well-loved children's book by Katherine Paterson, *Bridge to Terabithia*, Harper Collins, 1977.

[16] See David Sobel, *Childhood and Nature: Designing Principles for Education*, Stenhouse Publishers, 2008 and his text, *Children's Special Places*, Wayne State University Press, 1993.

[17] Dolls come fully equipped to do everything for the child; she simply pushes buttons. Video games control the child's choices in vivid color and detail. The differences between the imaginative reading of a story vs. the watching of the video version are well documented. We might wonder if the vast array of contemporary toys and technologies has preempted our children's (and our own!) imaginations and contributed to the passive stance in the face of education in general. In his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paolo Freire blamed the educational system of adopting the "banking method" but the problem may be far more systemic.

[18] By this reference to Disney, I point to the talking animals, the animals that are really people dressed in animal outfits, whether they be crabs, deer, elephants, or Lady and the Tramp. C. S. Lewis made a point of describing the animals in his Narnia series as real animals. Even when they could talk, they remained true to their own natures.

[19] See Beth Dixon's *Animals- Emotion and Morality*, Prometheus Books, 2008 for a provocative exploration of how we parse child and animal experience vis a vis emotions and rational choices, moral responsibility.

[20] For a beginning consideration of the child's philosophical nature, see the writings of Gareth Matthews, Matthew Lipman and others associated with such world-wide associations as the IAPC (Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children) and ICPIC (International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children) and SAPERE (Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education.)

[21] Kieran Egan, *The Educated Mind*, University of Chicago Press, 1998.