

Philosophy with Children: Considering Factors to Facilitate Voice

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ABSTRACT: This article proposes that children's voice is important. It also suggests that one way in which children's voice might be supported is through Philosophy with Children. However, when teachers undertake Philosophy with Children to promote children's voice, it is important that they reflect on their role and the practice to consider how that role and practice enable children's voice. One way in which teachers might do this is by considering the seven factors for enabling children's voice identified through the Look Who's Talking project. The seven factors are as follows: definition, power, inclusivity, listening, time and space, approaches, processes and purposes. The article takes each element in turn to consider the ways in which Philosophy with Children might align with them and offers questions teachers may ask of themselves and their practice. As there is a range of approaches to Philosophy with Children, the article focuses on one model: Community of Philosophical Inquiry.

KEYWORDS: Philosophy with Children, voice, listening, practice, Look Who's Talking.

Voice and Childhood

VOICE HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY PROMINENT IN DISCUSSIONS SURROUNDING CHILDREN'S LIVES IN RECENT YEARS. Arguably, this is due to the increasing attention to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations 1989), which has been ratified by all countries barring one (the USA). Part one of Article 12 of the UNCRC states, "States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

At the outset, it is worth noting that this article tends to provoke discussions relating to children's voice and participation, where participation is often conflated with voice and voice is seen to be an expression of views. Indeed, Lundy (2007) highlights that thinking of Article 12 in this way may diminish the potential impact of what is intended by the authors of the Convention. She explains that abbreviating Article 12 to, for example, "the right to be heard" or "the right to be consulted" allows adults to avoid a key element of the article—that children have a right to express their views "in all matters" affecting them.

The notion of voice as the sharing of views or opinions is common, though Robinson and Taylor (2007) recognize "voice" as a controversial term. One aspect of the controversy surrounds the sense that it suggests children all speak with one voice. Clearly, like adults, they do not (Cassidy 2012), and to avoid this suggestion, the noun "voice" is often pluralised. It might also be seen as controversial because often it has an adjective attached to it: student or pupil. Talking of student and/or pupil voice limits children's voice to the place where they are most often found—the school. Indeed, traditionally classroom talk consists of the teacher asking questions that are often very directive or closed, children trying to guess what's in the teacher's head, and the teacher moving the discussion on to reach a desired endpoint determined by a series of learning outcomes (Mercer 1995, 1996; Wegerif 2005; Cassidy and Christie 2013; Splitter 2016). In this sense, voice is not promoted, though there is potential for it to be. However, while it is certainly the case that there is scope for voice—a range of voices—to be heard in school, children are not only pupils or students; their lives reach beyond school into the wider world (Wall K. et al. 2019). They are, after all, like adults, part of society (Biesta, Lawy, and Kelly 2009), and this includes very young children (Bartels, Onstenk, and Veugelers 2016).

There is an added dimension to the challenge that children's voice presents to adults. Voice is a loaded, even political, term (Wall J. 2010). It not only recognizes the owner of the voice but also suggests an element of capacity or agency (Holdsworth 2000; Wall J. 2010), where agency is seen as having the wherewithal to act and to influence the world in which they find themselves. When the owner of the voice happens to be a child, it may be considered as problematic because children's agency often goes unrecognized. Arguably, it goes further, children's agency is not countenanced in the first place. Acknowledging the voice of children acknowledges their agency (Shultz and Guimaraes-Iosif 2012; Horgan 2017) and sees them as participants in society beyond the classroom, which, in some way, elevates their status in that society. Cook-Sather (2006) recognizes this, asserting that having a presence in society alludes to individuals' power, and this facilitates participation.

There are reasons that some adults consider elevating children's status as problematic, and these present challenges to realizing children's voice. There is tension in accepting that children have the capacity to act and influence the

world they inhabit, but this requires a recognition of capacity, which is problematic. Much understanding of children's capacities is premised on the work of developmental psychologists such as Piaget (Donaldson 1978; Matthews 1994, Cassidy 2007; Matthews 2008; Murriss 2016; Green 2017), which fails to allow for children's agency. Often, children are portrayed as deficient in some sense, that they lack the likes of reason and self-regulation. Indeed, while this is the case for children generally, this perceived lack is emphasized further for very young children. In suggesting that children have the capacity to enact and effect change, a challenge to adult status is felt. Children may not agree with adults and the systems and structures they have created (Wall J. 2010, 2019; Sundhall 2017), and this is uncomfortable and challenging for some adults.

Reed-Sandoval and Sykes (2017) discuss positionality, seeing this as the way in which one is located—and locates oneself—in relation to cultural, political, economic, and social networks. Like John Wall (2010) and Sundhall (2017), they highlight that adult positionality may be troubled if children's views or participation challenges adults' views. Indeed, they reach further to show that for some children, those from marginalized groups, their voice is even more diminished (Chetty 2014; Reed-Sandoval and Sykes 2017; Chetty, Gregory, and Laverty 2022). This resonates with the suggestion that some children are discriminated against by adults on more than one count: firstly, they may belong to a marginalized group, and secondly, they are children. This fails to take account of Spyrou's (2019) assertion that children are networked and should be recognized as such. A linear, non-networked view of the child diminishes the possibility of children having voice and agency (Cassidy and Mohr Lone 2020). It plays into the narrative of children as adults-in-waiting, as becoming (Kennedy 2006; Cassidy 2007; Stables 2008) and, therefore, not (full) members of society. The issue at play is often that if children's capacities are recognized and their agency is permitted full rein, their places within and the relationships they may have with that society are called into question (Kohan 2014; Murriss 2016, 2017; Gheaus, Calder, and De Wispelaere 2018). It is, after all, adults that often determine what children may become, along with their opportunities in the present (Giesinger 2017), so it may be in their interest—or not—to recognize, accept, and facilitate children's voice. In effect, this is a question of power or authority. Adults are generally seen to have more authority in the world than children, including being able to demonstrate that power through the control they may exert over children. Arnott and Kate Wall (2022) suggest that power should not be seen as a finite entity, that it belongs to only one or the other—adult or child. Instead, they propose that power shifts between individuals, including between adult/child, depending on the relationship at play.

Regardless of one's age or status, there may be transformative intentions in using one's voice; it may indicate that one is making a deliberate statement (Fielding 2004). Indeed, voice is often seen to represent the spoken word (Rudduck

2006). In their work focusing on young children, Kate Wall et al. (2019) assert that voice reaches beyond the spoken word or even verbal utterances and that we must attend to the various ways in which voice might manifest itself. They propose that voice may be evidenced through children's body language, actions, pauses in action, behaviour, glances, movements, artistic expressions, or silences. They accept Fielding's (2004) notion that voice is an expression of self and propose that this does not need to be articulated through words.

Indeed, the idea of silence with respect to voice is an interesting one and one to which Johansson (2022) encourages us to attend. This is not the same as children's voice being mediated or filtered by adults (Roberts 2000; Komulainen 2007; Lansdown 2010; Bucknall 2014; Cassidy, Conrad, and Figueiroa-Rego 2019), though this may be seen as silencing in some respects because adults, even with the best of intentions, interpret what children wish to convey. Lewis (2010) draws attention to the power of silence and notes that it is neither neutral nor empty, an important consideration when reflecting on the relationship between children and adults with respect to facilitating and recognizing children's voice. Spyrou (2016) suggests that not paying attention to silence oversimplifies voice and that this is an often-neglected area of study. If it is neglected in research, it might be safe to suggest that it also lacks consideration in practice. In the same way, Hanna (2021) draws our attention to silence as worthy of attention, particularly because in failing to recognize silence, injustices may arise that result in reinforcing traditional power dynamics.

Further, caution needs to be taken when considering how children's voice, including their silence, might be facilitated. The language of "giving children a voice" is unhelpful (Bucknall 2014; Semenec 2018). It assumes they do not have voice, and, beyond that, it implies it is in the gift of others—usually adults—to allow it. This reinforces the paternalistic view that adults know best (Giesinger 2017), with such a view running the risk of perpetuating the epistemic injustice experienced by children (Kennedy 2010; Murriss 2013; Cassidy and Mohr Lone 2020), in which, simply because they are children, what they say is at best not credited and at worst ignored entirely. As suggested above, lying at the heart of questions of children's voice is the need to acknowledge that children have a place within society and that they should be taken seriously. Of course, this is not to suggest that children's voice trumps adults' voice or that they should have more space than adults for their voice; rather, it is a suggestion that their voice should be given "due weight," as the UNCRC suggests. The notion of "due weight" is often reduced to a discussion of children's capacities, in which they are seen to be deficient in some regard (Hendrick 2000; Hammersley 2017; Cassidy and Mohr Lone 2020). This is a complex and challenging notion given that many adults do not have the capacity to express their voice in relation to all manner of topics (Cassidy 2017; Cassidy and Mohr Lone 2020). Care must be taken that assumptions are not made about their capacities simply because they are children,

as this may result in their voice not being heard. Indeed, it may be even more basic than this, that their voice is neither invited nor expected. In their study of what children wanted as their ideal society, Conrad, Cassidy, and Mathis (2015) note that there are very few spaces in which children can explore their views with others, where they can try out their thinking and consider the ideas of others. Space is one element that Lundy (2007) identifies as being vital if Article 12 is to be realized. It is also one of seven factors identified as necessary for facilitating very young children's voice through the Look Who's Talking project (Wall K. et al. 2017; Wall K. et al., 2019). The Look Who's Talking project was created with the goal of promoting children's voice, particularly the voice of young children. In addressing this focus, the project set to explore how voice is understood and supported in various early years settings, with a view of offering advice to practitioners. Seven factors for consideration were identified by Kate Wall and her colleagues and are directed toward practitioners to encourage them to reflect on their practice in enabling children's voice.

The Seven Factors

The factors for facilitating very young children's voice presented by Kate Wall et al. (2017; 2019) are as follows: definition, power, inclusivity, listening, time and space, approaches, processes and purpose. The authors note that these are not definitive features, but they recommend them as good starting points for practitioner reflection and offer a series of questions designed to shape their practice in eliciting children's voice. Kate Wall et al.'s (2017; 2019) focus on very young children is interesting as work in this area is limited, though, increasingly, the subject of children's voice is becoming more prominent in research. Kate Wall and her colleagues recognize that young children have voice, that they are members of society, and that they have an element of agency. Given that Philosophy with Children (PwC) also recognizes the place of children in society and that philosophizing with children is one way in which they might participate in that society (Matthews 1994; Cassidy 2012, 2017; Cassidy and Mohr Lone 2020), it may be helpful to consider the extent to which the seven factors identified above may support teachers in considering voice in their own practice in relation to PwC. This is not, though, about determining why one might undertake PwC, as much has been written on this already (Lipman 2003; Anderson 2020). Rather, the suggestion is that teachers might use the factors to consider their own practice in PwC with a view to supporting children's voice. Some questions that teachers might ask themselves to aid in that reflection have been provided.

Community of Philosophical Inquiry

There are different approaches to PwC; the focus in this article will be on McCall's Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CoPI). CoPI, as developed by McCall, grew out of her work with Matthew Lipman in the early 1990s (McCall

2009). There are some similarities with Lipman's program as there are with other approaches to PwC, but it is not the same (for an explanation of differences and similarities, see McCall 2009). The term PwC is used in this article as a generic term for the various approaches to practising Philosophy with Children, while CoPI will be referred to when discussing this specific approach.

Very simply put, CoPI participants sit in a circle with the facilitator outside the circle. The session begins with a stimulus being read aloud by the participants. The stimulus is usually a written piece, perhaps a short story, a newspaper article, a poem, song lyrics, or the like. Following this element, the participants are invited to ask questions that are noted by the facilitator who then selects the question for the ensuing dialogue. Usually, the person who asked the chosen question is invited to contribute first. Thereafter, participants raise their hands and wait to be called to speak. They will not necessarily be called in the order in which they raise their hands. When they speak, they begin by saying, "I agree/disagree with [person's name] because . . ." Participants may not refer to an authority for their reasons for the dis/agreement, they should not use technical language or jargon, and there is no search for a conclusion or consensus at the end of the session (McCall 2009; Cassidy 2007, 2017; Conrad et al. 2015).

Definition

Kate Wall et al. (2017, 2019) hold that a definition of voice is first required by practitioners if they are to support children's voice. In relation to PwC, the voice of the teacher is significant in the promotion of children's voice. This, therefore, requires teachers to explore what voice means for them as facilitators of philosophical inquiry. In McCall's Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CoPI) (McCall 2009; Cassidy 2007, 2017), the facilitator is less conspicuous than in some other approaches to PwC. She does not offer comments on what has been said or present views or even questions of her own. Her participation in the dialogue is to juxtapose perspectives through her selection of the speakers and to ask questions only for clarification of a particular point (Cassidy 2007, 2017; McCall 2009). To some extent, then, the voice of the facilitator within CoPI is quietened, at least in terms of her audible voice. If voice includes aspects such as actions, then the facilitator's voice in CoPI is a feature. She selects the order in which participants speak with the goal of juxtaposing speakers to take the dialogue forward. She may ask participants to define a word they have used or offer an example to illustrate a point. In this way, she is able to influence the dialogue, though her responsibility is to ensure the dialogue remains as philosophical as possible and that the participants have ownership of the dialogue, in that they can direct where it goes. She has to be careful that her voice does not dominate. It is perhaps this element of the definition that requires attention from the teacher, who may ask questions such as the following: *How do I support the dialogue in being philosophical without dominating the dialogue? In what ways might I ensure*

that my voice is not heard more than the children's? How might I frame my interventions so that I say less but still support the dialogue? To what extent does my non-audible voice impact upon participants and the dialogue?

Power

There is power associated with being the facilitator. Cassidy et al. (2022) are clear that voice is about power, whether that is having voice or supporting voice, and teachers need to be conscious of the role they have in enabling children's voice. It would be easy for them to silence it.

Kate Wall et al. (2019) note that there are power imbalances between children and adults. This is, of course, true in the classroom context. In this context, therefore, power relates to the authority or ability one has to diminish the agency or autonomy of another. In classrooms generally, teachers (adults) have the power to determine who does what, who goes where, what happens, when things happen, and who has opportunities to express their voice. Indeed, the agendas in classrooms are almost entirely set by adults (Anderson 2020).

In CoPI there is scope for the power imbalance to undermine children's voice. Situating herself outwith the CoPI circle, the facilitator moves around in order to observe the participants. After all, if voice is more than verbal utterances, she needs to pay attention to participants' body language to support how she chooses the sequence of speakers. However, standing above the participants seated in the circle requires sensitivity to where one stands in relation to the group and to the individuals within that group. It would be easy to dominate a group of children physically or by being overly authoritarian (Robinson 2011). While CoPI has rules for participants to follow, these are designed to facilitate the philosophical content of the dialogue.

Kate Wall et al. (2019) see the teacher as co-inquirer, which is one way of limiting the power of the teacher. However, in CoPI, because the teacher as facilitator does not explicitly explore the topic under discussion with the children, she could not be considered a co-inquirer in the sense that Kate Wall et al. might suggest. Instead, Johansson's (2022) notion of co-being may be helpful, where the facilitator is in the dialogic moment with the children. In stepping aside from conspicuously inquiring with the children about a particular question, the facilitator arguably relinquishes power to offer the children control of the dialogue, thereby ensuring they can direct the dialogue and exercise their voice. This does not mean that the facilitator loses all control but that power in the session is shared and that in some moments the children are more in charge, have more power, than the adult. This aligns with Arnott and Kate Wall's (2022) suggestion that power is not entirely in the possession of the teacher or the children but that it moves along a continuum.

The facilitator selects who speaks in a CoPI dialogue. The facilitator should be cautious in exerting her power with respect to this element of her role. Unlike

the traditional role of the teacher, with teachers selecting contributors to a discussion without much consideration of the way they will contribute, in CoPI the teacher as facilitator has loyalty to the dialogue, so she selects speakers in an order that is likely to take the dialogue further philosophically. This means that she could choose not to call on particular individuals at a particular time. Care must be taken to ensure that voices are not silenced and that all participants have the opportunity to contribute.

Interestingly, power may also manifest itself for the facilitator through silence. She has power not to choose a speaker at a particular moment to structure the dialogue, to allow a pause for thinking time, and to control the dynamic of the dialogue. The balance of power may switch to the participants if they choose not to speak, to remain silent. The facilitator must read this silence. The silence may be philosophically interesting. Perhaps what is not said, what is omitted from dialogue, makes it interesting. Johannson (2022) urges the facilitator to attend to the spaces between what is spoken. This silence may be deliberate on the part of the participants if there is an area into which they do not wish to stray (Chetty 2014; Reed-Sandoval and Sykes 2017), perhaps due to the adult presence, particularly if they wish to protect themselves and/or their family's privacy (Hanna 2021). Or it may be as a consequence of the participants choosing to focus their philosophical attention elsewhere. Perhaps the participants are not interested—they may be confused, they may have nothing to contribute, they may not wish to participate, or they may be thinking something through. In reading the silence, the facilitator recognizes the children's power. Indeed, in inviting the children to engage in dialogue, the facilitator is offering power to the children and is, therefore, relinquishing some of the power she may, at other times, exhibit in the classroom context.

Acknowledging one's power as teacher, as facilitator, as adult in the classroom is important. There is tension between being the adult facilitator who selects the question, who determines who speaks and in which order, and saying that this enables voice, because it may appear that she controls the dialogue. However, the facilitator has expertise that cannot be ignored. She generally has experience and expertise in engaging with philosophy and in philosophical dialogue. In choosing the question, selecting the order of the speakers, and asking for clarification, she draws on her expertise to scaffold the children's philosophical dialogue. As Splitter (2016) says, questions posed by the participants are more likely to engender curiosity, and, in agreement, McCall (2009) extends this by suggesting that the facilitator arguably recognizes the question with the strongest philosophical potential and takes on the responsibility of choosing which of the participants' questions are explored. In acting thus, she works to create a fertile ground on which the children may plant their philosophical seeds so that they might flourish. There is an interdependence that is important. Power between adults and children is not an all-or-nothing concept; it is relational, and children

draw on the expertise of the adult to serve their own ends in the dialogue. The CoPI facilitator's role is to support, even model, but not to diminish children's voice. The moves she makes should be to open dialogue rather than to corral the children in a particular direction. Instead, she positions herself in relation to the children and creates the context to allow for inquiry; she recognises and accepts that the children should control the dialogue and that she is there to serve it (Mc-Call 2009). Children's voice need not be diminished because an adult has a role in the context. There are some questions, therefore, one may ask oneself in considering the element of power when seeking to facilitate children's voice through CoPI. Here are some examples: *Do children wish to participate in philosophical dialogue? Where and how do I position myself during the dialogue? To what extent will my interventions take the dialogue forward philosophically? How do I read participants' silence during CoPI, and what do I do as a consequence of this?*

Inclusivity

Although the facilitator has an element of control in CoPI in terms of ensuring the rules are followed and in choosing the speakers, it is important that she considers how she will ensure that all children are included. It is worth noting that age is not a barrier to participating in CoPI, and it is practised with children as young as three years old. Also, children of all ages and abilities are able to participate together in CoPI. This means the teacher has to accept that all children have voice and that it is valued. Within Kate Wall, et al's notion of inclusivity, it is clear that everyone should have an equal voice. Of course, this is not only about the relationship between the adult and children in the context of CoPI but about all children within the dialogue and how they should have equal status and be able to participate to the same extent. The notion of having equal voice extends to considerations of power and the need for the facilitator to relinquish her power to enable the children's voice, to recognize that their voice has value and that, in the context of the dialogue, this is not considered lesser than the adult facilitator's. That is, there is an ethical element to one's practice.

Diversity for Kate Wall and her colleagues is valued in considering inclusivity in the facilitation of children's voice. In CoPI the facilitator welcomes and encourages diversity of views. She may do this in the stimulus she selects or in the question she chooses or in the way she selects speakers to take the dialogue forward. Diversity of views is what drives CoPI, and in promoting disagreement as well as agreement, this will flourish. Caution, of course, needs to be taken in suggesting that all views are welcome. Certainly, it is important to philosophical dialogue that a range of diverse views are explored, but some will be neither palatable nor acceptable, such as views that are racist, homophobic, or sexist, for example. The facilitator must consider how to facilitate voice with respect to such ideas without enabling such attitudes. She perhaps has to use her voice after

a dialogue to discuss some of these ideas, something the CoPI facilitator would otherwise avoid.

Beyond diversity of views, inclusivity is about ensuring that all have the opportunity to participate. In so saying, the facilitator of CoPI should work to ensure that those who may be marginalized are included in the dialogues (Chetty 2014; Reed-Sandoval and Sykes 2017; Chetty, Gregory, and Laverty, 2022). There is certainly evidence that those who are marginalized because of particular learning needs, behavioural challenges, and/or various other personal needs are able to participate in CoPI in the same manner as their peers without such needs (Cassidy et al. 2017; Cassidy et al. 2017; Cassidy and Heron 2018; Heron and Cassidy 2018). Indeed, for children for whom verbal contributions are challenging, the facilitator has to consider ways in which their participation may be supported. Perhaps symbols or cards with word/images might be used, or if the child is not fluent in the dominant classroom language, consideration should be given to how understanding may be promoted and voice facilitated, such as through using a translation app.

Questions teachers may ask themselves with respect to ensuring inclusivity through CoPI may include the following: *How do I ensure that marginalized individuals have the opportunity to participate? How do I balance the notion of everyone having an equal voice with the need to drive the dialogue forward? How do I select stimuli from a range of worldviews to prompt dialogue? How do I reflect that all views are worthy of consideration but that some may challenge notions of inclusivity?*

Listening

It seems obvious when speaking of voice, that someone will be listening or attending to that voice. This is not always the case when children and young people are concerned. CoPI accepts that children have something worth saying and that their views are given attention. These philosophical encounters should positively be sought (Johansson 2022). The facilitator's role in CoPI centres around careful attention to what is being said during participants' contributions and in their body language. One challenge for the CoPI facilitator is that she never validates or commends what has been said by a particular individual. Each contribution is valued, and the facilitator and participants recognize that one contribution cannot be made without building on others previously presented. Therefore, without praising individuals for their contributions, it is harder for the teacher as facilitator to demonstrate that she is listening and that what has been said—or not—matters.

However, there are times when she intervenes in the dialogue, and to do so she must listen conscientiously. At a simple level, the facilitator can intervene to ensure the rules are followed. More importantly, listening will allow the facilitator to intervene to ask for clarification on terms used, to request an example, or

to encourage a participant to elucidate or extend a point. The facilitator never rewords or reframes a participant's contribution in CoPI; rather, she pays close attention to what has been said to be able to ask a clear question to take the dialogue forward. Splitter (2016) asserts that good teachers will know how to stimulate curiosity and that the question posed will prompt participants to seek answers for themselves. For example, drawing on an extract of dialogue where children are exploring the existence (or not) of God (Cameron and Cassidy 2022, 182), one participant, Claris, says, "I disagree with Ellie because he's [God's] not really a living thing. In my opinion, if he does exist, he's not really a living thing, but he is alive." In response to this, the facilitator requests that Claris explains the distinction she's making between being a living thing and being alive. In everyday conversations, Claris' statement may have passed unnoticed, but here, the facilitator was listening carefully enough to encourage Claris to further both her thinking and that of her co-inquirers. She did not offer a view of her own but highlighted potential for further probing by posing a well-placed question.

In demonstrating careful listening, the facilitator models behaviour for the participants. Not only that, she removes any barriers to her listening to children's voice (Haynes 2009). Counterintuitively, this may happen by putting in place a structure that facilitates voice and listening for the teacher and the participants. The structure of CoPI requires that participants listen because they must make explicit connections with what has been said previously. But to ensure the strongest possible dialogue, the facilitator has a responsibility to listen with care and with interest to what is being said. Such listening suggests that contributions are valued. In valuing and modelling this type of attention, it is anticipated that the children and young people will adopt a similar way of being when others express their voice.

Listening in this manner, one might posit, reaches beyond valuing what is said in a dialogue. It also acts as a sign of respect for what is being shared and for those who share. It suggests that the listener, in this instance the facilitator, takes seriously what is shared as part of the dialogue. It also generates a particular ethos within the classroom, something with which Haynes (2009) would agree when discussing ensuring classrooms are safe and respectful, where listening is a central feature and where children are able to share their thinking freely, knowing that it will be valued. If the children know that their teacher attends carefully to what they say, and they do the same, the general mood may be influenced, and a culture of mutual respect is likely. Indeed, a community reaching beyond the Community of Philosophical Inquiry is possible.

There are several questions the teacher as facilitator may ask when reflecting on her listening and how she promotes voice in her classroom, including the following: *Do I listen equally to each contribution and each participant? In what ways do I demonstrate that I am listening and valuing contributions? How do I*

respond to what I hear in the dialogue outwith the CoPI session? To what extent does listening to the children's dialogue impact on me as an individual?

Time and space

As Kate Wall et al. (2022) note, time and space can be physical and metaphorical. Here, they will be discussed in concrete, practical terms. Space, they suggest, is often construed as the classroom, the school building, the playground, while time manifests itself in the shape of timetables. They also highlight that space can be occupied or empty and that simply by being in a space does not mean that voice is supported or heard. Time, too, tends to be beyond children's control, particularly in a classroom environment. This means if the teacher wishes to facilitate voice in the classroom through CoPI, she has to pay attention to time and space. She is immediately present (Johansson 2022) for the children and their dialogue.

One way in which we might consider time and space with respect to the teacher as facilitator of CoPI and children's voice is to think of these in terms of opportunity. Reviewing what opportunities there are—what spaces and times—available to the teacher and to the children to allow for voice through CoPI becomes a central consideration. In several ways, engaging in philosophical dialogue through the likes of CoPI affords teachers the opportunity—the space and time—to foster and engage with children's voice. Philosophical inquiry is not another subject to be crammed into an already full curriculum. Instead, it presents opportunities to engage with topics philosophically. Introducing new concepts or reflecting on ideas presented in the curriculum may benefit from philosophical exploration. This is to say that children, through philosophical dialogue, are able to express themselves in relation to the topic being examined. They can explore their ideas and understanding of the subject and reflect on their thinking in relation to this. The teacher provides opportunity for this by making time in the schedule and physically arranging the classroom for this to happen. She also accommodates the dialogue by enabling the activity to happen. This is seen, for example, in Cassidy and Heron's (2018) work with young people in secure accommodation, where the young people report that they are surprised that young people that find themselves in such settings are able to think philosophically or that they do not get the chance to speak with one another about topics such as, "Should life [in prison] mean life?" or "Should you respect other people?" or "Is there an afterlife?" For such vulnerable young people in a very restricted space with very rigid timetables and rules, CoPI offered them the freedom and opportunity to express their thinking because the teacher provided the physical space and a dedicated time to do so.

Further, if time is not linear but cyclical (Wall K. et al. 2022), CoPI recognizes children as part of a wider system, part of the present and future, and their status is thereby enhanced. This is important in terms of enabling children's

voice because it assumes a view of childhood where the forward momentum to adulthood is not the driving force. Instead, this view recognizes and acknowledges children *qua* children, and voice is valued. This perspective is one that the teacher adopts in CoPI, and it is one that Kate Wall and colleagues (2022) would commend as it allows that voice requires practice and that in so practising voice, one will be able to revisit one's thinking with a view to developing one's identity.

Classrooms are often places of division, where children work individually or with children that match their own so-called ability level. This diminishes opportunities for collaboration, particularly collaborative dialogue, that is inclusive of all. In adopting the likes of CoPI, the teacher welcomes opportunities for collaboration. Beyond this, she actively creates a physical space where children can come together at a specific time to explore their thinking together. The teacher as facilitator is sensitive to the need to ensure opportunities for children to come together physically in shared dialogue and that in creating a setting where children sit with and among others from their traditional groups and those outwith those groups, she positions voice as important in the children's lives and in her own life as a teacher, as an adult.

To this end, there is a series of questions the teacher may ask herself about voice in terms of time and space, including the following: *How do I create opportunities for philosophical dialogue in the planning of the curriculum? What opportunities do I offer the children to practise voice in the classroom? To what extent do I encourage children to work with different people in the classroom, within a CoPI session? In what ways might I physically organize my classroom to facilitate voice?*

Approaches

Kate Wall et al. (2019) argue that approaches to facilitating children's voice must be flexible and varied. They note that open dispositions are also likely to support voice (Cassidy et al. 2022). As Splitter (2010) explains, dispositions are what prompt or provoke particular behaviour, and this may relate to our inclinations, attitudes, or desires. Various dispositions are seen to be important for teachers should they be keen to promote philosophical dialogue—for example, openness, curiosity, responsiveness, and inquisitiveness (Splitter 2010; Johansson 2022). It is hoped that these dispositions are manifest by the teacher and the children. Kate Wall et al. (2019) suggest that such open and flexible approaches will engender participation. Of course, the dispositions of the teacher have to be as open as those they aim to foster in the young people. While CoPI has a set structure, as outlined above, it does not sit in isolation within the classroom. Adopting CoPI, which may be seen as inflexible due to its rule structure, is not the only activity the teacher will provide for the children with whom she works; she will offer a range of approaches and activities, of which CoPI is only one, that complement one another. It is worth saying, though, that although CoPI has a relatively rigid

structure, this structure is one that allows for freedom in making connections and expressing ideas. The structure provided supports the sharing of voice by ensuring that participants make connections to what they hear, think, and say. It may also act in such a way that those who tend to be more reticent in sharing their voice are afforded the security of the structure and may feel more confident in articulating their voice in CoPI.

The element of increased participation, or a link to action, is an interesting one. Certainly, Philosophy with Children generally would aim to align thought with action, and CoPI is no different. In this respect, the facilitator adopts an approach to stimulating and supporting voice in a manner in which reflective action is likely to follow (Lipman 2003; Cassidy 2007; McCall 2009; Di Masi and Santi 2015; Bartels et al. 2016). By providing participants with a range of philosophical topics to explore, the facilitator offers a range of instances when the children can move from the abstract of the dialogue to the more concrete element of living with others. The children, it is hoped, will reflect on what they hear, think, and say, and this will help them in making decisions about how they behave in society. And the more practised their voice is, the more likely they are to consider broader questions about how they live, which in turn helps them to have good judgement and participate in a way that is good for all.

If the teacher has already determined that she wishes to engage the children with whom she works in philosophical inquiry, she has a number of questions she may ask, including the following: *How might CoPI complement the other activities I provide in the classroom? To what extent might the structure of CoPI support children's voice? What dispositions am I hoping to foster in the children through CoPI, and which do I display? How can I be more explicit with the children about the connection between thought and action?*

Processes

Cassidy et al. (2022) make a distinction between approaches and processes. While approaches relate to the choices an individual teacher might make, processes are concerned with the conditions and structures under which the teacher works that necessarily impact on the structures and conditions under which the children will work. Kate Wall et al. (2019) are clear that processes should welcome risk-taking and that they should work to offset an imbalance of power. Indeed, they advocate group dialogue as one way in which processes might support voice.

One thing that is important here is that risk-taking is encouraged for the teacher and the children. CoPI is a risky endeavour for teachers. For a start, the teacher cannot plan what is said during the dialogue; she responds to what the children contribute. In traditional classrooms, the teacher is in control, and control does not suggest risk-taking. In accepting that children will contribute in various ways and that they will share what they wish to share and not what is

wanted or even expected, the CoPI facilitator accepts the risk that she has to respond to the individuals and community engaged in the dialogue. She has to adopt an open-minded disposition and accept that she has to relinquish control in her classroom. This shifts the power dynamic, as Cassidy and her colleagues advocate.

It is worth noting that embracing philosophical dialogue with children means the teacher—the adult—is not only taking a risk but is accepting herself as not knowing, as being uncertain, as epistemically less privileged than might be the case in normal classroom contexts. In being disposed to curiosity, one might propose that the teacher will embrace uncertainty (Splitter 2016). The teacher has to be prepared for what may come when welcoming children's voice. The teacher, as Splitter (2016) explains it, will facilitate the dialogue and will create the conditions in which being unsettled or uncertain is desirable. The teacher may model this in her engagement with the dialogue, and this, continues Splitter, suggests to the children that she cares about their questions and inquiries and that she embraces her not knowing (Johansson 2022). Johansson (2022) talks about the teacher emptying herself, meaning she may acknowledge her experience and knowledge to enable her to hear what is being said but that she should not let this determine what is heard; the teacher seeks processes, structures, that allow this to happen. In so doing, she becomes aware of the possibilities for children's voice, leaving aside assumptions that may hinder this.

Beyond this, in adopting philosophical inquiry in the classroom, the teacher encourages the children themselves to take risks. She invites them to experiment with their thinking, usually out loud. This can be risky, partly because of children's interpersonal relationships and partly because they may not yet feel able to express their voice. In advocating this kind of risky behaviour in the classroom, the teacher is saying to the children, albeit implicitly, that risk is a good thing, that to express oneself, to share one's voice, can be risky, but risk-taking can be good if it aids understanding and dialogue and fosters respect.

This encouragement and acceptance of taking risks also enables the teacher to demonstrate that she has created a safe space in CoPI for this to happen. There will, of course, be structures within a school that suggest children are not necessarily as important as the adults in the same setting. If this is the case in school, it is magnified many-fold in wider society. CoPI offers children the opportunity to practise their voice in a safe context. The teacher has chosen an approach—CoPI—to employ with the children, and in so doing, she has created conditions that enable children's voice to be nurtured within the structures imposed on them and about which neither they nor an individual teacher have much control. Indeed, given the conditions under which many teachers and children work in schools, practising Philosophy with Children allows certain structures such as rigid timetabling, performativity, and narrow curricula to be offset. In some senses, CoPI offers the teacher a subversive way to engender children's voice.

The structure offered by CoPI can also be seen to allow for children's voice in very tightly controlled spaces such as the secure accommodation in which some find themselves (Cassidy and Heron 2018; Heron and Cassidy 2018). Although the young people in the secure accommodation described in Cassidy and Heron's project were bound by the confines of their imprisonment, individuals who would not otherwise come together in the setting engaged collaboratively in dialogue in ways in which they would not normally. For example, aside from the topics they wanted to explore, they quickly realized that while swearing was not tolerated in the setting under the usual circumstances, it was ignored in the context of the dialogues. This is important because the conditions and structures under which they lived and studied dictated immediate withdrawal from any situation where swearing was used. In the CoPI dialogues, the participants were able to use whichever vocabulary helped them to express themselves. They also, on occasion, participated in CoPI with their teachers. The setting's structures, much like those in mainstream schools, generally do not see a group of children engaged in dialogue with their teachers on an equal footing. This kind of activity has the potential to alter the processes, the structures, and the conditions in which children—and their teachers—work.

In considering how she might work within the structures—the processes—in which she and the children find themselves in school, there is a range of questions the teacher may ask herself, including the following: *To what extent do I encourage children to take risks in their thinking? In what ways might my practice suggest that I am willing to take risks to support children's voice? How might CoPI challenge the structures within the school to enable children's voice to be heard? What processes in the classroom, school, and society would benefit from listening more carefully to children's voice?*

Purpose

Cassidy et al. (2022) are clear that it is important to know why children's voice is to be promoted. There are various reasons the facilitation of children's voice may be seen as a good thing, including, as Cassidy et al. (2022) suggest, for consultation, evaluation, to help with planning, to advance democracy, or to effect some kind of change. Anderson (2020) correctly highlights the particularly adultist perspective that drives educational philosophy and practice. This is problematic and runs the risk of treating children as a means to an end, with that end being adult (Cassidy 2007). The same charge may be levelled at those wishing to promote children's voice should children's goals be ignored. One must know what one is trying to achieve through encouraging children's voice, and this should be communicated, even if it is in an attempt to displace the traditional power structures to reposition children and adults in more positive relation. Cassidy et al. (2010) assert that children may initiate voice. Although CoPI follows a particular structure, as previously explained, this does not mean that children do

not initiate philosophical inquiry in the classroom. The teacher's responsibility in such circumstances is to respond positively and welcome this move. One aspect of this may be to explore with the children what their purpose is in raising philosophical questions, particularly if this happens outwith a scheduled time for CoPI.

One thing that may be avoided in having an explicit rationale or purpose for introducing CoPI into the classroom is tokenism. Too often children are invited to share their views without care or consideration being given as to why this may be desirable; though, as noted previously, voice reaches further than an articulation of views. In understanding why she facilitates CoPI in the classroom, the teacher is being honest with herself and her pupils. She is suggesting an element of reciprocity that Kate Wall et al. (2019) would welcome. She is giving something of herself, her rationale, an explicit statement of her values, in order that children are freed to give something of themselves—their voice. In so doing, there is a sense that more authentic voice will be shared. The teacher will be more open, and the children will be more likely to share what they wish to share rather than what they think the teacher—the adult—wants to hear.

In considering her purpose in practising CoPI with the children with whom she works with the aim of supporting children's voice, the teacher might ask herself questions, including those that follow: *What do I hope to achieve through using CoPI as a means to facilitate children's voice? How do I communicate my purpose to the children? To what extent do I ensure a shared vision for children's voice through CoPI? How can I be sure that I am avoiding tokenism in practising CoPI with children?*

Conclusion

If voice, as has been suggested above and through the likes of the UNCRC and the World Programme on Human Rights Education, is important, it is vital that practitioners take note and consider their practice. One way in which they might foster children's voice is through Community of Philosophical Inquiry, but it is important that they ask questions of themselves and their practice to ensure that what they are trying to achieve is clear to themselves and others, including the children with whom they work. In promoting voice through the likes of CoPI, it is not about satisfying the teacher's goal (Splitter 2016; Anderson 2020); it is about recognizing children as agents that have the capacity to think for themselves. This will require particular behaviour on the part of the teacher and reflection on her practice. It will likely involve her in having pedagogical humility, as Johansson sees it, in order "to let the child make me [the teacher] small" (2022, 26). Acknowledging the adult/child binary and recognizing adult privilege and adultist perspectives so often present in society generally, and in classrooms specifically, will be important. To that end, this article has offered a series of questions upon which teachers might reflect. These are prompted by the

Look Who's Talking project undertaken by Kate Wall et al. (2017; 2019; Cassidy et al. 2022). The flourishing of children's voice is central to their project, and they offer seven factors—definition, power, inclusivity, listening, time and space, approaches, processes and purpose—that might be useful in helping practitioners think about the extent to which they support children's voice and the ways in which they do this. These factors may be useful in affording consideration of CoPI and how it might enable children's voice.

One thing is clear, as Conrad et al. (2015) note, children and young people are rarely afforded opportunities to explore their views, experiment with their thinking, and have others listen to and take their voice seriously. They often experience epistemic injustice by virtue of being children (Kennedy 2010; Murriss 2013; Cassidy and Mohr Lone 2020). Paying attention, being present, and making an effort to identify and nurture children's voices through philosophical dialogue (Haynes and Murriss 2000) could allow for a more inclusive approach that fosters children's voice and provides opportunities to the children—and the teacher—to shift the balance of power with the goal of the teacher actually listening to what is shared—or not—and ensuring that this in some way influences the status of children. Attention might usefully be paid to Anderson's (2020) suggestion that the educational goals of children should be taken seriously, and this includes in their practice of philosophical inquiry. However, it is not sufficient that voice is expressed; Lundy (2007) is clear that "voice is not enough"; she insists that there must be space, audience, and influence if Article 12 from the UNCRC is to be successful.

Certainly, CoPI offers a space for voice to flourish, with the teacher and other participants being the audience. It is hoped, too, that the audience extends to those outwith the classroom. This may be achieved through finding spaces in which children might be listened to carefully and respectfully, in order that they have influence. This will require that their status and notions of their capacity are reconsidered (Hendrick 2000; Hammersley 2017; Cassidy and Mohr Lone 2020). Rather than "giving" children a voice (Bucknall 2014; Semenec 2018), what is proposed is that CoPI in the classroom supports children in developing their voice and that the teacher as facilitator needs to consider how her practice might impact on this goal.

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