# The Concept of Curiosity in the Practice of Philosophy for Children

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*Philosophy for Children is, at its core, an educational movement that started in the 1970s and it is currently practiced in over 60 countries. Rather than teaching children philosophy, it aims to develop thinking, inquiry and reasoning skills by means of intellectual interaction and by questioning both with the facilitator and amongst themselves. Thus it creates a community of inquiry. This movement has created a sound literature within philosophy of education which indirectly relates to issues in meta-philosophy, epistemology and philosophy of childhood. Despite the fact that Philosophy for Children is a movement which is predominantly based on questioning and inquiry, there is little empha-sis on curiosity within its literature. This is not surprising because even in philosophy literature the concept of curiosity was ignored until quite recently. Producing the first book-length treatment of curiosity within philosophy literature, İnan provides a philosophical framework on how human curiosity is possible and how it finds expression. The notion of inostensible conceptualization, which İnan has developed and central to his theory of curiosity, could be utilized in order to demonstrate the significance of curiosity within Philosophy for Children. Philosophy for Children sessions are usually centered around a philosophical concept such as fairness, egoism, and identity. In this paper I argue that the in-class discussions in Philosophy for Children practice enable children to realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them. That is, they do not have all the knowledge about this specific concept. In order to explain the concept of curiosity in P4C sessions, I have developed two no-tions: the first notion is curiosity-arouser, which I utilize to explain how the community of inquiry could better concentrate on and discuss the inostensible concept. The second notion is joint curiosity, which I have developed in analogy to the trans-disciplinary notion of joint attention. Similar to the positive impact of joint attention on child development, I argue that joint curiosity has positive outcomes for children's inquiry and questioning. I explain these notions in detail by providing examples of Philosophy for Children sessions. My overall aim is to emphasize the importance of curiosity in order for this practice to reach its fundamen-*

*tal aims. The practitioners and those who prepare materials have to take into consideration the concept of curiosity and must equip themselves with an understanding of it.*

**Keywords:** Philosophy for children (P4C), philosophy of curiosity, philosophy of education.

## General Information about Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for Children, abbreviated as P4C, is an educational movement that includes in its background the philosophies of John Dewey, Gareth Matthews, Lev Vygotsky, George H. Mead and Charles Sanders Pierce (Lipman et al. 1980, Murris 2008).[1] It has arisen from the philosophy professor's, Matthew Lipman, concern about the poor reasoning abilities of university students, and so as to find a solution to this he wished to improve critical thinking, to develop the inquiry about philosophical questions and to enhance making reasonable judgment at a younger age (Lipman 1985, Gregory 2011). In collaboration with Ann Margaret Sharp, he founded and became the director of Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), where the philosophy textbooks for children and the Philosophy for Children program were prepared.[2]

Lipman and P4C followers believe the fruitful outcomes of the development of thinking and reasoning skills at an early age in the process of education. Lipman (2003) acknowledges that children are curious and inquisitive, and thus introducing philosophy to children and discussing philosophical issues with them have the benefit of improving their certain skills. This is because "philosophy is the finest instrument yet devised for the perfection of the thinking process" (Lipman et al. 1980: xi). Philosophy for Children practitioners aim to develop children's cognitive and communicative skills by bringing philosophy into their school curricula. According to Lipman, getting acquainted with philosophy enables children to develop thinking skills, such as formulating concepts precisely, drawing inferences, making appropriate generalizations, recognizing consistencies and contradictions, clarifying ideas, identifying underlying assumptions, giving reasons, making distinctions, making connections, analyzing values, identifying fallacies, instantiating, constructing definitions for familiar words, taking differences of perspective into account, constructing arguments and formulating questions (Lipman 2014).

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[1] The original name of this practice is Philosophy for Children (P4C). Some writers prefer to use the phrase "Philosophy with Children" when referring to this practice. I acknowledge both phrases and use the abbreviation "P4C" in this paper for brevity.

[2] Matthew Lipman prefers to call those textbooks "philosophical novels".

Children develop these skills by means of discussing a philosophical concept or issue.[3] The quality of P4C sessions rests on the fact that children scratch beneath the surface of a philosophical issue with the help of questions and dialogues that are initiated with the help of the materials appropriate for children's age and understanding. In order to fulfill this, some constitutive elements are essential to P4C sessions.

## P4C Session

For a better understanding of my claims regarding P4C practice, it is necessary to know what takes place in a session. Briefly, P4C session is defined as a typical session that consists of a group reading a source text, followed by the gathering of students' questions stimulated by the reading.[4] There are certain elements in a P4C session, and these are indispensable factors of a session; namely, Socratic Dialogue, the Facilitator, and Community of Inquiry.

All these distinctive factors have different and complementary roles. The discussion method is grounded on Socratic Dialogue. Originally in Socratic dialogues, Socrates is "tirelessly pursuing intellectual inquiry by method of question and answer" (Kahn 1998: 72). Bringing this type of dialogue into the session helps children to enhance their dialogic skills, to hear each other's ideas and to make inquiries. "The dialogic skills the Socratic Dialogue employs are listening, formulating and re-formulating, asking for clarification, checking for understanding, following on from probing assumptions and explicating them, abstracting and concretizing" (Knezic et al. 2010: 20).

In the Socratic method of systematic questioning and dialogue, children are encouraged to talk and listen to each other within a community of inquiry that is not controlled, but is facilitated by the teacher. The P4C practitioner is called a facilitator because she is not in a position of transferring knowledge. On the contrary, the facilitator is responsible for leading the sessions in order to enable children to experience philosophical discussions and to gain equity for talking and sharing as well as for the use of compatible discussion plans, exercises and activities. This is also pointed out by Murris, she says: "the philosophical dimension of an inquiry depends, to a large extent, on the facilitating skills and attitudes of the teacher" (Murris 2000: 40).

The children and the facilitator engaged in a Socratic Dialogue constitute a Community of Inquiry, abbreviated as CoI. With all its

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[3] Although the concepts discussed in the sessions are mostly philosophical, there can be concepts or issues that are not philosophical; such as the concept of "cooperation" or "work". The issue of what a philosophical concept is, is a topic in itself. Nevertheless, philosophical questions could be generated from the concepts of cooperation or work. The underlying issue here is that the children are philosophically discussing them in the sessions.

[4] You can find the definition of a P4C session and more information on the website; www.p4c.org.nz.

members, including the facilitator, this inquiring community sits in a circle. Sitting in a circle is a significant aspect of a P4C session, because this aspect makes it possible for all members to fully see each other as peers. Thus, they are encouraged to share on the same platform. The aim is to give children an opportunity to share thoughts with each other. Having discussions in this inquiring community that requires sitting in a circle gives everyone the opportunity to hear one another's ideas, experience each other's thinking processes, help build up their thoughts by listening to each other, asking questions and be able to think within a community. This arrangement of the session promotes open-mindedness, self-expression and furthermore, intellectual courage, and respect for others.

Through embracing all these constitutive elements, a P4C session improves cognitive and social skills. On the whole, a Philosophy for Children session includes Socratic Dialogue and enables the community of philosophical inquiry to engage in discussions with the help of the facilitator so that children could inquire, ask questions, respond to each other, and hence become an active member.

Coming to the end of this section, I would like to mention a session, which I am going to refer throughout the paper, for illustration. The community of inquiry of this session was composed of ten people including the home room teacher, the facilitator and the primary school children aged 8. The video of a story book about the gingerbread man was introduced to the group.[5] In the video, the gingerbread man managed to escape from all the characters who said that they would eat him. Then, he came across a fox who said to the gingerbread man that he did not want to eat him. The gingerbread man was tired of running from the others. He felt no threat from the fox and wanted to walk with him. While the gingerbread man was enjoying his company, the fox played a cunning game and ended up eating him.

The concept of lying was the topic of concern for the inquiring community.[6] After watching the video, one of the members started the discussion with the following probing question: why did the gingerbread man believe the fox, who was a natural liar? This question brought up discussions on what lying is. Furthermore, inquiring community discussed ethical problems about lying. The discussions went on with commentaries, questions, answers and sharing experiences. In analyzing the concept of lying, related issues such as deceiving, hiding and keeping secrets were introduced by different members. By means of

[5] The name of the book is *The Gingerbread Man*. There are different versions of the book. I used a video version in this session. You can find the video on Youtube; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U89dkGrsYZY

[6] I bring such materials to P4C sessions that a couple of philosophical issues can be brought under light. In this example, some children share their opinions about the behaviors of the characters. Although there is more than one philosophical issue to discuss, the community of inquiry gave emphasis to the concept of lying because children chose to discuss it.

dialogue, conversations, questioning and sharing ideas, the community had discussions in order to understand better what those concepts stand for. They pondered on these concepts. The children mentioned their experiences. They thought about issues such as whether keeping secrets is lying, whether hiding is lying and whether lying is always bad. Some members changed their ideas and some others gained more information about lying. Throughout this paper, I will touch upon this sample and explain the concept of curiosity in the light of it.

## Curiosity in P4C Literature

The general information about P4C reveals that the sessions are built on discussion, inquiry, and questioning. Children are able to grasp philosophical concepts (Murris 2000), inquire into them and ask questions about them. That being the case, discussing the concept of curiosity and its importance for inquiry and questioning deserve great attention. Although it is significant, the relationship between curiosity and questioning is not discussed in detail in the P4C literature. The importance of fostering curiosity and the success of P4C in fostering curiosity are acknowledged.

   As mentioned earlier, Lipman and some P4C followers draw attention to the fact that children are curious, as part of their natural impulse, and inquisitive (Lipman 2003, Lipman 1976, Wartenberg 2007). Lipman is influenced by the philosophers Gareth Matthews and John Dewey, who both claim that curiosity is one of children's dispositions. The curiosities and wonderings of children are regarded so valuable that adults are criticized for losing their natural sense of wonder. This loss could be explained by giving several reasons, but, most importantly, implementations of wrong education techniques and programs cause children to be on the edge of losing their natural curiosity. According to Lipman, the nature of schooling, intransigencies of the educational system and didactic textbooks generate a loss of curiosity (Lipman 2003, Lipman 1976). In his paper *Philosophy for Children* (1976) he mentioned the underestimation of a necessary preparation to arouse a child's curiosity in education. He added that, in addition to arousing it, educators have to guide the child's responses. He said that "a curious child is like a coiled spring in that he contains his own energy, his own dynamism and his own way of opening or unfolding" (Lipman 1976: 15). At this point he did not elaborate on the importance of arousing curiosity; instead he mentions the importance of finding the "proper trigger".

   P4C movement takes these educational problems seriously. Therefore, arousing and fostering children's curiosity are among the main concerns of P4C movement. The success of P4C, that is, getting children to be curious, is explicitly mentioned in the literature. For instance, it is argued that the P4C program not only benefits from children's natural curiosity but also fosters their original curiosity for intellectual inquiry

(Conlan 2013, Murris 2008). It helps children to be more curious by asking appropriate questions, and the P4C groups are said to display more curiosity (Oral 2012, Ndofirepi and Cross 2015, Trickey and Topping 2004). At the same time, the methods in the practice such as Socratic Dialogue and Inquiry are regarded as a way to awaken curiosity (Turgeon 2015). In addition to this, Ann Margaret Sharp sees curiosity and questioning as necessary features of a facilitator (Gregory 2011).

Drawing attention to the fact that children are naturally curious and the emphasis on the need of fostering it are pivotal gains for education. Yet, the explanation as to why it is important and necessary to foster curiosity in children is missing in the literature. From now on, I will discuss the need of fostering curiosity and the importance of the concept of curiosity in P4C with reference to İnan's conceptualization of curiosity.

## Curiosity and the Asking of a Question

P4C is supposed to have children inquire and ask questions. As well as aiming to develop the thinking and social skills of children, P4C intends to enable children to be substantial questioners who will critically evaluate the information they acquire. There is a relationship between the asking of a question and being curious. Curiosity acts as a crucial motivation for humans to ask questions (İnan 2012). When we take İnan's hypothesis into account, curiosity gains a respectable and indispensable place in the process of asking questions and inquiry. Typically, we express our curiosity by the asking of a question. Although there are other ways of expressing curiosity such as mimics and gestures, the asking of a question is the fundamental way of expressing our curiosity. This relationship between the asking of a question and being curious renders the concept of curiosity significant for P4C practices in which questioning has an essential role.

In order to explain my claim, I refer to İnan's book *The Philosophy of Curiosity* which offers a theory of curiosity. İnan focuses on illuminating human curiosity. According to him, human curiosity has evolved together or before interrogative sentences. He claims that curiosity is one of the impetuses for our interrogative sentences. The mainstream understanding regards the asking of a question as a speech act. However, we could ask questions to ourselves and answer them without producing sentences. İnan takes into account the asking of a question to oneself as a private mental act and thus, regards curiosity as a fundamental impetus for humans to ask questions.

He acknowledges the variety of ways in which a speaker could be motivated to ask a question. "One may ask a question whose answer one knows just to test someone's knowledge of the matter, one may ask a rhetorical question to make a statement, and one may even ask a question whose answer one wishes to find out but not because one is curious about it all" (İnan 2012: 40). Similarly, not all inquiries require

curiosity. "Someone may inquire into something, not because he is curious, but because his job requires him to do so, or he wishes to get some satisfaction by it, or to find something novel, or to gain power, and so on" (İnan 2012: 19). Although there are different kinds of motivations behind the asking of a question and inquiry, these do not change the significance of curiosity. This is because curiosity is a *crucial motivation* for questioning and questions asked out of curiosity tend to be more in-depth and valuable in acquiring knowledge.[7]

In order to explain further how curiosity is related to the asking of a question, I will give İnan's description of curiosity. İnan says "for every question a subject asks out of curiosity there is a corresponding term for the subject that is inostensible for him and whose content is an inostensible concept; this I take to be a requirement for asking a question out of curiosity" (İnan 2012: 41). İnan provides us with a novel definition and defines curiosity as follows: it is the mental state one enjoys by the entertainment of an inostensible concept about something that is of interest. Then, what is an inostensible concept? According to him;

> In order to inquire into something, and later to be able to discover it, one must have at hand something that guides him…this guide, on my view, is neither any kind of knowledge, nor any kind of true belief, but it is rather a complex term that I call "inostensible" (relative to the inquirer).

He continues with an explanation of ostensible and inostensible terms as follows:

> In the first case the speaker may know what a term may refer to, in the sense that he knows that a certain object as being the referent of the term, and in the second case one may lack such knowledge. Let us call the first kind of term relative to a speaker an "ostensible" term (for that speaker) and the latter an "inostensible" term (for that speaker) (İnan 2012: 33).

At this point, it will be useful to exemplify İnan's argument. One of İnan's examples is the term "the population of Peru". I do not know "the population of Peru", in other words I do not know the number the term "the population of Peru" stands for which is what makes this term inostensible for me. However, for someone who knows what the population of Peru—what the term stands for—the term is ostensible. İnan says that the epistemic link to what the term stands for is what makes that term ostensible or inostensible for a subject. İnan applies this distinction to concepts that the terms express. "When we are engaged in an inquiry, the thing that guides us in our search for the object of inquiry is an inostensible concept" (İnan 2012: 35). He claims that the inquiry will end when the inostensible concept is transformed into an ostensible one.

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[7] Curiosity could give rise to in-depth questioning. Children, who ask questions out of curiosity, ask not to be active, talkative, take attention of others or give response but ask because of their interest in the topic and their natural wonder about things in general. They are the ones who are willing to learn and think more about the concept in question. Curious children are likely to think, inquire and engage in a dialogue.

It is crucial to point out that there are degrees in ostensibility and curiosity (İnan 2014). A concept being inostensible for someone means that, there are (more) things to learn about that concept. Following İnan's example of the term "the population of Peru", we could say that for someone who knows the exact number of the population, this term would be fully ostensible. Most likely, however, there is no person who knows what that number is exactly. For me, this term is inostensible because I do not even know an approximate number this term stands for. Furthermore, even for someone who knows the population approximately, the term would still be inostensible but less so compared to my situation. There is a difference between the one who knows the exact number of the population and the one who knows it approximately. Since there are degrees in ostensibility, there is *to learn* for those who do not know the population and there is still *more to learn* for those who know approximately. Acquiring knowledge and gaining new experiences increase the degree of ostensibility. For concepts, especially philosophical concepts, there is a fair amount of information to learn. Thus, an increase in the degree of ostensibility, even if the concept is not fully ostensible, is still a remarkable achievement.

In the light of İnan's definition of curiosity, I would like to put forward a new analysis for the P4C sessions. A P4C session enables children to realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them. The session allows children to discuss, to question, to provide answers, to make comments and to evaluate on the inostensible concept, to listen to each other's interpretations and ideas and to hear their own voices. By means of these, P4C aims to make children realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them, and then make the concept as ostensible as possible for the members of the inquiring community.

Examining the session example in the light of the inostensible concept is going to be helpful for a better understanding. The purpose of that session is to make those children become aware that there are many things that they do not know about lying than they thought they knew. The concept of lying being inostensible for a child means that she does not know certain things about what lying is. What the concept of lying stands for was a topic of debate for that community of inquiry because there were things that they did not know about lying.[8] They had different ethical claims regarding the action of lying. Throughout the discussions children analyzed some cases. They shared their experiences and tried to decide whether the cases in question fall under the concept of lying or other concepts. Throughout this P4C session, the concept of lying became more ostensible for the inquiring community.

If a child thinks that she knows the concept, most likely she will not ask questions about it. For a child, becoming aware of the fact that

[8] The concept of lying is a debatable topic of Ethics. Even for the grown-ups and the philosophers, the concept of lying may not be fully ostensible. I believe some philosophical concepts or issues are not fully ostensible even for the experts of those concepts or issues.

the concept is inostensible for her is a threshold in the process of inter-rogation and asking a question. If she thinks that she knows what the concept stands for, why would she feel the need to ask questions about it? We may argue that for children to ask questions out of curiosity, they need to have a realization of the inostensibility of the concept. In order to ask questions, they need to think that there are issues to ques-tion. In the P4C sessions, the child may realize that there is much more about the concept in question than her knowledge about it, that is she has partial knowledge about the concept, or she realizes that she has false beliefs about it.[9] This realization shows us that the child reaches a certain kind of an awareness of ignorance.[10]

In the session example sharing ideas, giving approval and counter examples, commenting on each other's sayings; namely having discus-sions helped children to realize the inostensibility of the concept of lying for them. Concept formation, differentiating the concepts lying, deceiving and hiding by discussion and evaluating the cases helped the community of inquiry to have clearer ideas about what those con-cepts mean in reality. The conversation below shows that children were having semantic disputes about the concept of lying. The conversation went as follows:

A:   The fox deceived the gingerbread man.
B:   The fox said that "I did not want to eat you". That's a lie!
C:   The fox hid something. He did not tell the truth that he wanted to eat the gingerbread man. When we hide something from our parents or friends, we lie to them.
B:   Keeping secrets is hiding. But keeping secrets is not lying.
D:   We have the right to hide. This is keeping secrets. If you say the opposite of what you are hiding, this is lying.
A:   The fox did not have a secret. He did not tell the truth. He want-ed to eat the gingerbread man. He deceived him by lying to him.

With the help of this conversation, the community realized that mem-bers had different understandings about the same issues such as whether keeping secret is lying or not. The children wanted to con-tinue discussing the concepts hiding, deceiving and lying in the light of sharing different examples and their experiences. Without sharing your ideas, hearing your own words and comments, it is not easy to realize your false beliefs. Child A thought about the behavior of the fox

[9] It is possible for the child to hear about the concept for the first time. However, this is contradictory to the fact that it is fruitful to discuss the concepts, issue or topics that children are already in search for their meanings. Although it is possible for some member of the community of inquiry to hear the concept in question for the first time, this is usually not the case.

[10] It is possible to say that Socratic Dialogue helps this realization. Achieving an awareness of ignorance is an aim of Socratic Dialogue. Socrates in his dialogues aims at helping the others to achieve it. As Kahn says; "his (Socrates) own modest claim is simply the recognition of his own ignorance; and his own endeavor in discussion with others is to help them achieve this same recognition" (Kahn 1998: 73).

and analyzed it. By this, he came to a conclusion that the fox deceived the gingerbread man. After child B gave him a reply, child C and D joined the conversation. One of the members continued this discussion by saying that;

D:    The fox lied because he wanted to eat the gingerbread man. Without this lie, he could not eat the gingerbread man.

C:    So, he lied.

D:    Yes, but he lied for himself.

F:    We have to be honest and say everything. But if we protect someone or try to save our life, hiding is not lying.

Facilitator: Is lying always a bad action?

G:    There are different types of lies. For example, we tell pink lies. Telling pink lies is not deceiving. We tell pink lies for making our friends not to feel sad.

D:    When we lie for our interest, no, this is not bad.

E:    But it is bad for the gingerbread man!

D:    But it is good for the fox. What could he do?

F:    Something good for you can be bad for some others. So this is a bad thing, you should not do that.

The children helped each other as being the members of the inquiring community to differentiate the concepts and make them clear by giving arguments, introducing new concepts and examples. Introduction of "pink lies" was followed by the conceptualization of lies as black, pink and white later in the discussion. They discussed cases and had ethical discussions on whether lying is always bad or not. While child D legitimized the action of lying, children E and F opposed to this legitimization. The session enabled a realization of the inostensibility of the concept of lying in ethical terms so that they asked questions and shared their opinions about this concept. Constructing definitions for familiar words and formulate concepts precisely is challenging. Throughout this session, the community of inquiry tried to construct definitions for the concepts in question and formulate them.

To make my argument clear, I would like to give another example from a P4C session that I facilitated. In this session, the topic of discussion was cooperation. The book that we read was about creativity and cooperation.[11] The characters achieve something good and favorable by way of cooperating with each other. While we were discussing the concept of cooperation, one of the members said that;

W:    Thieves cooperate to steal. However, stealing is a bad thing.

This sentence reduced the members of the inquiring community who were discussing the issue enthusiastically to silence. Every member began to think about this remark. Although we were discussing the cases where cooperation is not working and is not productive, none of

[11] The material of this session was the book called Swimmy. Lionni, L. (1963). *Swimmy*. New York. NY: Pantheon.

us mentioned achieving something bad and unfavorable by way of cooperation. Then, the members continued the discussion by giving similar cases as examples.

X:      For killing somebody, people can cooperate!

Y:      They can hurt animals by cooperating.

Z:      Before, I thought cooperation is always good. Now I changed my mind. Bad things can happen by cooperating.

Homeroom Teacher: I realized that I'm teaching the concept of cooperation in giving emphasis to the fruitful outcomes of cooperation. I'm always giving examples of cooperative activities that have positive outcomes. Now I see that my approach is missing some aspects of cooperation. People can certainly achieve something unfavorable by cooperating.

By way of cooperation, we may achieve something not only good, but also achieve something bad. It is clear that, the members gained new information about what the concept of cooperation stands for and some members realized their false beliefs, such as the child Z, after considering this information. The children, who had thought that cooperation was always good, realized that this was not true. By means of discussing the concept of cooperation child W came up with a remark. His contribution affected the community of inquiry, and thus some members declared that they had changed their ideas after evaluating and accepting that remark.

In every successful session, children realize the inostensibility of the concept in question. The materials of P4C together with questions, discussions and hearing the thoughts and experiences of others about the concept in question have the possibility to make the child realize the inostensibility of the concept in her own intellectual journey. Therewith sessions serve the purpose of accomplishing the task to make the inostensible concept as ostensible as possible for each child.

Do the sessions complete the transition of the concept from inostensible to an ostensible one? Neither the session complete the transition of the inostensible concept into an ostensible one, nor, the session aim to complete it. The purpose of the program is to discuss the concept in question philosophically in which a complete analysis of the concept is not a requirement. In the sample session, the community of inquiry did not come to a decision about what lying is or about whether lying is always bad or not. However, they thought about these issues, shared their ideas and heard each other's ideas. For the children, these opened the way to think about their own ideas and compare different thoughts about the same issue. To put in a nutshell; fair amount of information and opinion were shared by means of discussion in that session. Those are what enabled the transformation of the inostensible concept, lying, into a more ostensible one for the children. At the end of the session, to a certain degree, they have an idea of what lying is and is not.

On the other hand, aiming to make the concept ostensible for each

child will bring up the issue of didactic teaching. Making a concept as fully ostensible as it could be requires having all the knowledge about it beforehand and the task of transmitting it during the session. However, the community of inquiry with the facilitator discusses the concept, finds out what the concept stands for and even may come up with new ideas. The issue here is not to teach or transmit them all the information about the concept but to make the concept as ostensible as possible by *discussing* it.

In this respect, the midwife analogy sounds quite plausible for P4C sessions. "A number of metaphors have been developed to illustrate the role of the teacher…the teacher is seen as a…midwife" (Splitter and Sharp 1995: 140). The facilitator leads the session, asks questions to children and helps them to state what they have on their minds. Not only the facilitator but also the discussions and the session in general have the potential of acting like a midwife. Children are eager to talk and share their experiences. They have opinions and want to hear the thoughts and ideas of other members; that is to say they want to learn what the other participants think. The session enables them to hear the members and also their own thoughts by means of Socratic Dialogue, discussion and sharing ideas. P4C gives them the opportunity to state what they think and give answers to the questions. Children have the chance to take the thoughts out of their minds. By means of creating an inquiring community in which thinking and sharing opinions are fostered, the session acts like a midwife.

P4C sessions act like a midwife and there is much more to it. In addition to acting like a midwife, that is creating an environment for the children to take their thoughts and ideas come out of their minds, the sessions work on those thoughts and ideas, paving the way for their development. By enabling them to hear other minds, building up on to other's thoughts, evaluating arguments, drawing inferences, finding examples, sharing experiences and self-reflection, children come to a certain decision or understanding regarding the philosophical concept and get acquainted with philosophical discussions.

So far I touched upon the relationship between the asking of a question and being curious. If my position is taken into account, then, an analysis of the concept of curiosity would be essential for P4C sessions in which there is a fair amount of questioning and inquiry. When P4C sessions are analyzed under the light of İnan's theory of curiosity, it is seen that, P4C sessions have the power to foster children's natural inclination to be curious by offering them discussions that are centered around a philosophical concept (or a concept which can be discussed philosophically) which is an inostensible concept for them. The P4C session helps children to realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them. Through discussions, asking questions and inquiring into the concept in question, the sessions serve the purpose of making the concept as much ostensible as possible.

The crucial point is the occurrence of an awareness of ignorance, that is a realization of the inostensibility of the concept, which may lead the child to ask questions. When the child realizes her, the concept is inostensible for her, it is more likely for her to question the concept and be an active member of the community of inquiry thus, be able to make the concept more ostensible for herself and also make the discussion more fruitful by her contribution. Becoming aware of the fact that the concept in question is inostensible is very crucial in the process of becoming curious and asking questions. However, this is not enough. As İnan suggests, "only when awareness of ignorance concerning a specific matter is accompanied by a certain kind of interest in that matter could it result in curiosity" (İnan 2012: 126). It is also necessary to draw the attention of the children to the concept and arouse interest, in order to get them to be curious. For a better discussion of the concept of curiosity and how to get children to be curious during the sessions we have to mention attention and interest, and then examine the P4C session in the light of these notions.

## *Attention Grabber*

For children to be curious apprehending that the concept in question is inostensible, that is an awareness of ignorance, is necessary but not sufficient. To become curious, the child has to pay attention and moreover, feel interested in the topic. The session and the materials have to be arranged with respect to drawing the attention of the children to the concept and making them feel interested in it. The important thing is to prepare the materials according to the cognitive levels of children. The materials help us present the concepts to the community of inquiry at the beginning of the sessions. The important thing is to prepare the materials according to the cognitive levels of children. The materials and the way the concepts are presented have vital roles for the sessions because the children pay attention to the concept and to the sessions by means of the materials and their presentation. Paying attention will prepare the way for a realization of the inostensibility of the concept.

For fulfilling this realization in children, first, the materials have to draw their attention. According to Lipman, "the child has little future to count on; they only know that the present makes sense or does not make sense, on its own terms. This is why they would appreciate having educational means which are meaning-laden: stories, games, discussions, trustful personal relationships, and so on" (Lipman 1978: 256). If the materials designed according to the needs and cognitive levels of the children are presented in the classroom, it becomes easier to draw their attention to the concepts. Typically, short stories or passages from stories are used in the classroom in order to present the concepts or the issues. Other materials such as videos, toys or skits may well be used in the sessions in order to bring a concept to the class and take their attention. In relation to that, "attention grabber" seems

a suitable umbrella term for P4C materials whether they are books, passages, short stories, videos or skits. The aim of these materials is to draw the attention of the children to the philosophical concepts or issues contained in these materials.

For drawing the attention of the children not only the material itself but also its presentation is influential. During the presentation of the attention grabbers, it is useful to ask one or two questions for clarity. When there are unclear or ambiguous points, it will be hard for the child to grasp the issue, keep his interest, and thus become curious. Before pondering on the concept, the child has to understand the content of the material. Asking questions during the presentation of the material is practical also to engage the distracted children to the story. The questions for summing up, such as, "what has happened so far?" and the questions for emphasizing connections between two things are helpful.

As mentioned before, in the session example the video of a story book was presented. The video includes lively images, colorful scenes and animal characters. These make the video an appealing material for children and thus, the community of inquiry watched it with enthusiasm. It was successful in drawing children's attention because it was appropriate for children's ages and cognitive levels.

After the presentation, one of the children asked "how can a gingerbread man run faster than a horse?" This question was about the material. Another child asked "how does the gingerbread man believe the fox who is a natural liar?" This question indicates that he understood the story and questioned the actions of a character. What is the difference between these two questions? In both cases, children paid attention to the video. However, the child who asked the second question both paid attention to the material and felt interested in the issue. Both questioners were in an attempt to understand. However, the child who asked the second question was curious about the issue which opens a way for the discussion about the concept of lying.

Being perplexed may well be the case for the child who asked the question "how can a gingerbread man run faster than a horse". It seems that she was perplexed about the logical issue such as how a cookie can run faster than a horse. The distinction between curiosity and perplexity is worth noting here. Perplexity is for the good of arousing curiosity. When a child is perplexed, she is more likely to ask questions that are supposed to make the issue clear for her. Children could ask questions out of perplexity when they are in need of clarification. A perplex child is also the attentive child who cares about the topic and needs a clarification because she is on the way of grasping the issue. It is necessary for the facilitator to take into account the reasons behind children's questions so that the facilitator could make the clarifications. It is useful for the facilitator to distinguish between curious states and perplex states of the child so that she could put an end to her perplexity. When

the issue is clear for more members, it would be possible to have a sound discussion with more participants.

## Joint Attention

Thus far, I claimed that for catching the attention of the children, the materials and their presentations play crucial roles. The materials that are suitable for both introducing the philosophical concepts (or concepts that can be discussed philosophically) and drawing children's attention to the concept act as attention grabbers in the session. At this point, providing the analysis of the concept of attention is going to be useful. Paying attention individually and paying attention jointly in a group or community are regarded as two different aspects. Since children are members of an inquiring community in P4C sessions, joint attention comes to the forefront.

Joint attention is used and defined by developmental psychologists and linguists: joint attention which occurs when a group of people perceive the same object together is attributed to mind functions in which we understand the intention and goal-directed behaviors of other people around us. Its effectiveness for improving human capacities is proven (Timothy 2010; Kidwell and Zimmerman 2007). In a famous study that is conducted on mothers and their children, Tomasello and Farrar indicated that "during periods of joint attentional focus both mothers and children talk more, the dyad engaged in longer conversations, and mother used shorter sentences and more comments" (Tomasello and Farrar 1986: 1459).

If we are striving for getting children to be curious and developing their thinking and social skills, it is better to establish joint attention during the session. Joint attention smooths the way for the members of the community of inquiry in engaging to all parts of the session. Joint attention must be established if the objectives of discussing in a community are supposed to be reached. By means of joint attention, members affect each other in a positive way and this enables more sound and fruitful dialogues, conversations and discussions. Thus, it is expected for an attention grabber and in general the session, to create joint attention in the community of inquiry.

As aforementioned, every child, who pays attention, is not necessarily curious about the topic in question. Paying attention and being curious are relational; however, paying attention is not always followed by curiosity. If arousing curiosity is an aim of the session, then, I propose that it is meaningful for an attention grabber to create joint attention, and also be a curiosity-arouser. For the effectiveness of a P4C session, it is more anticipated for the material to function as a curiosity-arouser. For the effectiveness of P4C sessions, it is more anticipated for the materials to be a curiosity-arouser. To fulfill this, the materials and the session have to make children feel interested in the topic.

## Interest

In order for an attention grabber to be considered a curiosity-arouser, children have to feel interested about the content of it. As İnan puts it "to become curious one must also have an interest in the topic that the concept is about" (2012: 42). The relationship between curiosity and interest is a uni-directional one. "For everything we are curious about we have an interest, but we are not curious about anything we have an interest in" (İnan 2012: 126). A curiosity-arouser has to draw children's attention to the concept, make them feel interested in it, enable a realization of the inostensibility of it and thereby, arouse curiosity.

Although drawing the attention of the children to the concepts poses no difficulty with the proper materials, accomplishing the task of both drawing their attention to the concept and arousing their interest require greater effort. In order to accomplish these, it could be better to introduce the philosophical issues or concepts that children are already acquainted with. Discussing concepts which children have been instructed during other lessons or they encounter in their daily life arouse their interest more easily. "Children look for meaning and they are hungry for those that might be relevant to-and might illuminate-their lives" (Lipman et al. 1980: 17). In this manner, discussing the concepts that they are acquainted with would help enabling the children to feel interested in those concepts.

## Joint Curiosity

İnan's conceptualization of curiosity elucidates the need of fostering curiosity in P4C sessions. According to his theory, a child's realization of the inostensibility of the concept together with her attention and interest get the child to be curious about it. I would like to introduce a new concept to this picture with regard to P4C sessions. In a P4C session, there is a special type of curiosity which is different than individual curiosity. The term joint attention shows us that there is a fair amount of difference between paying attention and paying attention jointly regarding their outcomes. Joint attention is more influential for developing skills and creating a sound communication. Taking into account the positive outcomes of joint attention, joint curiosity could appear to be more effective in comparison with individual curiosity, for developing more fruitful discussions and creating a more productive inquiring community. It seems the P4C literature and the literature on curiosity could be enriched by a concept which I would like to name joint curiosity. It is naïve to expect a philosophical study about joint curiosity when there are too few articles on Philosophy of Curiosity.

For P4C, the ideal could be establishing joint attention and joint curiosity during the sessions. Similar to attention and joint attention cases, joint curiosity could be more effective for a sound discussion compared to individual curiosities. Children listen to each other's thoughts,

ideas, experiences and questions with curiosity and hence, the session creates powerful discussions in which there is questioning out of curiosity. Theoretically, if joint attention is a more effective tool than attention, then joint curiosity would be more effective than individual curiosities in the sense of sharing, questioning each other's thoughts and building up ideas, and therefore would lead to more effective discussions. There would be more members who are willing to participate to the discussions. The more the community of inquiry enjoys joint curiosity, the more in-depth questions and fruitful discussions will come out. When there is joint curiosity during the sessions, building up onto each other's sayings and asking questions to each other could bring more fruitful discussions and analyses.

I would like to explain further the concept of joint curiosity with a conversation from the sample session. As I said before, we were discussing the concept of lying and the community of inquiry differentiated the concepts hiding, secrets and lying from each other. The conversation went as follows:

A:   A close friend of mine saw me talking with another friend. She asked me what we talked. I cannot tell her because we have talked about her birthday party organization. It would not be a surprise to her if I tell her our conversation! So I told her that we spoke about something else. This is not a lie because we were trying to make her a surprise. This is keeping secrets.

C:   Keeping secret is not lying. Sometimes when you keep secret, you do it for the sake of the other people such as the case in the birthday example. The same thing happened to me and I was the birthday boy!

A:   Don't you feel angry when they didn't tell you what they talked about?

C:   Yes, I get angry at that moment but then they told me that they were talking about which birthday present they will buy. When I learn this I didn't feel angry anymore. Also when I get the present I felt happy.

A:   Sometimes boys come near and ask us what we did talk about. When there is a secret there, I don't say it. I have to keep it because this is a secret and I have the right to keep it.

B:   But this is telling a lie. Why don't you just say this is a secret so that I cannot tell you?

D:   Yes I agree with B. Why don't you tell the truth?

A:   (thinks for a while) Because they will not give up and let me go. They will harass me about it.

B:   Have you ever tried to say this to them?

A:   No, because if I say this, they won't leave me alone.

D:   How will you know this without trying?

A:   (feeling uncomfortable, starts to move on her chair) I'm sure this will happen.

B:     But how can you know without trying!
A:     Ok, I never thought about it that way.
C:     Although you won't be telling a lie when you say it is a secret,
       you are still hiding something from someone.

The community was discussing whether the case that A exemplified is lying or not. Some children agreed with her (A), and some did not. They had a conversation and some children questioned her action. In a sense, they bombarded her with questions. By means of these, she began to think about her own action. The questions of these curious children led to a fruitful discussion and clarification.

In this example there is joint attention; these children's attention was on the issue of what lying is. A, B, C, D are all attentive to this concept. By means of their joint attention, the discussion became more fruitful and vivid in the sense that more members of the community of inquiry shared their thoughts about the concept. This discussion could be effective also if only two children would have talked. But with the contribution of others, new concepts were introduced and more questions were asked. Joint attention enabled more members to participate. Thus, this made the dialogue and the discussion more fruitful.

Further, this example shows us the constructive effect of joint curiosity. B and D were not only attentive jointly but also curious jointly. They were curious about the same concept and concentrated on the same example. Their joint curiosity led them to question the issue *together*. They built up *questions* like building up ideas. C shared his experience and thoughts while A was participating actively in the discussion. However, D and B were curious on the same topic so that they asked questions. B's questions out of curiosity and A's answers, that is their dialogue, created a proper condition for D to enjoy his curiosity and ask questions. The harmony in these questions indicates a joint curiosity.

This example shows how joint curiosity progressively affects the discussion. By means of joint curiosity, the discussion became fruitful and lively. In addition to having an influence on the discussion, joint curiosity led children to formulate and ask questions, to reply each other's comments and generate novel ideas and thus, helps to stimulate the session. Not only at the beginning of the discussion but throughout the session, joint curiosity enables children to formulate and ask questions. As mentioned in the first part, Lipman emphasized the fact that getting acquainted with philosophy makes formulating questions possible for children. Questions raised by children during the session both indicate this fact and help them to improve their critical thinking abilities which is one of the main purposes of P4C.

All in all, emphasizing the significance of curiosity for P4C by presenting a theory of curiosity could help this practice to reach its fundamental aims. The notions of curiosity-arouser and joint curiosity may be expanded and used in additional areas of education. In my opin-

ion, using curiosity-arousers and getting children to be curious jointly would produce effective outcomes not only for P4C but also for other educational concerns.

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