Practicing philosophy of childhood: Teaching in the (r)evolutionary mode

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Abstract

This article explores the necessary requirements for effective teacher facilitation of community of philosophical inquiry sessions among children, and suggests that the first and most important prerequisite is the capacity to listen to children, which in turn is based on a critical and reflective interrogation of one's own philosophy of childhood (POC)—the set of beliefs and assumptions about children and childhood which adults tend to project onto real children. It argues that the most effective way to explore these assumptions is in community of philosophical inquiry (CPI), where we encounter the same concepts—nature, person, good and evil, innocence, etc.—which underlie more general philosophical inquiry. It then describes the work of the American educator Patricia Carini, who developed the Descriptive Review Process as a phenomenological approach to understanding the children with whom one is in relation, and identifies the Descriptive Review Process as another form of the practice of philosophy of childhood which, together with the regular practice of POC-CPI among teachers, offers us a grounded, integrated methodology for schools dedicated to adult-child dialogue and to school as a site for cultural reconstruction.

Key words

philosophy for children, community of philosophical inquiry, philosophy of childhood, adult-child dialogue, child observation, assessment

Introduction

In this article, I suggest that a primary form of teacher preparation for doing community of philosophical inquiry (CPI) *with children* should be in the form of teachers doing CPI *with each other* on an ongoing basis, and devoting that inquiry—or at least one major dimension of it—specifically to philosophy of childhood (POC). I will argue that the natural training that teachers receive through doing shared philosophical inquiry into and around the concept 'child' prepares them in an exemplary way to become facilitators of CPI among children, because that natural

training is presumed to lead to a recognition, deconstruction and ongoing reconstruction of their implicit, pre-conscious beliefs about childhood in general and children in particular, which thereby allows them to listen more openly, more carefully, more intelligently to children's reasoning.

I argue further that the teacher's self-understanding as a philosopher of childhood involves an openness to the child-adult chiasm that has emancipatory potential, not just for their vocational self-understanding, but for our understanding of school as a site for adult-child dialogue. The teacher in dialogue with children is also an adult in dialogue with childhood, and hence with the evolutionary possibilities expressed in the Arendtian concept of natality (Arendt 1958) for which the school, as a space of creative possibility for the joint production of new meaning and of value, is a privileged zone, and for which CPI, as a paradigmatic form of communicative action, is a master discourse.

Finally, I offer an example, in a brief review of the work of the philosopher-educator Patricia Carini, of another form of applied philosophy of childhood in her Descriptive Review Process. This process approaches assessment and evaluation of children from a reflective, phenomenological perspective, through which what she calls the 'disciplined student of childhood' endeavors to become the 'seer of children' and, as such, complements and enhances the practice of CPI by means of a structured meditation on the lived worlds of individual children.

What makes for a good facilitator?

What is it that equips and enables a teacher to converse ably with children in a group setting about philosophical themes in such a way that there is (a fair percentage of the time anyway) substantive development of ideas, and new meaning is generated? Is it something that comes naturally to some people and not to others (a genetic form of intelligence); some predilection to dialogue that one's parents' communicative values and style imbue in the first three or four years of life; a hard-won result of constant exposure and practice, or some incalculable mixture of the three? Can it be anything but idle conversation if the facilitator has no academic philosophical preparation, or even auto-didactic preparation in philosophy? Can it be learned through talking and listening to adults about philosophical themes? What is it that leads to the formation of a teacher as a competent facilitator of a CPI among groups of children?

Given that schoolteachers are adults whose vocation entails spending long periods of time in the company of children—which naturally involves spending long periods of time conversing with children, both individually and in groups—it would seem common sense that schoolteachers would tend to be the kinds of adults most likely to be successful CPI facilitators. I would hypothesise that whatever the balance of the multiple causes and conditions that might foster the skills and dispositions of good facilitation—whether time spent with children or study in the field of pedagogy or in the field of philosophy—there is one particular basic disposition that is indispensable, and that is the capacity for and the motivation to actively *listen*, whether to children or adults. In the case of children, the capacity to listen is influenced by the fact that many adults carry around with them a set of beliefs and assumptions about children and childhood that they project onto real children, which can dramatically affect how seriously or accurately they listen to them, if at all. As such, one first and fundamental step, not just in preparing facilitators but in preparing teachers of children in general, should be in identifying and interrogating those beliefs and assumptions that make up their own (and others') implicit *philosophy of childhood*.

Interrogating our own philosophies of childhood

Interrogating beliefs and assumptions together in a group, in a conscious, reflective and at least semi-methodical way, is the primary activity of a CPI. Typically it begins with identifying one or more philosophical concepts in response to some stimulus—whether it be a story, film, newspaper article, poem, picture, or just a list of questions—and engaging together in a dialogical discussion that seeks to give an account of that concept or concepts—justice, for example, or friendship, or happiness—that satisfies (generates new meaning for) the participants in the discussion. And what we find when we do philosophy of *something*—whether art or history or science or technology or childhood—in this way, is that the conversation tends to gravitate towards certain key concepts that are common to *various* fields of inquiry. The concept 'person', for example, may be relevant, if in different ways, whether we are talking about history, technology, psychology or literature; the concept 'fact' in doing philosophy of history and of both hard and soft sciences; the concept 'power' in psychology, history, both soft and hard sciences, and so on (Kennedy & Kennedy 2011).

The field of inquiry that is philosophy of childhood (POC) both upholds and is upheld by many of these same key concepts—of nature, human nature, persons,

animals, time, innocence, good and evil, sexuality and aggression, growth and transformation, autonomy and heteronomy, normality, authority, identity, and so on—that form a continual subtext or pretext whenever we say 'child'. For example, 'child' very often functions for adults as a proof-text for one's beliefs about 'human nature'—witness Augustine (1961, p. 28) using the behavior of infants as proof-text of the doctrine of original sin. Implicit beliefs about 'human nature' are in turn are connected with beliefs about the nature of persons, which in turn are connected with beliefs about the nature of animals, which in turn are connected with beliefs about nature itself, which in turn are connected with beliefs about growth and development, which are connected with beliefs about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which are connected with beliefs about autonomy and heteronomy, which are connected with beliefs about freedom, which are connected with beliefs about good and evil, and so on. Our deep beliefs are experienced as perceptions: we see individual children through the 'child' the lenses of our beliefs show us, which in turn influences our pedagogies. Take Rousseau (1956), for example, who, in the mid-18th century, saw this 'child' in all children's haptic impulses:

> He wants to touch and handle everything; do not check these movements which teach him invaluable lessons. Thus he learns to perceive the heat, cold, hardness, softness, weight, or lightness of bodies, to judge their size and shape and all their physical properties, by looking, feeling, listening, and, above all, by comparing sight and touch, by judging with the eye what sensation they would cause to his hand. (Rousseau 1956, p. 23)

While a German child-rearing 'expert', writing a decade before Rousseau, sees this one:

> Food and drink, clothing, sleep, and indeed the child's entire little household must be orderly and must never be altered in the least to accommodate their willfulness or whims so that they may learn in earliest childhood to submit strictly to the rules of orderliness … [O]ne must take every opportunity to present order to them as something sacred and inviolable. If they want to have something that offends against order, then one should say to them: my dear child, this is impossible; this offends against order, which must never be breached, and so on. (quoted in Miller 1990, pp. 29-30)

Both of these observers trust the evidence of their senses, which each interprets differently based on a set of core beliefs about human nature, good and evil, selfhood and human will, the nature of learning, the nature of habit, and so on. The very perceptions of the children before them and the evaluation of their behavior are

shaped and coloured by these basically pre-conscious beliefs about childhood in general. It is in bringing these beliefs into mutual encounter that CPI, with its emphasis on dialogical interrogation and self-correction—leading not to a unification but to a critical coordination of perspectives (Kennedy 2010; Kennedy & Kennedy 2010; Lipman, Sharp & Oscanyan 1979; Splitter & Sharp 1995)—provides a context for their ongoing reconstruction.

Doing philosophy of childhood in a community of philosophical inquiry setting as a form of professional development

I would suggest then that a most primary ongoing task to be undertaken by schoolteachers, whether or not they aspire to facilitate specifically philosophical conversations, is philosophical self-examination of a particular sort: the practice of philosophy of childhood in a communal dialogical setting. In addition to making teachers more aware of their own beliefs and assumptions about childhood, doing POC as an applied practice in a CPI format acts to prepare teachers to be CPI facilitators tout court, in that POC as a conceptual zone opens out, as we have seen, onto the major philosophical concepts in our tradition. In this hands-on, learning-by-doing form of facilitator preparation, we teachers enter philosophy from the ground up; we become reflectively aware of the major concepts in the tradition—self, knowledge, the other, beauty, justice—as philosophical elements of our own lifeworld before we have even heard of Plato, Aristotle et al. And if, in order to deepen and enliven our familiarity with these concepts, we turn to the written works of philosophers, we do so with some level of experience-derived background knowledge, co-constructed in the CPI experience that acts as a scaffold as we read them.

POC-CPI is then one dimension of applied philosophy of childhood practiced as a form of professional development among schoolteachers, whether we plan to facilitate methodical CPI with children or not. We might initiate a weekly series of POC-CPI sessions among our fellow teachers, for example, by posing the question, 'What is childhood 'innocence'?' which is likely to lead us to a consideration of the concept of innocence and its different connotations, its relationship to experience, whether it is even thinkable without other concepts like guilt, and so on. In other words, the concept is broached through its application to and reflection on childhood, but its interrogation leads beyond its relation to the concept 'child' to the concept in its broader senses and uses and its relations with other concepts—then, in a circle of interpretation, reflects back on the way we see and listen to the real

children with whom we are in relation as we facilitate philosophy discussions with/among them.

For teachers, this kind of communal critical inquiry challenges stereotypes and habitual interpretive misunderstandings of children's motives and understandings. Once the concept of innocence, for example, is problematised and deconstructed through the dialectical play of intra-group argumentation, we tend to apply the concept to real people and situations in more nuanced, more complex, more ambiguous ways. The concept loses the 'one size fits all' quality that leads to the sort of profiling that unexamined assumptions and beliefs tend to produce. So when we sit among children, we do less polarising and automatic classifying of children's responses. We are better able to listen, and to help them clarify their own thinking through our efforts to understand that thinking. We become more adept at 'translating' in the sense of restating a person's idea in such a way that it makes it clearer, both to themselves and to others. And we are better able to do this because we start to hear all conversation—any conversation—with a more philosophical ear. Having spoken and listened critically and searchingly and with care with our peers about the concepts for which childhood is a sort of magic lens—innocence, human nature, autonomy, authority, growth, development, and so on—we start listening for and 'outing' assumptions, noting the logical order and articulation of premises and conclusions in a given argument, or judging the rightness of an analogy or a part-whole relationship. Our goal then becomes, not to teach this heightened critical capacity to children so much as to notice children exercising it when they do, calling attention to it and encouraging it. Indeed, we might just notice that some children are doing it better than we are—that their ear is already more philosophical.

As philosophers of childhood we see children better, but we recognise that we are also seeing adults, to the extent that children are often saying things that an adult would say, and they are doing so quite consciously and without mimicking. On the other hand, the differences between us become more poignant because the concept 'child', after this work, is no longer monological and unitary: we start to see individuals before we see children. This does not mean, however, that we treat children like adults, even though we may accord to this or that individual child rights and privileges that we would to an adult. The difference between us remains, and it is in this insistent fold of difference between child and adult that we start to listen and to hear *seriously*—not as a confirmation of our adultist psychological, developmental, pedagogical and so on theories of children and childhood, but for something new, some fresh way of seeing the world, of understanding self and

relationship, of understanding nature, or freedom, or justice. Once we awaken to their voices, children become our genuine interlocutors, and we expect new meaning to develop between ourselves and them as much as we expect it when we talk seriously with adults. And this lends new meaning as well to the concept 'school' (Masschelein & Simons 2013).

School, the child-adult chiasm, and 'becoming child'

The teacher's vocational identity as a philosopher of childhood is of great importance to the possibilities that schooling offers for cultural evolution in any given society, because of its power either to attempt to domesticate the next generation or to encourage its emancipatory tendencies. School is the space where two generations meet, in a place specifically designed for that meeting. In a school in which that meeting happens consciously and mindfully, and where dialogue is the normative discourse, 'child' and 'adult' are folded into each other in the mutuality of lived experience, in a chiasm where there is difference, but one doesn't know exactly where it begins and where it leaves off.

Following John Dewey's (1916, 1938) broad formulation, educative experience is above all an experience of 'growth', which is the result of a form of experience that makes further, equally or more significant experience possible. In an ideal school, both child and adult are undergoing educative experience—are growing. The school is the experimental and experiential zone of that chiasmic growth, where the adult models for the child a form of adulthood which is deeply influenced by living and talking with children. This evokes what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to as 'becoming-child', and which Dewey identifies as a form of ongoing individuation that retains a childlike flexibility of schemes and habit structures. Even children, Deleuze and Guattari argued, need to be 'becoming-child', to retain or develop or stay in touch with the virtual dimension of self—that dimension in which self is always forming and never quite realised, and which, when it is foreclosed in adulthood for cultural or personal reasons or both, betrays our human possibility. As such, school is a laboratory in which the interaction of children and adults creates new forms of subjectivity.

CPI's status as a master discourse in 'school' understood as an institutional free space for cultural evolution through adult-child dialogue shares genealogical roots with the cultural revolution of the 1960s, driven as that was psychologically and socially by the search for a new sensibility (Marcuse 1969), politically by a global impulse toward authentic democracy, and educationally by a search for a truly

dialogical pedagogy. Part of the energy of the cultural revolution movement is towards a reconstruction of philosophy, which, we might argue, is central to the emergence of a new global, post-colonial emancipatory discourse. This reconstructive impulse is fed both by the introduction of genuine communal dialogue into philosophical practice—which is a fulfillment of the Socratic promise—and the induction of children into that practice, which represents a challenge to philosophical practice as a white adult male domain governed by a narrow view of human reason. The construction of reason itself is under interrogation in the post-modern west, and it is this common evolutionary project in which children have finally been called to participate (Kennedy 2006). Is it those who spend the most time with the most children—classroom teachers—who are best positioned to develop the capacity to see beyond the multiple ideological and theoretical constructs that block our view[1], to become interlocutors of childhood, and to act maieutically in the service of philosophical reconstruction?

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[1] These include: (1) The discourse of child-normalisation, part of an ever more powerful disciplinary trend in the 21st century growth of biopower, according to which 'normal' children are not (and even should not be) particularly interested in philosophical questions, and prefer solid, comforting and mostly euphemistic answers to life's big questions. This discourse has solid mass media support, as in shows like *Kids say the darnedest things*, in which children's emergent philosophical questions or speculations are treated as amusing and endearing expressions of innocence, ignorance and naivety, the way we might be charmed by a talking animal; (2) Piagetian stage-theory, according to which children are basically pre-logical until the age of 12, which means they are incapable of the syllogism. This prejudice is in fact at least partly in contradiction with Piaget's actual theory, which holds that what he called 'sensory-motor intelligence' is a form of logic—the logic of the body and its interaction with an environment, and which is the basis for the logic of what he called 'formal operations'. The baby playing with blocks—lift, place on, place next to, knock over, etc.—is in fact experimenting with logical combinations that internalised through repetition and exploration; (3) The discourse of discrete stages of child development, which assumes little or no continuity between cognitive stages, which are seen as near total reorganisation of cognitive structure and capacity. Not only is this belief belied by (2) above, but it conflates the notions of pre-operational and pre-logical. If interaction between the body/senses and the world is inherently logical, it should lead us to explore multiple logics that differ from the 'formal operations' of Piaget's final stage, rather than excluding children (and other cultures) as incapable of reasoning; (4) The particularly North American discourse of fear and contempt of philosophy, which is understood as a class-specific, pretentious, self-indulgent, unnecessarily abstruse and completely impractical pastime. This attitude is in no small part attributable to: (5) A deeply nationalistic educational discourse that understands education as an economic and military weapon necessary for maintaining dominance in the hostile worlds of the marketplace and of geopolitics. Popular resistance to philosophy is also exacerbated by: (6) The historical reign of analytic philosophy in the academy, with its aggressively stripped down and rarified language-games. The most common bar (or talk show) meme on philosophy in the US is to reflect on the total incomprehension experienced in the one philosophy class one took in college, sometimes illustrated by the famous quote from Tarski: '"Snow is white" is true if and only if snow is white'.

The descriptive review of the child: Philosophy of childhood in everyday practice

I would like to briefly introduce another form of applied philosophy of childhood which, in combination with the practice of POC-CPI, offers us a grounded, integrated methodology for teachers in schools understood as sites of adult-child dialogue. This practice, known as the Descriptive Review of the Child, might be categorised on first glance as an instance of typical adult behaviors in an institution in which the child becomes an object of scrutiny and even an inherently problematic element in a smooth-running school—one that must be observed and monitored, indoctrinated, managed, rewarded or punished, tested, medicated, and so on. But in fact when we look more closely at this child observation protocol developed in the 1960s by the American educator-philosopher Patricia Carini[2], we see the double power of its epistemological framework: while it is structured as a specific practice designed to yield thick, phenomenological description of individual children, it is in fact also a form of self-observation and self-questioning by adults, an earnest interrogation of one's own perceptions of the children with whom one is in relationship in the classroom or in the home, and as such an exercise in seeing, which identifies it as complementary to the conceptual work that POC in community of philosophical inquiry represents.

Carini co-founded the Prospect School in Vermont, USA in 1965[3], where she developed the Descriptive Review Process, which is a simple but profoundly innovative dialogical protocol based on phenomenological observation and description of children in classroom and home settings. Carini's teaching and writing represent a philosophy of childhood fully incarnated into practice based on, in her words, the 'definition of the person as active maker of works, the dialogic inter-animation of person and world, and the world itself as plural, ambiguous, and always larger than the systematized readings of it …' (Carini 2001, p. 10). The aim of the Descriptive Review process is to recognise and work to understand a particular child's strength and style as a person, learner and thinker, using their art, writing and other artifacts as 'texts', in a language that assiduously avoids the vocabulary of ranking, labeling and deficit diagnosis that pervades contemporary educational

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Here philosophy is understood as a specialisation closely connected with mathematics, and unavailable to the lay person, much less the child.

[2] Carini's work in child observation is described in depth, with case study examples, in these works: Himley and Carini (2000); Carini (2001); Carini and Himley (2010); Himley (2011).

[3] Prospect School closed its doors in 1992, but Carini's method has continued in a variety of both public and private schools throughout the United States, and is supported through a national network of yearly conferences and workshops.

discourse. Her practice offers teachers not just another, emergent language of assessment, but a concrete method based on dialogue and collaborative deliberation with fellow teachers, which opens a clear and vivid space in schools for teacher community of inquiry focused on the Review process, a space in which adult assumptions about children are exposed and transformed in the process of looking closely, carefully and caringly at real children. This process identifies the teacher as what Carini calls a 'seer of children', and thereby a 'teacher in the revolutionary mode'. What follows is a very short overview of the descriptive review process, which is in fact an adult community of pedagogical inquiry centered on a particular child as well as, by implication, a practical case study of applied POC-CPI.

Although not a necessity, the Descriptive Review of the Child protocol is congruent with what used to be called an 'open' classroom setting, by which is implied an emergent curriculum; one that is the product of adult and child in dialogue, and in which the basics—reading, writing and math—are taught as pedagogical responses to children's interests and preoccupations. Teachers who practice emergent curriculum are, in Jones' and Reynolds (1992) formulation, stage managers, scribes, planners, mediators, players, assessors and communicators. At Prospect, teachers kept daily track of children's choices, and finished each day or week by writing 'four or five sentences for each child describing what the child did that week, with whom, and any other observations the teacher may have made' (Carini 2000, p. 10). Teachers also collect children's work—writing, drawing and constructions and so on. At least once a year one meeting, including a small group of teachers involved in the student's school life, is devoted to each child, which would represent one meeting per week. Each meeting is an exercise in what Carini refers to as a 'way of looking at people, both children and adults', which

> … honors the complexity and uniqueness of each person. It is a way of looking that strives for as full a picture as possible of that person's way of being in the world, while acknowledging that however full the picture, it will always be partial. It is a way of looking that aims at recognition of each child's and person's capacities and strengths, understanding these to be indispensable for the child's education, including for the negotiation of any hard spots and bumps in the road she may encounter as she grows and learns. (Carini, cited in Himley 2011, p. 39)

The descriptive processes, she continues,

> make a space for stepping away from a vocabulary of deficiency. Positively, they create a space for discovering a vocabulary particular to a child and a

> child's work that is both apt and vivid, and so to restore to view the child as she is -- a lively presence, with capacities and strengths to be counted upon. Carini, cited inHimley 2011, p. 39)

In preparation for a Descriptive Review meeting, the child's classroom teacher prepares a narrative reflection in which she or he describes the child, using ordinary language and illustrated by samples of the child's work—whether art work, poetry, papers, letters, or some other collection of representative artifacts. This narration is preceded by the teacher posing a question, typically a question to themselves—again, put as simply and directly as possible. It might be a question, for example, like, 'How is it ... that this child seems always to slip by me? How can a get a clearer picture of where she is making her presence felt in the group?' (Himley & Carini 2000, p. 13). The question leads to a reflection on the key words in the question—in this case 'visible/invisible' and 'presence' are rendered down to 'slips', and the facilitator/chair of the meeting 'invites everyone in the review circle to write down words, images, and phrases that these words—slip or slips—call to mind' (Carini 2000, p. 13).

After this collective inquiry into a key concept relevant to the teacher's perception of the child, the teacher presents her narrative, dividing her description into five categories of observation (1) physical presence and gesture; (2) disposition and temperament; (3) connections with others (both children and adults); (4) strong interests and preferences; (5) modes of thinking and learning. All of these descriptions are set in an anecdotal context, completely free of theoretical or clinical jargon, and of educational or psychological classification, and avoid negative judgments or judgments of deficit or failure. The emphasis is on the lived presence of the child in all the contexts in which the teacher knows them. When the teacher is finished with the narrative presentation, the chair summarises and offers the opportunity for others in the circle to offer insights into what they have heard. There are several rounds of these individual choices to contribute, all moderated in a sequenced order by the chair. This same process of structured dialogue is sometimes also centred, not on the five categories of observation, but on one drawing or painting, letter or other artifact produced by the child. The precise formatting of the meeting by the chair, with its methodical, recursive process of focusing questions, thoughtful, careful description, sequenced gathering of questions and comments, and repeated 'integrative restatements', has the quality of a collective meditation, and does indeed produce the impression of a process of 'discovering a vocabulary particular to a child and a child's work', rather than fitting a child to a pre-existing

vocabulary. As such, it is a profoundly creative exercise in what Carini calls a 'deepened recognition of children'.

The deep goal of this process is not to come up with new ideas for teaching the child in the classroom, or to rank the child in some sort of hierarchy of skills, intelligence, or achievement, or to place the child in this group or that, but to understand the child as, in Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) compelling formulation, a 'desiring machine', a dynamic set of affects and intensities in a process of becoming, an energy-picture, a 'singularity'. It is to *feel* the child, as Carini says, as *person* under the sign of what she calls 'key ideas', which she lists as follows:

> The importance of the child's or any person's uniqueness, complexity, and integrity. The role of description in representing these. The attentiveness to the manner in which, for any person, dynamic polarities, seemingly contradictory, enact that person's expressiveness and complexity. The assumption of human capacity, widely distributed, as the taproot value nurturing all these ideas. (Himley & Carini 2000, p. 4)

I would like to suggest that the accomplished facilitator of philosophical dialogue among children is by definition also what Carini calls 'a disciplined student of childhood' (Carini 2000, p. 16)—one who observes and listens with as much concentration and internal stillness as they can muster for what has not been heard before. And from the other side, philosophical dialogue with children finds a completely natural home in Carini's methodology, because the latter implicitly enables and encourages children both to voice (or write, or paint, or dance) their own emergent philosophies and to enter into dialogue with adult philosophies, thus activating the transformative dimension of the adult-child relationship. This is the dimension within which the particular balance of identity and difference that is the adult-child chiasm—both within each person and between persons—creates a transformative space; a space of creative possibility for the joint production of new meaning and of value. It is this dimension that the practicing philosopher of childhood is always in search of in her or his day-to-day life with children.

Conclusion

In imagining the normative ideal of school as a territory of cultural evolutionary advance, in which the adult-child chiasm produces new meanings and even new sensibilities—an experimental zone governed at its base by the principle of adult-child dialogue—I have identified three specific practices that I associate with an

applied philosophy of childhood: (1) *POC-CPI*, where teachers engage in group dialogue through which they explore and interrogate their own beliefs and assumptions about the nature of childhood, the nature of the adult-child relation, the process of childhood learning and development, and so on; (2) *CPI with children*, where children identify, explore, and work playfully to reconstruct the concepts that we typically call 'philosophical'—that is, concepts that touch on epistemological, ontological, axiological, logical, and metaphysical problems, puzzles, and deep wonderings; and (3) *The Descriptive Review Process*, in which adults work collaboratively and mindfully, through what Carini calls the 'discipline of description', (Himley & Carini 2000, p. 21) to 'make the child more visible as a full and complex person through the language the teachers develop in their efforts to do justice to that complexity' (Himley & Carini 2000, p. 21). All three of these practices are expressions of community of philosophical inquiry, a practice based on dialogue, participation, and the pursuit of an ideal speech situation, and thus a pedagogical framework that provides a broad discursive framework for a form of schooling that allows for inter-generational dialogue and cultural reconstruction.

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