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**Philosophising with Children Worldwide
about Nature, Natural Values, and Pollution**

Abstract

This study presents the results of our international, intercultural, and empirical study. We philosophised with children from different countries and social contexts about nature, pollution and sustainability. Before presenting the key findings of our empirical research, we outline our concept of Philosophy for Children (P4C). What is P4C? What forms of P4C are commonly advocated? How and for what do we use it? The interpretations of our empirical study can be summarised as follows: Pollution touches and moves children around the world, evokes wide-ranging emotions, and is valued as an important issue. Children reflect on an intrinsic value of nature and express pathocentric and vulnerabilistic views towards humans, animals and nature. Finally, children of different cultures justify different levels of punishment for environmental offenders.

Keywords

philosophy for children, P4C, intercultural comparison, value of nature, sustainability, environmental pollution, pathocentrism, empathy, punishment

1. Introduction¹

Philosophising with children is paradigmatically apt to placing children in a world where they have the opportunity to wonder and think and feel freely, to engage in critical thinking and philosophical dialogue, and to express their thoughts about philosophical questions and problems. Our natural world is a large subject area that interests children and directly affects their living environment. Of course, this is not the only topic that children want to, could, and should philosophise about, but it is one that children do think about. Children are generally more willing than adults to think about big questions concerning our nature, partly out of curiosity and partly because, compared to many adults, they do not have a fixed worldview (see, e.g., Matthews 1980; Kizel 2016, 7). Therefore, philosophy – as a discipline and practice of philosophy for children (P4C)² – should think about philosophical issues related to nature (e.g., the consequences of pollution) as part of its core themes.

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See, for example relevant literature by Lipman (1974/1986) and Matthews (1980), and also Camhy (2013); Biggeri/Santi (2012, 373–395); Gregory (2011, 199–219); Anderson (ed., 2017).

We draw on some of the results of our empirical study with *children aged eight to ten from different countries*. In this study, we philosophised with children about nature, its value, and pollution. To support our thesis that P4C and philosophical engagement with nature contribute to a broad range of philosophical and general competencies, especially personal competencies, we first clarify what we mean by P4C and how and to what end we apply it. We also justify why we consider the topic of nature to be so important for philosophising with children. In presenting the interpretation and evaluation of our empirical project – the core of this paper – we show which and how – even in primary schools – conditions are facilitated for the success of P4C (on the topic of nature) and why these conditions are important. In doing so, we draw on the findings of our empirical and intercultural research project involving P4C on pollution and sustainable development.³

In this project, we used a repetitive real-life school setting to investigate and explore how the topic of nature and its associated problems can elicit a reflective attitude towards nature in children, and whether processes of justification for the (perhaps objective) value of nature develop as a result. We defend the position that a well-constructed P4C (e.g. guided by Neo-Socratic dialogues or other thoughtful and reflective conversations, as well as well-chosen thought experiments) on the topic of nature contributes decisively to a reflective attitude towards our natural world and strengthens basic philosophical skills. First, a reflective and thoughtful engagement with nature contributes to adopting a (possibly) empathetic attitude towards it (e.g. towards animals). Second, such engagement is paradigmatically likely to stimulate and initiate aesthetic experiences and moral feelings that not only become the object of children's awareness but are also emphatically likely to provide a holistic philosophical education. Importantly, these are also fundamental and essential philosophical and personal competencies. Thirdly, questioning oneself and one's role in nature and becoming aware of this role in a philosophical discursive or shared reflection is essential for the maturation of an individual.

From this, our paper is divided into two sections. Section (2) is divided into two subsections dealing with what P4C is and the importance of the theme of nature in it. In section (3) we present our empirical intercultural project: philosophising with children (from all over the world) about nature, natural values and pollution. This section also includes several subsections in order to present the study in a structured way and to address different interpretive approaches.

2. What is P4C?

P4C is used in many, partly contradictory notions (see e.g. Trickey, Topping 2004, 365–380; Pritchard 2018). In section 2.1, we attempt to clarify our understanding of P4C by highlighting the importance of methodical and methodological considerations, such as the relevance of Neo-Socratic dialogue, the role of teacher guidance in concrete teaching-learning situations, and our understanding of the meaning of P4C and third grade pupils' philosophical thinking.

In section 2.2, we argue why the topic of thinking about *nature* is highly relevant to P4C.

2.1 What is P4C? Some Clarifications

P4C is a widely accepted and adopted educational-philosophical branch that aims to philosophise with children aged 6 to 12. Although it can be considered a worldwide movement, there are various attempts and theoretical concepts related to P4C (Pritchard 2018). While we argue for a particular conception of P4C, it is not specific and can be applied in manifold ways in the classroom. We understand P4C in the sense of Lipman (1986), namely as a methodical and didactic concept that can be used in any subject.

Specifically, P4C means (a) the integration of dialogical-creative methods in teaching situations. It is a method for practising dialogical-pragmatic and creative thinking regarding lifeworld problems (cf. Martens 2005a and 2005b; Matthews 1980; Brüning 2014; Michalik 2015); (b) the focus on critical thinking. The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC)

“... promotes the idea of the classroom as a ‘community of inquiry’ in which pupils openly and respectfully exchange ideas. Each pupil is regarded as having the potential to make valuable contributions to the topics under consideration. Pupils are encouraged to develop good listening skills, responsiveness to what others say, willingness to try to support one’s own ideas with good reasons, and openness to the possibility that one should modify one’s beliefs in light of new considerations. In short, the classroom is designed to reinforce the pupil’s potential for *reasonableness*.” (italics in the original; Pritchard 2018)

Furthermore, (c) P4C favours the acquisition of diverse reflection, abstraction and argumentation skills as well as the differentiated handling of heterogeneous opinions in multicultural societies. The method of Socratic Conversation (SC) is well suited for acquiring and deepening such competencies.⁴ Broadly speaking, SC is a teaching method based on moderated group discussion that encourages self-critical, reflective, and argumentative thinking and adheres to certain discussion rules: We let others finish, we take others’ statements seriously, we strive for self-consistency, we try to generalize and universalize our theses, etc. (cf. Daniel, Auriac 2011). SC ideally starts with a general topic that moves pupils – in our case, the environmental issue – and becomes increasingly complex (cf. Martens 2005a and 2005b). This does not mean that teachers cannot introduce SC with a provocative theoretical question – as we did – and vice versa, to link the theoretical issue closely to pupils’ lives by amazing and moving them. We believe that the above P4C methods are not only tools but also apt in improving children’s abilities to argue

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Our empirical approach encompasses the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development. However, due to space constraints, we could not elaborate on them in this paper. Contributing to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a desideratum, because ESD is neither accepted by teachers at large, nor is its implementation in schools always successful. One reason for this is that ESD is considered demanding and complex and can only be implemented in an interdisciplinary way (Cirulies, DeWolf Hoffmann 2010, 141). Furthermore, there is a lack of practicable concepts for ESD. On the relevance of ethical thinking for environmental issues, see for example Norton (2015, 159), who refers among others to Sen and the capabilities approach

and argues that environmental issues and the capabilities approach are intertwined. He also integrates the capabilities approach into his heuristic of environmental decision making: “The capabilities heuristics: Evaluate environmental change from the viewpoint of broadening the capabilities of both present and future people.” (see Heuristic 9; Norton 2015, 294)

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Here, we do not differentiate between the different streams of P4C but apply a wide definition thereof. The terms children’s philosophy, thinking with children, or philosophising for children are used synonymously.

philosophically. Furthermore, we argue (cf. Ch. 3) that fostering the development of an empathetic attitude towards nature, especially towards suffering animals, enables children to reflect on aspects of the Education of Sustainable Development (ESD). We elaborate on this point in section 2.2.

The methodological core of P4C can be closely related to Kant.⁵ The following principles (Münnix 2005, 102f.) are heuristically fruitful and applicable in the context of concrete teaching that promotes pupils' philosophical competencies (see section 3):

1. Learn to think for yourself!
2. Always try to think how another human person may think.
3. Think in accordance with your own thinking and thoughts.

Why is Kant relevant to P4C? Kant is one precursor of the contemporary didactics of philosophy, which focuses on developing pupil's abilities and truly enabling them to philosophise. This is in contrast to the view that philosophy education teaches philosophy (as a body of outcomes). Kant was concerned with thinking for oneself and the activity of one's own thinking in the spirit of *sapere aude* (Latin for "dare to know" or "to have courage to think for oneself").

In short, principle 1 contributes to pupils' active, self-engaged, and systematic reflective thinking. This principle may seem trivial, but remember that pupils often do not say what they really think, but what the teacher probably wants to hear (and which ultimately earns them a good grade). In P4C, principle 1 contributes to developing pupils' intellectual self-awareness and enhancing their cognitive development. This is because P4C is about truly comprehending a thought and testing an argument for validity, universalisability, scope, and possible objections. These cognitive skills all need to be practised. Just as empathy means genuinely trying to feel as another does ("putting yourself in the other person's shoes"), principle 2 means thinking oneself into the place of another. Understanding how someone might think promotes mutual respect on rational grounds, which is important in terms of granting mutual respect and other competencies, such as judgement or social competence. Principle 3 directs pupils to argue consistently and promotes a coherent way of thinking. It improves practical reasoning. Being able to use our minds protects us from manipulation and oppression.

Together, the principles improve children's cognitive skills, especially their personal cognitive abilities, namely social and judgement competencies. However, why these? Taking for granted that children can engage in "skilful reasoning" (Pritchard 2018), we highlight that reasonableness and an empathic attitude towards human beings (and animals in our case) are not only cognitive abilities but also a "social disposition" (Splitter, Sharp 1995, 6). Reasonableness in accordance with the above three principles contributes significantly to understanding the arguments and feelings of other people, including those with different opinions, and to taking them into account in one's own deliberations.

2.2 Nature as One Topic in P4C

As used here, the term P4C does not refer to primary scholars engaging with the history of philosophy as older pupils might in philosophy or ethics classes. While the focus on aspects of nature in P4C is not a new topic, it is instructive to briefly examine why we should seek a better philosophical understanding

of children's attitudes toward nature. *First*, philosophising about nature, e.g., about the risks and consequences of pollution and about normative aspects such as the supposed intrinsic value of nature and human beings in comparison to animals as part of the same realm of nature, can be taken up in many branches of philosophy (e.g., ethics, metaphysics, aesthetics, and (applied) ethics) and numerous other disciplines. Therefore, philosophising about nature is relevant to pedagogical considerations and to fostering children's thinking about connections between seemingly disparate school subjects. One example illustrates our point: *nature* is not only a – highly disputable – term in anthropology used in debates about human nature. In many school subjects, the parlance of *nature* is also relevant. In biology, human beings are considered highly evolved animals. For argument's sake, subscribing to this view enables easily arguing that animals and human beings are part of the same realm called nature.⁶

Second, for didactic and heuristic reasons, we argue (see section 3.1) that pupils worldwide, regardless of the culture in which they live, commonly share some experiences of nature, such as the aesthetic dimension of nature (see Pedersen 2019, 106ff). It is beyond the scope of this contribution to explore intercultural concepts of children's notions of nature in detail. Nevertheless, the assumption that many children have strong feelings towards nature – as an aspect of their cognitive and especially philosophical competencies – and develop normative ascriptions thereof can be validated empirically. Reflecting on *nature* seems meaningful for children because they think about it in their everyday world, in their, to coin a new phrase, *pre-philosophical common-sense world*. Why is this so? There is a general anthropological reason:

“The self-image of man is essentially determined by demarcations from ‘nature’ and especially from other living beings.” (Michalik 1999, 139; our translation)

If human beings in general tend to think about their relationship with other living beings, children probably do as well. As mentioned in section 2.1, P4C also affects environmental issues, and nature is one of the most obvious topics of environmental education. Bleazby recently stated:

“P4C assumes that the self and the capacity for independent thinking develop through mutually transformative interactions with the environment. As the environment is inevitably social-cultural, this means that growth is also shaped by, and dependent upon, our interactions with others.” (Bleazby 2020)

Third, one of our goals is to awaken and promote children's sensitivity to thinking about the inner value of nature – independent of whether nature really has intrinsic value and whether we believe that nature has intrinsic value. To live within nature might be a final purpose or an ultimate goal. These assumptions should not be imposed on children's thinking! We argue that children can benefit from activities within and their thinking about nature.

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You might object that Kant is a western thinker and that his philosophical insights do not transcend European thinking, whatever this might be. We argue that we only refer to methodological principles that might be fruitful for the didactics of philosophy in general. Ethnocentricity and other shortcomings do not follow from the abovementioned principles.

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The relevance of *nature* in various school subjects is discussed in Brüning (2018) and Kattmann (2010).

One aspect that makes the study of nature in the classroom more important today, which is only briefly mentioned, is children's increasing alienation from nature because of excessive digital media use and a lifestyle that excludes experiences with and in natural surroundings (e.g. forests, conservation areas). The broader context of these considerations is based on ESD.⁷ It is beyond the scope of this contribution to explore this in detail, but three further arguments – (a to c) for the relevance of P4C linked to ESD – are sketched.

- (a) Independent from children's alienation from nature and their lifestyle, a tradition of pedagogy stresses the value of making experiences in and reflecting about nature. This tradition can be traced back to philosophers like John Locke (1632 – 1704), who explicitly argued that animals should be treated with respect. Furthermore, those who feel “delight in the suffering and destruction of inferior creatures, will not be apt to be very compassionate or benign to those of their own kind” (Locke 1693, § 116).
- (b) ESD is a worldwide movement closely related to the educational goals of the UN (UN, 2020).⁸ ESD demands and promotes the mindful use of natural resources and our natural environment, and the mindful, respectful, and responsible treatment of other living beings, including animals. However, the importance of this needs to be elaborated in the context of P4C because ESD is a global task in many subjects and young learners should engage with related issues.
- (c) The topic area of *nature* in terms of ESD, that is, sustainability, offers rich philosophical considerations, such as whether and to what extent humans live with nature or whether and to what extent we could or should master nature. Regardless, it is clear that humans are also part of nature, even if there are good reasons to regard them as natural and cultural beings. In terms of curriculum, relationships between humans and animals are implemented in many ways, substantiating the relevance of topics like ours. To illustrate this, we argue that in philosophy education in many curricula, *nature* is a topic, such as in Australia, the United States, Germany, and Brazil.⁹ For brevity, we focus on one philosophy curriculum in North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany) (Ministerium für Schulen und Weiterbildung [MSW] 2008).¹⁰ The following topics are planned for the 5th and 6th grades: “Question area 5: The question of nature, culture, and technology. Main content: Living from and with nature, Animals as co-beings” (MSW 2008, 20; our translation). They were selected because the following competencies (MSW 2008, 18f) can be promoted by addressing these key topics:

- 1) *Personal competence*: Pupils “express their feelings and present them in appropriate situations, classify actions as ‘reasonable’ and ‘unreasonable’ and justify their classification, present their own views in a comprehensible way in conversations with each other to learn, and [...] reflect their responsibility in daily-life situations” (MSW 2008, 8).
- 2) *Social competence*: Pupils “record and describe the feelings, desires, and opinions of people of their living [...] environment; actively listen to others in conversation and summarize the thoughts of others; and distinguish between different perspectives in fictitious situations and present them” (MSW 2008, 18).
- 3) *Content-specific competence*: “Pupils understand social phenomena in terms of their significance in their lives, [...] and formulate basic questions about human existence about acting in the world and interaction

with nature as their own questions and identify them as philosophical questions” (MSW 2008, 18).

- 4) The most important *methodological competence* is that pupils learn to understand their environment and describe their observations.

3. Our Empirical Intercultural Project: Philosophising with Children Worldwide about Nature, Natural Values, and Pollution

In this section, we present selected empirical results. First, we outline our reflections based on the teaching concept we designed, elaborated, and carried out from 2016 to 2019 in Germany, Brazil, Argentina, Tunisia, and South Korea. Some of our interpretive findings are addressed in section 3.1. We also introduce key terms and describe how we intend to understand and apply them. Interesting questions and aspects that might come to the reader’s mind must be omitted for reasons of space. Regarding the fundamental questions of whether and how children express their concern about pollution and argue for the value of nature, we compare the responses of children from Germany, Brazil, Argentina, Tunisia and South Korea (sections 3.2-3.5).

3.1 Our Research Project: General Findings and Preliminary Remarks

By presenting our empirical, intercultural research project, entitled “Philosophising with children (all over the world) about nature, natural values, and pollution”, we want to verify that engagement in and with nature is ideally suited for all dimensions of P4C as well as for children’s philosophical education and personal competences.¹¹

3.1.1 Background

The unit has interdisciplinary and international relevance and, because of its simple design, can be implemented in different educational institutions around the world. We held or initiated (recorded in writing and partly in video) our teaching unit in different schools and educational contexts in Germany, Brazil, South Korea, Argentina, Israel, Mexico, Tunisia and Turkey with more than 300 pupils. In this evaluation, we focus on the results from Germany, Brazil, Argentina, South Korea, and Tunisia, as the material evaluated is considered sufficient for these countries. The children or pupils with whom we conducted the lessons come from different social backgrounds. This is not

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For a more detailed view, see Sukopp 2020, 113–134.

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See especially Sustainability Goals no. 12, “Responsible Consumption and Production”, no. 14 “Life below Water”, and no. 15 “Life on Land” (UN 2020).

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In this paper, we only hint at some of the comparative curricula research. For an overview, see UNESCO 2007. We do not want to conceal the fact that there are opponents of a P4C that focuses on issues of environmental

pollution, such as lobbyists from industry circles who exert massive influence on school and education policy.

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In English: Ministry for Schools and Continuing Education, located in Düsseldorf, North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany).

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Note that we already published the structure and some of the results in Prust, Sukopp 2018, 33–43.

only true for the country comparison, but also within the respective countries, where we deliberately conducted the lessons in very heterogeneous institutions. In Germany, for example, we selected a school where students from the upper middle class are taught and an inclusive school in a socially deprived area. The same is true for Brazil and Argentina. Here, the lessons took place in state-run city schools and schools in rural areas where the children's parents mostly work on fruit and vegetable plantations. In South Korea, we taught at a private school that could be described as an elite school. Against these backgrounds, it is remarkable that the children were not that different in as many aspects as one might assume considering the social and geographical locations, which we elaborate later; for example, in terms of their behaviour, interest in nature, willingness to engage in philosophical and thoughtful conversation, basic argumentative structure and sense of sustainability, empathy and moral feelings, and moral reasoning. We present some of these results later and our interpretations thereof.

3.1.2 Our teaching concept

The teaching concept for our P4C was designed for one double period (90 minutes) or two single periods (45 minutes each) with children aged eight to ten. In an introductory step, the pupils looked at and described dissimilar pairs of photographs showing the same nature motif (polluted nature vs. *unspoiled* nature). By talking intensively about their emotions when looking at these contrasting images, they were sensitised to natural phenomena, beauty and related issues. Based on this, the pupils composed a letter from the perspective of their favourite animals that suffer from pollution. Here pupils had to change their perspective and think about their feelings. In addition, writing these letters promoted processes of aesthetic and sustainable education. This formed the foundation for a thoughtful and reflective conversation and dialogue in the following period.

During the conversation, the pupils dealt with three questions: 1) Why do I feel bad or not bad when I see pollution and suffering animals? 2) Should people be punished when they leave rubbish at the beach or in the forest? If so: what should the punishment be? 3) People also suffer because of pollution. Is it worse when humans become ill from waste or is it just as bad when animals become ill and die?

3.1.3 Some (didactic) intentions, clarification of the terms, and surprising results

With this teaching unit, we initially intended children to first talk about their emotions and subsequently to exchange arguments on nature and applied problems. We were astonished that the children – worldwide – were able to leave a subjective emotional and egoistic perspective behind and adopt an allocentric perspective. For example, the following comes from an eight-year-old German pupil:

“I feel bad and guilty and want something to be done about it. Otherwise, the animals in the ocean will eat the garbage and die.”

A Brazilian girl stated the following:

“The sea is dirty, and we need to clean it.”

Furthermore, children worldwide displayed a high level of empathy, especially towards animals. Empathy can be considered a core moral feeling (Persson, Savulescu 2018).

We use “moral feeling” in a broad and common sense, for example, admiration, pride, respect, sympathy, anger, contempt, disgust, indignation, shame, guilt, regret, and so forth. In a brief schematisation, we classify moral feelings as those that are self-directed (e.g. shame, regret) or directed towards others. The latter can be subdivided into feelings directed towards someone’s behaviour or acts (e.g. admiration, indignation) and those directed towards someone’s situation (e.g. compassion, concern).¹² How does a feeling qualify as a moral feeling? For a feeling to be a moral feeling, it must emerge in a morally relevant situation either in interaction with other living beings or more generally when other people are objects of our feelings or actions. The latter includes self-directedness. Another important feature is that moral feelings have a motivating force. First, we consider *empathy* to be a feeling that is responsible for including other persons in our practical considerations. Without empathy, we would not regard the moral considerations of others as worthwhile. Perhaps empathy is the most basic moral feeling. At least, it is a feeling that plays a fundamental role in morality (for an opposing view, see Prinz 2011).

Furthermore, the children argued in favour of natural values, here generally understood as a strategy of reasoning according to which nature has a value or a value of its own. We do not delve into the philosophically controversial discussion on inherent or intrinsic values here.¹³ They were able to justify their positions and discussed these with the other children. We call the children’s prevalent argumentation strategy pathocentric or vulnerabilistic (understood here as the position according to which we should consider animals in our moral actions as they are sentient, suffering, and vulnerable beings with an interest in not being hurt or having to experience suffering),¹⁴ or biocentric (in the sense that nature or all living things have an intrinsic value) because they value possible creatures without ascribing to human beings a special role on earth. Some of the pupils’ answers even attribute rights to living beings or creatively explain why it is bad if beings capable of suffering must endure it. Some quotations are as follows:

“All living creatures have a right to live.” (Brazilian and German pupils.)

“Animals are as vulnerable as human beings, but animals don’t have physicians; therefore, it is worse if animals suffer.” (German pupil.)

“The whole of nature is a treasure given by God.” (Tunisian pupil.)

These quotations reveal open-mindedness, practical and logical reasoning, empathy, acknowledgement, and appreciation for (a value of) nature.

¹²

A similar classification is in Thies 2017.

¹³

Intrinsic or intrinsic values are those values that a thing has in itself, regardless of whether we recognise them correctly and of any attribution. For the question of what exactly intrinsic values are, see Bradley, Zimmerman 2019. Positions of natural ethics, according to

which the whole of nature has intrinsic value, are sometimes also referred to as biocentrism or holism (for this, see, e.g. Krebs 1997).

¹⁴

For the approach, see Singer 2011, ch. 3; cf. Krebs 1993, 995ff.

Furthermore, the children discussed a suitable penalty for environmental offenders, showing that they want to defend a strong position in terms of issues concerning nature. For example, the children not only proposed fines – nearly everyone in South Korea (ranging from 80€ to 10,000,000€) but no one in Brazil – but also redemption and compensation (pupils in Germany, Argentina, Brazil, and Tunisia); a change of roles to feel malfeasance (pupils in Argentina); jail sentence(s) (pupils in Germany and Brazil); and capital punishment, preferably executed by piranhas (pupils in Brazil).¹⁵

Moreover, while highlighting the fact that human beings are guilty and responsible for pollution, the children reflected on themselves and their roles as human beings. These statements and arguments assert a high level of rational reflection and philosophical thinking, as well as the presence of moral feelings and moral thinking. The children told us that they are interested in these issues, that they want to learn and discuss more about them, that they want to help suffering animals and that they feel good when they think about it.

By including nature as a core theme, we conclude that P4C is indispensable in our primary education because it astonishes children and makes them willing to deal with the problems of nature. Most importantly, it helps children to develop a philosophical, personal-emotional, and empathetic perspective. Our teaching units generate moral feelings, provide an elementary education, including the joy of learning, stimulate joyful and lively discussions, and ultimately make a small contribution to children's morality. This is, as noted, independent of our position on whether and how nature should be treated (morally appropriately). These claims should be interpreted on the basis of our empirical findings. The following sections serve this purpose.

3.1.4 An intercultural study

First, given that the term *interculturality* is disputable, we outline our account of this concept (see Srubar, Renn, Wenzel 2005; Cappai 2005; Yousefi, Braun 2011; Sukopp 2020). As a working definition of interculturality, we follow Yousefi, Braun:

“Interculturality is the name of a theory and practice that deals with the historical and contemporary relationship of all cultures and people as their bearers on the basis of their complete equivalence. It is a scientific discipline insofar as it methodically examines this theory and practice.” (Yousefi, Braun 2011, 29; our translation)

Our understanding of interculturality is partly based on the assumption that cultures are comparable in terms of relevant aspects. Admittedly, this is also disputed. We assume that differences in and between cultures are not simply deviations from an ultimately normative universalism. The difference is not a mode of the absence of universality in the sense that it is a deficiency if universality cannot be established. We explicitly recognise cultural differences and cultural particularities.

“Only with the definition of cultural difference as an incommensurable and non-translatable quantity do serious problems arise for a comparison between cultures.” (Cappai 2005, 51; our translation)¹⁶

Regarding our research, these assumptions should be revised in cases of real incommensurable empirical results.

Second, guiding school lessons in primary schools around the world is challenging from a methodological viewpoint. In addition to our argument in

favour of P4C, intercultural aspects of teaching can be summarized as follows: we are not obliged to follow any particular adherent of Neo-Socratic dialogue.¹⁷ However, our methodology¹⁸ is connected to the concepts presented, for instance, by Stelzer (2015) and Camhy (2015). The convergence of asking critical questions in the tradition of critical rationalism and intercultural philosophy is instructive:

“Both positions rest on a discursive/dialogical orientation, i.e., critical discussion within a scientific community, spanning debates over different philosophical traditions.” (Stelzer 2015, 80)

Furthermore, we see one main assumption of critical rationalism, namely falsifiability, and provisional results in the context of a common search for truth and the obligation to justify statements as inevitable. The thoughtful dialogues we initiated with the children are open to results, which is challenging. Nevertheless, not every opinion is equally justified. The typical relativism of many pupils must be accorded to the truth. Even if there is no absolute truth standard, “the absence of final criteria does not mean that the choice between competitive theories or moral standards is arbitrary” (Stelzer 2015, 85).

3.1.5 *Limits of our study*

We are aware that our statements and interpretations are based on a certain amount of data and that therefore, we cannot claim absolute truth.

Regarding our approach, the following is noted: when put to a critical test, the teaching unit has shortcomings from a philosophical-didactic perspective and methodological viewpoint. We must keep in mind the teachers who conducted the lesson, as we were extremely pressed for time. Nevertheless, it could be objected that the pictures have relatively strong suggestive power; thus, whether this task leads in a certain direction should be considered. While this may be true, we intended to introduce the pupils to the topic and sensitise them through the pictures. We also wanted to allow for methodological

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We will refer to this point in ch. 3.2.3. Note that this contribution cannot present and interpret every aspect of our study.

¹⁶

There are good arguments against the fundamental incomparability of an intercultural comparison, because communication is often doomed to failure. However, this failure is often only relative to concrete communication situations. Failure does not mean total and comprehensive failure, for human beings are capable not only of language and reason, but also of a *common* language and reason (see Cappai 2005, 67–84: “Three strategies against radical skepticism”).

¹⁷

One reason is our limited time and lack of teacher training. However, there are also many arguments against an interpretation of what Neo-Socratic dialogue means (see Heinrich 2017, 110–133) and what philosophical dialogue in general should be. Camhy

(2015, 145f.) recurs to Lipman (1991, 16). Lipman described it as “a dialogue that tries to conform logic, it moves forward like a boat tacking into the wind, but in the process of its progress comes to resemble that of thinking itself”.

¹⁸

We highly appreciate many of the insights concerning the theoretical background of multicultural education that Vang (2010, 69) explores. Referring to Rogers (1967), he claims that a teachers’ attitude should (a) be genuine or real; (b) be positive, with unconditional regard; and (c) display empathy. Table 13.9 includes the following: “Basic Cognitive Development (aged 7 to 11) [...]. Develop reasoning skills, use ideas, solve problems, understand more complex issues, apply imagination. Curious about learning.” (Vang 2010, 297) This could hint at why the topic we chose is not beyond children’s cognitive capacities.

diversity, and by letting them describe what they saw and their feelings, we wanted to promote competencies that make sense and are often lacking.

A thoughtful conversation (cf. Schreier 1999) is not a SC because the topics are discussed in the tasks worked on beforehand, even though we reacted flexibly in this case. However, not every discussion in the school setting has to be a SC to be philosophically demanding, productive, and fruitful. Another possible objection is that an anthropomorphic change of perspective into an animal is ultimately not a real change of perspective because it remains anthropomorphic and seems impossible to enter into the perspective of a being that possibly or probably *thinks* differently – if it thinks at all. These critical objections must be taken seriously but are ultimately owed to the limited time available and to the fact that the lesson was carried out comparably in diverse cultural contexts and educational settings.

After these preliminary remarks, we now summarise and interpret some of the results of the conducted lessons.

3.2 Empathy, feelings, the value of nature, pathocentrism and vulnerabilism, and penalty rates: An intercultural comparison of views on suffering animals and environmental pollution

It was impressive that children around the world do not want animals to suffer (as a consequence of pollution) *and* that they can partially justify their views. Universality and justification are not arbitrarily associated with moral reasoning, but are essential to ascribing to children the capacity for moral reasoning.¹⁹ To briefly remind you of this again, we asked in our thoughtful conversation: 1) *Why do I feel bad or not bad when I see pollution and suffering animals?;* 2) *Should people be punished when they leave rubbish at the beach or in the forest? If so: what should the punishment be?;* 3) *People also suffer because of pollution. Is it worse when humans become ill from waste or is it just as bad when animals become ill and die?*

3.2.1 Empathy and feelings

One notable finding is that children around the world were not only able to show their strong empathy with animals, but also to justify it. A Brazilian girl insisted:

“Imagine if you were an animal and someone threw garbage in your house. Think about it.”

A Brazilian boy at another school in Brazil put it in anthropomorphic terms:

“I don’t want garbage in my house. Otherwise, I will get sick, or my family will die, and then, I will be very sad. I will also take revenge.”

We found similar responses in all countries, in all schools, and from most pupils. In addition to empathy, pupils displayed a wide range of emotions: anger, hatred, shame, guilt, responsibility, disgust, and sadness. It should be mentioned here that – according to the general impression – the South Korean children demonstrated a less broad spectrum of feelings (also in dealing with each other) and often did not name their feelings as explicitly as the German, Argentinean, and Brazilian pupils did. However, the sign language of the South Koreans contained a rich abundance of symbolism, and we could interpret some of these symbols with the help of a translator (a native speaker of South Korean). We understood that a strong emotion is meant here (often

something like the compassion of misery towards others) and the urge or request to do something to end the misery.

3.2.2 *Value of nature, pathocentrism, and vulnerabilism*

Beyond our findings that children learn to reflect on their feelings, we also argue in favour of an inner value of nature that children at first sight universally attribute to nature. The children's responses not only showed empathy towards animals (and to some extent to all living things) but extended beyond that, offering approaches that ascribe a special role and value to nature and animals. One argument frequently repeated in Germany, Brazil, and South Korea is as follows:

"We belong to nature and animals belong to nature as well. We are also mutually dependent on each other."

One German schoolgirl attributed a special power to nature, saying:

"Nature helps us, so we should help her too."

An Argentine pupil pointed out

"... that there will be no more life when all animals and plants die."

Asked if he meant there will be no more human life, he answered affirmatively but added that

"... no living being deserves to be mistreated."

This pupil demonstrated knowledge about the value of nature and knowledge about causal connections (if something is destroyed, this has effects on something else). A Korean boy, in a statement about the value of all living things, also referred to the phenomenon of impermanence, emphasizing that

"... man, animal, and plant have only one life."

In a class in Tunisia, the religious aspect came into play when it was pointed out that "

... the whole of nature is a treasure given by God".

The question of animals suffering cannot only be addressed in the context of children's pathocentric attitude but is also clearly related to vulnerability. For the reason of space limitations, we do not explore this in detail but emphasise the decisive role of vulnerability in the children's view of themselves and from an educational perspective (since the Enlightenment). Children *in all countries* not only experience and recognise themselves as vulnerable (Burghardt *et al.* 2017, 161ff) but also have the ability to recognise *other* groups, such as animals, *as* vulnerable. Vulnerability can be classified as an inescapable anthropological category (Burghardt *et al.* 2017, 167) and moral

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Godfrey-Smith states: "A moral agent, I assume, must be capable of exercising reflective rational choice on the basis of principles" (Godfrey-Smith 2005, 314). To aim at the universality of moral statements can be grasped as a meta-ethical principle or meta-ethical normative claim.

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A well-known approach to this is described in Singer 2011, ch. 3.

category, which states that we do not inflict suffering or harm living beings who feel suffering and are vulnerable.²⁰

In Germany and South Korea, more than 80% of the children stated that human and animal suffering are equally bad; however, fewer than 40% did so in Brazil. In this context, it is also important to note that 45% stated that it is worse for Brazilian children that animals suffer than human beings. To understand the meaning of the inner value of nature, we compared the results that differed in intercultural terms.²¹ The relatively small percentage of Brazilian pupils who think it is equally bad that animals are threatened by pollution is not reflected in their reasons for feeling bad about seeing animals suffer or when they argue about appropriate levels of punishment for environmental offenders because, in terms of punishment, the Brazilian pupils demand the most severe penalties.

3.2.3 Penalty rates for environmental offenders

The German and Tunisian pupils were mostly in favour of moderate punishments, such as requiring polluters to make up for the damage by cleaning up the trash and doing community service. In Germany, however, they favoured fines or imprisonment. Brazil and Argentina offered a heterogeneous picture in terms of just punishment, but sometimes drastic punitive measures were proposed, ranging up to execution by piranhas. Interestingly, no Brazilian child asked for a fine, which is the only punishment suggested by children in South Korea, ranging from a moderate €80 to unaffordable sums. Thus, the relation to money is different when comparing Brazil and South Korea.

Briefly, the children worldwide are similar when it comes to our nature, the value of animals, and pollution. They all show empathy towards animals, argue pathocentrically, and advocate against pollution, which they consider a great evil. However, cross-cultural differences were also evident. We interpret some of these differences next.

3.3 Germany: Feelings of responsibility, guilt, and shame²²

The answers to the question on why the children feel bad, if they feel bad at all, when they see suffering animals indicate that they feel bad *de facto* because they consider animals an essential part of our nature and as valuable creatures. Especially in Germany – according to the evaluations – animals seem to be just as valuable as humans when considering the consequences of environmental pollution.²³ First, German children reflect (themselves), so they know that environmental pollution is bad, although human agents will not stop. Moreover, they feel bad because suffering and pollution should not exist. For German children, responsibility and guilt are connected. There is ample evidence of this from German pupils, for example:

“It is bad that despite knowing that pollution is very bad, we do not stop it.”

“I am responsible for pollution, the whole of [hu]mankind is to blame.”

Furthermore, they feel bad *because* they imagine being a suffering animal (indirect conclusion from “animals need nature” and “humans need nature”). Finally, they have an awareness that humans ultimately harm themselves. The justification why it is equally bad when animals suffer compared to human beings is as follows: for the children, it is obvious that humans and animals can become ill and die. While the human being can see a doctor, the animal

has no doctor. Furthermore, it is clear to many of the children that humans, not animals, have caused environmental pollution culpably and intentionally. Therefore, some conclude that it is worse than other species than our own suffer because of our mistakes. This causes feelings of guilt and shame in the pupils.

To interpret these results, we hypothesised that responsibility and guilt have a strong and lasting tradition in Germany, at least since the Nazi tyranny in the 1930s and 1940s.²⁴ Having such feelings, however, need not have a negative connotation, for conscience is an essential aspect of practical reasonableness and thus, is itself part of philosophical, emotional, and personal development. This approach of the German pupils seems enlightened and reflective, attesting to philosophical-ethical thinking. However, the German children also seemed more pessimistic about their view of humanity.

3.4 Brazil: Heterogeneous answers, ecological attitudes, fear for safety, and the desire for cohesion

As noted, 45% of Brazilian pupils thought it is worse when animals suffer, but another 45% argued the opposite.²⁵ However, those pupils who claimed it is worse that people suffer from pollution also despised pollution and advocated that polluters be harshly punished. This result can be explained by the pupils' environmental awareness. They recognise that animals suffer and that this suffering is unnecessary and caused by humans. Lorgus noted that:

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Though intercultural studies have been conducted, for example, on children's notions of friendship, it seems to be an urgent desideratum of research to ask the research questions we propose. Overall, not many studies related to children's concept of nature have been conducted (Keller 2007, 37 and 43). An attempt entitled "Values and Knowledge Education" (VaKE) was recently elaborated by Brossard Børhaug, Weyringer (2019, 1–14). The authors argue that VaKE promotes the development and "critical and empathic capabilities in intercultural education" (2019, 1). The linkage with the capabilities approach is as follows: "Amartya Sen defines public reasoning as the involvement of real observers in collective deliberation on the viability of ethical principles [...], and Martha Nussbaum argues that liberal education should promote Socratic questioning, world citizenship, and narrative imagination." (Brossard Børhaug, Weyringer 2019, 2)

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The relevance of the feeling of such emotions for the moral development of children is obvious and understood as follows: "A moral person is characterised by two conditions: He has a disposition or motive to be considerate of others in his actions, and a disposition to feel certain moral feelings. Feelings of guilt and shame in the case of violation of interpersonal obligations as well as positive feelings, such

as pride or self-esteem in the case of 'overcoming' selfish inclinations. Underlying this is the assumption that morality is fundamental in how we deal with the concerns of others in our everyday lives, both the concerns of people who are close to us and those who are more distant from us." (Keller 2007, 24)

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The situation would likely be different if we were discussing the question of whether we should eat animals. However, it should also be noted that an increasing number of children of primary school age (at least in Germany) consciously eat a vegetarian or vegan diet.

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One prominent ethical view conceptualised in the aftermath of the Nazi tyranny is Hans Jonas' "The Imperative of Responsibility" (German: *Das Prinzip Verantwortung*). This prominent ethical concept is perhaps implicitly influential in German educational contexts.

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The diverse socio-cultural settings in Brazil are beyond the scope of this paper. Clearly, the answers to our questions depended on whether the school is located in a rural area or megacity. Furthermore, whether most children belong to the middle class or a socially disadvantaged group also impacted their answers.

“In Brazil [...] it is becoming increasingly relevant for primary education to demonstrate at an increasingly early stage this social responsibility towards and for the protection of the world we co-inhabit.” (Lorgus 2010, 169; our translation)

This interpretation is aligned with the results of Holtmann’s (2015) comparative study, comparing the economic, political, and social parameters of various countries. Brazil’s ecological performance (Holtmann 2015, 484) ranks fourth in an international comparison. The fact that Brazilian children express strong feelings towards animals suffering from environmental pollution correlates with the sometimes extreme answers received to the question of how polluters should be punished. For example, one Brazilian pupil wanted to

“... throw a nuclear missile at the people who pollute the environment”

Fifteen percent of the pupils wanted to

“... feed the polluters to the piranhas.”

In some classes, up to one-third of the pupils voted for the death penalty, although other physical punishments were also considered. A reason for the severe penalty for environmental offenders proposed by the Brazilian pupils could be that they are not familiar with penalty systems or ways to punish fairly or that they wanted to exaggerate a little.

However, there could also be deeper reasons they did not advocate fines but drastic measures. One hypothesis – confirmed by researchers in Brazil – is that pupils do not propose fines because money is not talked about in Brazil and therefore, young pupils have no connection with money or fines, especially in poorer areas. Having no relation to money, pupils would not be able to propose a money-based punishment system. Another hypothesis for the severe penalty could stem from the fact that environmental offenders harm the community and that only through a severe form of punishment can harmony (and an equilibrium) be restored. Especially in the poorer regions of Brazil, pupils might think it is important for people (perhaps even humans and animals) to stick together, and environmental offenders are to be severely punished for jeopardising this cohesion. The latter interpretation is supported by the fact that people in Brazil fear about public and private security daily. According to Paul (2010, 219), crime and violence that endanger citizens’ security are part of everyday life and can only be countered with drastic measures. The children convey these concerns and possibilities in their remarks, namely that those who pose a threat must be punished. We find this dark picture clearly in a letter of a Brazilian boy from Cuiaba. While he writes unintelligibly, anger and despair emanate from him:

“I will break the bones of this crap. Throw the garbage while eating it. The other who will throw garbage here will see you with my poison that will not survive. Come and play garbage, come on, it could be someone with a gun. With poison, and I throw poison when you give me crap. I have to live. It also does not come that it is not for you. I’ll eat you if you ... or else I’ll eat you, if I throw garbage in the sea, I’ll drag you to the bottom of the sea and eat you all, to death, crap.

Come throw garbage, come I will eat you that the alligator in the war, is detonate everything in ... [this word is unintelligible]? I am a terror, and I am in the sea. I’m going to the shallows to get you. I am too small, but I can eat you, hit you with my mouth to swallow you to death. I will eat you because I am on earth, I am everywhere. And in the water, you will fish me, and I will eat you and your partner or only your partner. Only if you take care of me and my family and give me food will I not eat you.”

On one hand, we see in the letter that the pupil is (unfortunately) familiar with violence and threats to public life, and on the other, the willingness to retaliate this threat accordingly harshly. It is also clear that he would refrain from punishment if assured that he could live safely and contentedly (with his family). He seeks security for himself and his family. He strives for harmony and would do anything to achieve this. What he wants for himself and his family, he can – and this applies to the other pupils as well – also transfer to animals, which is where empathy emerges. Brazilian children argue that animals die, and in their captivating simplicity, that it is bad to die. Here, the question arises as to why the death of animals makes them feel bad. Is it a sense of guilt or responsibility because it also threatens humans? Either way, the children argue with the assumption of a perspective takeover and the equality of living beings. We see from the often very emotional approach and embellished letters to humanity that the Brazilian children feel particularly close to the subject. The only ones who really come off badly are those who threaten life in any way.

3.5 South Korea: Empathy without explicitly mentioned feeling and Confucianism?

In South Korea and Brazil, pupils refer to the equality of living beings. When asked repeatedly why they feel bad at the sight of suffering animals, they answered:

“Because animals have life just like humans.”

A similar answer is that it is equally bad when animals suffer because humans are animals too, or because humans and animals are equally important. Children in South Korea recognise the connection between pollution, suffering, illness, and death. They also argue that humans are to blame.

It is often said that South Koreans express their feelings indirectly or differently. However, the children in South Korea answered the question on what they feel when looking at the contrastive picture pairs by repeating the answers to the question on what they see on the photos. Nevertheless, their affection for the animals became clear in the argumentative context. It is not only about the fact that some animals are cute. It is because animals are living beings that can die that is intolerable.²⁶ This highlights that the pupils, rather than expressing their feelings, develop the urge to act against possible grievances.

The general framework for an explanation is again linked to economic and social conditions. Holtmann (2015, 462) detects a dominance of economic growth over ecological awareness. Therefore, the view that someone pays a penalty fee (see section 3.1) rather than a reparation prevails in South Korea overall, for example, no punishment in the form of harsher penalties aimed at real interaction in the form of reparation. In education, one prevailing assumption in South Korea is that it is right to hold back one’s own sensitivities. Although the range of verbal descriptions of feelings is more limited in South Korea, the South Korean children demonstrated empathy. A connection with the values of a Confucian ethic (Kim 2001, 39) seems to be an interpretative

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The children answered that animals have a right to live (for a detailed discussion, see Feinberg 2005, 33–53).

approach that can only be hinted at here. Although an opening to Western capitalist and individualistic lifestyles is rising in South Korea, as Keller stated “societies, such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, show that collectivist orientations are maintained even in capitalist systems” (Keller 2007, 43; our translation). This includes a withdrawal of one’s own sensitivities, a view that it is a matter of self-perfection regarding the overall well-being of society, and that modesty is a virtue. The reluctance to express one’s feelings can be interpreted as a consequence of a modest basic attitude. One interpretation from Confucianism is as follows: Confucianism is influential in teaching and learning (Levent, Pehlivan 2017, 321–330; Chung 2011, 1–13). Principles of Confucianism include cosmic order, that is, sensitivity towards a balance of all living creatures, responsibility towards other human beings and animals, and respectively living a virtuous life “being rational, behaving properly, being honest and fair, being wise, being rational, being loyal, being merciful” (Levent, Pehlivan 2017, 325, table 2). The following quotations from two letters of the South Korean pupils feature at least some of these ethical principles:

“If you keep the tap running, the North Pole will be put in a bad situation. That is, you are wasting the ice, right? It is very sad that polar bears are floating on the ice. So, if you take care of the earth, you should save the water or be environmentally friendly with the water. Food waste should be reduced, and electricity should not be used wastefully. Should we protect the earth together?”²⁷ [Girl from Seoul, South Korea, excerpt of her letter from the perspective of a polar bear.]

In particular, the children made appellative statements addressed to the people who should know better and not dispose of garbage carelessly. The aspect of behavioural change due to conditions of the mutual coexistence of animals and human beings is also evident in some letters, as the following example shows:

“Hi guys, I am a dolphin. I live in the sea. You have thrown away a lot of garbage in the sea. I am writing you a letter. Because you have thrown away a lot of garbage, I am breathing very heavily. Our water is polluted because of the garbage. I hope that you will not throw away garbage. The water would be polluted, and the air would be worse. If it were good for you, it would be very uncomfortable for us. If the sea continues to be polluted, you will not be able to live in the water either. Please get rid of the garbage from my house. It is also good for you. It would make the world where you live a better place. Please do not throw it away. Then, we could continue to live in the water.”

It is not only – from the pupils’ perspective – wrong to continue polluting our environment but also irrational and against the well-understood self-interests of human beings.

4. Summary

To summarize, we recapitulate the following findings of this study:

1. In section 2.1, we outlined elements of P4C in general and our attempt at P4C in particular. P4C is a broadly applicable concept to philosophising with children. It can be grasped in three ways: a) P4C integrates dialogical creative methods in teaching situations; b) promotes critical thinking; and c) favours the acquisition of diverse reflection, abstraction, and argumentation skills, as well as the differentiated handling of heterogeneous opinions in multicultural societies. Specifically, to acquire and deepen such competencies, SC is employed as a method based on a moderated group

discussion. Following this, we proposed and justified three principles starting from a Kantian perspective of P4C. In sum, we did not follow a specific approach, which in our experience has proven successful in multicultural learning contexts and internationally.

2. Section 2.2 was dedicated to justifying our topic *nature* as suitable and fruitful for P4C as follows: first, philosophising about *nature*, for example, about the risks and consequences of pollution, helps understand normative aspects, such as the supposed inner value of nature, especially from an interdisciplinary perspective (*nature* as a topic in many school subjects). Second, for didactic and heuristic reasons, we assumed that pupils all around the world, regardless of the culture in which they live, share some experiences about nature, such as the aesthetic dimension thereof. This was proven, although many children especially in large cities are alienated from nature as an unspoiled natural environment. Third, reflecting on *nature*, in our project, this is highly relevant to the curriculum and promotes pupils' cognitive development and competencies (e.g. personal social, methodological, judgement, and content-specific competencies).
3. In section 3, we outlined and interpreted our empirical findings. Most children left a subjective emotional and egoistic perspective behind and adopted an allocentric perspective. They also displayed a high level of empathy as the ultimate moral feeling, especially towards animals (pathocentric) and, to some extent, to all living things (biocentric). Furthermore, the children argued in favour of natural values: they were able to justify their positions and were inclined to discuss these with the other children. We call the children's prevalent argumentation strategy pathocentric or vulnerabilistic, or even biocentric because they value passible creatures without ascribing to human beings a special role on Earth. From an intercultural viewpoint, the following differences were identified: in Germany, the justification – of the view that the suffering of animals is as bad as or worse than the suffering of humans – is based on humans' responsibility and guilt. However, the Brazilian children expressed even stronger feelings towards animals suffering from environmental pollution. Subsequently, the Brazilian children sometimes gave drastic responses to the question of how polluters should be punished. The idea of ecological compensation seems to play a greater role in Brazil than in Germany and South Korea. Although the range of verbal descriptions of feelings and emotions is more limited in South Korea, South Korean children demonstrated empathy and the urge to help. A connection with the values of a Confucian ethic seems to be an interpretative approach that needs elaboration elsewhere.

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**Filozofiranje s djecom iz cijeloga svijeta o
prirodi, prirodnim vrijednostima i zagadenju**

Sažetak

Istraživanje predstavlja rezultate našeg međunarodnog, interkulturnog i empirijskog istraživanja. S djecom iz različitih zemalja i društvenih konteksta filozofirali smo o prirodi, onečišćenju i održivosti. Prije nego što predstavimo ključne nalaze našeg empirijskog istraživanja, izložimo koncept filozofije za djecu (Philosophy for Children – P4C). Što je P4C? Koji se oblici P4C-a obično zagovaraju? Kako i za što ga koristimo? Tumačenja naše empirijske studije mogu se sažeti na sljedeći način: onečišćenje dotiče i pokreće djecu diljem svijeta, izaziva široke emocije i vrednuje se kao važan problem. Djeca razmišljaju o intrinzičnoj vrijednosti prirode i izražavaju patocentrične i vulnerabilističke poglede prema ljudima, životinjama i prirodi. Konačno, djeca različitih kultura opravdavaju različite razine kazne za okolišne prekršitelje.

Ključne riječi

filozofija za djecu, P4C, interkulturna poredba, vrijednost prirode, održivost, okolišno zagadenje, patocentrizam, empatija, kazna

Hyeongjoo Kim, Christian Prust, Thomas Sukopp

**Philosophieren mit Kindern weltweit über
Natur, Naturwerte und Umweltverschmutzung**

Zusammenfassung

Diese Studie präsentiert die Ergebnisse unserer internationalen, interkulturellen und empirischen Studie. Wir haben mit Kindern aus verschiedenen Ländern und sozialen Kontexten über Natur, Umweltverschmutzung und Nachhaltigkeit philosophiert. Bevor wir die Schlüsselergebnisse unserer empirischen Forschung präsentieren, heben wir die Umrisse unseres Konzepts der Philosophie für Kinder hervor (Philosophy for children – P4C). Was ist P4C? Welche Formen von P4C werden gemeinhin befürwortet? Wie und wofür verwenden wir sie? Die Deutungen unserer empirischen Studie lassen sich wie folgt zusammenfassen: Umweltverschmutzung berührt und bewegt Kinder auf der ganzen Welt, ruft weitreichende Emotionen hervor und wird als wichtiges Thema geschätzt. Kinder reflektieren über den innewohnenden Wert der Natur und äußern pathozentrische und vulnerabilistische Ansichten gegenüber Menschen, Tieren und der Natur. Schließlich rechtfertigen Kinder aus diversen Kulturen unterschiedliche Strafebene für Umweltstraftäter.

Schlüsselwörter

Philosophie für Kinder, P4C, interkultureller Vergleich, Wert der Natur, Nachhaltigkeit, Umweltverschmutzung, Pathozentrismus, Empathie, Strafe

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**Philosopher avec les enfants du monde entier au
sujet de la nature, des valeurs naturelles et de la pollution**

Résumé

Cette étude présente les résultats de notre recherche internationale, interculturelle et empirique. Avec des enfants de pays et de contextes sociaux différents, nous avons philosophé sur la nature, la pollution et le développement durable. Avant de présenter les résultats clés de notre recherche empirique, nous exposons le concept de Philosophie pour les enfants (Philosophy for children – P4C). Qu'est le P4C ? Quelles sont les formes habituellement défendues du P4C ? Comment et pourquoi l'utilisons-nous ? Les interprétations de notre étude empirique peuvent se résumer de la manière suivante : la pollution concerne et ne laisse pas indifférent les

enfants du monde entier, elle provoque un large éventail d'émotions et est considérée comme un problème central. Les enfants réfléchissent à la valeur intrinsèque de la nature et portent un regard pathocentrique et vulnérabiliste envers les hommes, les animaux et la nature. Enfin, des enfants de diverses cultures justifient les différents niveaux de punition pour les auteurs de délits environnementaux.

Mots-clés

philosophie pour les enfants, P4C, comparaison interculturelle, valeur de la nature, durabilité, pollution de l'environnement, pathocentrisme, empathie, punition