

THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CURIOSITY  
IN PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

İREM GÜNHAN ALTIPARMAK

BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

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THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CURIOSITY  
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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, İrem Günhan Altıparmak, certify that

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## ABSTRACT

### The Role and Significance of Curiosity in Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is an educational movement which aims to develop children's thinking and reasoning skills by means of engaging them in intellectual inquiry and questioning. Though P4C is predominantly based on questioning and inquiry, there is little emphasis on curiosity in the literature. Ilhan Inan's account of curiosity could be utilized in order to demonstrate the importance of curiosity within P4C. In this thesis, the notion of inostensible conceptualization, which Inan has developed and is central to his account of curiosity, and awareness of ignorance are primarily highlighted together with bringing discussions about the value of curiosity from Virtue Epistemology as these shed light on the necessity of fostering curiosity in the sessions. In addition to this, Nermi Uygur and Luciano Floridi's accounts of philosophical questions help for a better understanding regarding the inquiry and questions asked in the P4C discussions. Realizing the theoretical background on the concept of curiosity, I explore the roles of curiosity in P4C. In analyzing these roles, Inan and I developed two notions with an aim to enrich the literature: the first notion is curiosity-arouser, which is utilized to explain how the children as inquirers could better concentrate on and discuss the concepts philosophically. The second notion is joint-curiosity, which we have developed in analogy to the trans-disciplinary notion of joint attention. My overall aim is to address the significance of curiosity in order for this practice to reach its essential aims and emphasize the capacity of these notions by holding that they will enrich not only P4C literature but also diverse areas of studies.

## ÖZET

### Çocuklarla Felsefe’de Merakın Rolü ve Önemi

Çocuklar İçin Felsefe, soru sorma ve zihinsel sorgulama yoluyla çocukların düşünme ve akıl yürütme becerilerini geliştirmeyi amaçlayan bir eğitim akımıdır. Her ne kadar Çocuklar İçin Felsefe, ağırlıklı olarak soru sormaya ve sorgulamaya dayansa da, literatürde meraka çok az vurgu yapılmaktadır. İlhan İnan’ın merak kavramı teorisi, bu eğitim akımında merakın önemini ortaya koymak için kullanılabilir. Bu tezde, Çocuklar İçin Felsefe oturumlarında çocukların merakını geliştirmenin önemini aydınlatıldığı düşüncesiyle İnan’ın geliştirdiği ve merak konusundaki açıklamalarının da merkezi olan gösterimsiz kavramsallaştırma ve bilmediğinin farkındalığı esasen vurgulanmakla birlikte Erdem Epistemolojisi’nden merakın değerine yönelik tartışmalar sunulacaktır. Buna ek olarak, Nermi Uygur ve Luciano Floridi’nin felsefi sorular hakkındaki görüşleri, Çocuklar İçin Felsefe tartışmalarında sorulan sorular ve sorgulamaların daha iyi anlaşılmasına yardımcı olabilir. Merak kavramı üzerine kuramsal arka planı sunduktan sonra, Çocuklar İçin Felsefe’de merakın rolünü araştırıyorum. Bu rollerin analizinde İnan ve ben, literatürü zenginleştirmek amacıyla iki kavram geliştirdik: birinci kavram merak uyandırıcı; çocukların birer sorgulayıcı olarak kavramlara nasıl daha iyi odaklanıp onları felsefi boyutta tartışabileceklerini açıklamaktadır. İkinci kavram, disiplinler arası ortak dikkat kavramına benzer şekilde geliştirdiğimiz ortak meraktır. Bu tezde hedefim, Çocuklar İçin Felsefe uygulamasının temel amaçlarına ulaşması için merakın önemine değinmek. Bununla birlikte, sadece Çocuklar İçin Felsefe literatürünü değil, aynı zamanda çeşitli çalışma alanlarını da zenginleştirecekleri inancıyla bu kavramların kapasitesini vurguluyorum.

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I am more than happy to work with all the children who have attended my Philosophy for Children sessions. They have added so much to my understanding of philosophy. The ideas in this thesis are the extended version of my above-mentioned paper. This thesis would not be finalized without the valuable inputs and inestimable encouragement of all the people I mentioned above.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Philosophy for Children movement<sup>1</sup>

Philosophy for Children<sup>2</sup> (P4C) is an educational movement influenced by multiple philosophers, educational and social psychologists. In “Mendham Dialogue”, Maughn Gregory<sup>3</sup> defines P4C with the following words: “Philosophy for Children is a humanistic practice with roots in the Hellenistic tradition of philosophy as a way of life given to the search for meaning, in American pragmatism with its emphasis on qualitative experience, collaborative inquiry and democratic society, and in American and Soviet social learning theory” (Gregory, 2011, p.199). Enabling children to experience inquiry, reasoning, and critical thinking is the goal of P4C movement. Lipman provides a similar explanation: “The main purpose of the program in philosophy for children is to help children learn how to think for themselves” (Lipman et al., 1980, p. 52). Behind the identification of this purpose, there were a set of ideas and theories. In *Philosophy in the Classroom*, it is maintained that “...the formation of a classroom community is of crucial importance

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<sup>1</sup> In the academic year of 2014-2015, I began writing my thesis on the role and significance of curiosity in Philosophy for Children. Within this period of time, I was invited to give a speech at The Curiosity & Philosophy Conference at Maribor University, Philosophy Department which was held between May 20 and 25, 2015 in Maribor-Slovenia. After the conference, I was invited to write my speech “How the Emphasis on Curiosity in Philosophy for Children Reveals the Philosophical Significance of Curiosity” as a paper to be published in the special issue of Croatian Journal of Philosophy. This is a refereed journal and my paper was peer-reviewed. My first academic paper “The Concept of Curiosity in the Practice of Philosophy for Children” was published on the 48<sup>th</sup> issue of the Croatian Journal of Philosophy XVI/2016. The ideas in this thesis are extended and developed version of my paper.

<sup>2</sup> The original name of this practice is Philosophy for Children (P4C). Some writers prefer to use the phrase “Philosophy with Children (PwC)” when referring to this practice. I acknowledge both phrases and use the abbreviation “P4C” in this paper for brevity. For more information see, Sutcliffe, Roger. 2017. The Difference between P4C and PwC. In *History, Theory and Practice of Philosophy for Children: International Perspectives*.

<sup>3</sup> Maughn Gregory is the successor of Matthew Lipman and has been the director of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC).

to the encouragement of thinking is not without a basis in cognitive or in social psychology...the work of George Herbert Mead (see *Mind, Self, Society*) or to the work of Lev Vygotsky (see *Mind in Society*), one will find both philosophical and psychological support for the thesis that thinking is the internalization of dialogue” (Lipman et al., 1980, p.23). Lipman lists the philosophers and psychologists he was influenced in the *History, Theory and Practice of Philosophy with Children*. His list consists of John Dewey, Justus Buchler, Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, Gilbert Ryle, George Herbert Mead, and Ludwig Wittgenstein (Lipman 2017).<sup>4</sup> The occurrence of P4C has been strongly influenced by substantial ideas in philosophy, education, and psychology.

This educational movement arose from Matthew Lipman’s concern [who was a Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University at the time] about the problems of the education system in America. He states:

American education has been indicted often and eloquently...while reading and mathematics are disciplines that contribute usefully to good thinking, they cannot *suffice* to produce it. The fact that Johnny adds, subtracts, multiplies, divides, and can race through a Danny Dunn book doesn't mean he can reason. It doesn't mean he is developing habits of efficient thinking or of arriving at independent judgments. Something more is needed...The intellectual possibilities of the American school child remain largely unrecognized and unexplored. We teach him to think about various subjects - English, history, social studies, and so on. But we do not teach him to think about thinking, although he is capable of doing so and would be interested in doing so. (Lipman, 1976, p. 18-21)

Lipman indicates that the American curriculum was insufficient to equip children with critical thinking and reasoning skills. As a solution, he wished to improve critical thinking abilities; develop inquiry and enhance reasoning at a younger age. In collaboration with Ann Margaret Sharp, he founded and became the director of

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<sup>4</sup> For a more detailed account of Lipman’s list, see Lipman 2017.

Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), where the philosophy textbooks for children and the P4C program were designed.<sup>5</sup>

Since the establishment of IAPC as part of Montclair State College in 1974, P4C has gained support worldwide and is currently practiced in over 60 countries. There are IAPC fellows and affiliate centers, non-affiliated organizations and promotional organizations all over the world.<sup>6</sup> Children engaging in inquiries and philosophical thinking produce positive outcomes in different regions of the world.<sup>7</sup> Trickey and Topping examined studies: “This critical review of controlled studies evaluating the outcomes of P4C shows a wide range of evidence for positive outcomes from different countries with different age groups of children” (Trickey & Topping, 2004, p. 374) Approaches to doing philosophy with children vary, however, their purpose is the same; to expose children to philosophy in order to cultivate their critical thinking skills. The P4C practices bring philosophical thinking to kindergarten and elementary level students for sharpening their critical thinking and reasoning skills.

Philosophy for Children (P4C) followers believe that doing philosophy at an early age<sup>8</sup> is beneficial for the development of thinking and reasoning skills. The practitioners aim to develop those skills by integrating philosophy into their school curricula. Gareth Matthews, who is the founder of Philosophy of Childhood area, maintains: “...some children naturally raise questions, make comments, and even engage in reasoning...” (Matthews, 1994, p. 4). Children are inborn inquirers so

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<sup>5</sup> Matthew Lipman prefers to call those textbooks “philosophical novels”.

<sup>6</sup> For more information, see the website of IAPC: The World of Philosophy for Children (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.montclair.edu/cehs/academics/centers-and-institutes/iapc/philosophy/>.

<sup>7</sup> There are various articles in the literature analyzing the outcome of P4C practices in different regions. They demonstrate the positive outcomes of P4C.

<sup>8</sup> Lipman criticizes the view that children cannot engage in abstract thinking before the age of 11-12. That view is based on Jean Piaget’s developmental stages. Opposed to Piaget, Lipman claims that children can engage in abstract thinking regardless of their age. For more information, see Lipman 1976.

exposing them to philosophy, “the finest instrument yet devised for the perfection of the thinking process” (Lipman et al. 1980: xi), has the benefit of improving overall cognitive skills. For Lipman, getting acquainted with philosophy enables children to develop thinking skills. His list of those thinking skills consists of formulating concepts precisely, drawing inferences, making appropriate generalizations, recognizing consistencies and contradictions, clarifying ideas, identifying underlying assumptions, giving reasons, making distinctions, making connections, analyzing values, identifying fallacies, instantiating, constructing definitions for familiar words, taking differences of perspective into account, constructing and seeing both sides of arguments, and formulating questions (Lipman 1985).<sup>9</sup>

Children develop the above-mentioned skills by means of discussing a philosophical concept or issue. Among the most popular concepts discussed in a P4C session are identity, change, personhood, nothingness, knowledge, belief, language, thinking/cognition, reality, perspective, existence, beauty, rights and duties, lying, war and peace, friendship, technology, freedom, fairness, justice, childhood, love, empathy, social contract, time, happiness, democracy, equality, differences, value, right/wrong/permissible, etc. The concepts discussed in the sessions are mostly philosophical, however, some of them are, at least at face value, not philosophical; such as cooperation, work, monetary value, colors, bullying, etc. In fact, the notion ‘philosophical concept’ is rather complex and deserves a full-fledged discussion of its own. In P4C sessions children engage in philosophical discussions that are centered on philosophical questions. Indeed, philosophical questions can be derived from non-philosophical concepts. That is, non-philosophical concepts can also be analyzed with a

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<sup>9</sup> For a detailed account of “List of Skills and Dispositions Taught”, see Lipman 1985.

philosophical attitude. The underlying issue here is that the children participating in the sessions are discussing concepts and issues philosophically.

The sessions provide children with settings where they can ask philosophical questions, give answers, share their opinions, ideas and reasons, revise their answers, change their opinions, raise new questions and consequently have philosophical discussions. In other words, the session creates an educational environment which helps children experience critical thinking, modification of ideas and beliefs, sharing at an intellectual level, and thus, get acquainted with holding philosophical discussions. The quality of P4C sessions rests on the fact that children scratch beneath the surface of a philosophical issue with the help of questions and dialogues that are initiated through age-appropriate materials. In order to fulfill this, some constitutive elements are essential to P4C sessions. To get a better grasp of P4C practices, it is necessary to know what takes place in a typical session. In the following part of this section, a P4C session will be explicated by identifying its distinctive features. Samples from facilitator and children exchanges will also be provided for explanatory purposes.

A typical P4C session consists of a group of students reading a mentor text or watching a video; asking questions stimulated by those attention-grabbers and having discussions.<sup>10</sup> These activities are realized with respect to certain understandings, arrangements, and tools that are indispensable elements to a P4C session. Among them three are the most important; Socratic Dialogue, the Facilitator, and the Community of Inquiry are what makes a P4C session possible. As it is a form of systematic questioning, Socratic Dialogue is the methodology for the dialogues and discussions that take place between the members of the Community of Inquiry that

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<sup>10</sup> For more information, see, “What is a typical P4C session like?” On the website; <https://www.montclair.edu/iapc/what-is-philosophy-for-children/what-is-a-typical-p4c-session-like/>

consists of children and the facilitator who think and inquire philosophically. The facilitator is like the conductor of an orchestra who helps children express their thoughts, ideas, and comments and enables them to think and discuss in harmony. These three elements will be introduced together with their roles in P4C sessions.

All these distinctive factors have different and complementary roles. The discussion method is based on Socratic Dialogues that are characterized by Socrates's "tirelessly pursuing intellectual inquiry by method of question and answer" (Kahn, 1998, p. 72). Bringing this type of dialogue into the session helps children engage in inquiries, enhance their dialogic and questioning skills, and hear each other's ideas.<sup>11</sup> Questions asked in the sessions both by the students and the facilitator are necessary tools in fostering the Socratic dialogues and starting the discussions.

In the Socratic method of systematic questioning and dialogue, children are encouraged to inquire, think and exchange ideas within a community of inquiry that is not controlled but is facilitated by the teacher. Lipman et al. hold: "...the teacher should be viewed as a facilitator whose task is to stimulate children to reason about their own problems through classroom discussion" (Lipman et al., 1980, p. 102). The P4C practitioner is called a 'facilitator' because she is not in a position of transferring knowledge. Additionally, the facilitator is responsible for leading the session in order to enable children to experience philosophical discussions and to gain equity for talking and sharing as well as for the use of compatible discussion plans, exercises, and activities. Morris draws attention to the important role of the facilitator: "The philosophical dimension of an inquiry depends, to a large extent, on the facilitating

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<sup>11</sup> "The dialogic skills, the Socratic Dialogue employs are listening, formulating and reformulating, asking for clarification, checking for understanding, following on from probing assumptions and explicating them, abstracting and concretizing" (Knezic et al., 2010, p. 20).

skills and attitudes of the teacher” (Murriss, 2000, p. 40). The role of the teacher as a facilitator is substantial for having conducive P4C sessions.

The children and the facilitator engaged in a Socratic Dialogue constitute a Community of Inquiry (CoI) that is “a pedagogy having its roots in Socrates and whose title is borrowed from Charles Pierce” (Lipman, 2010, p. 278). Lipman and Sharp state that:

When children are encouraged to think philosophically, the classroom is converted into a community of inquiry... The construction of a community of inquiry is a more substantial achievement than the mere contrivance of an open environment. Certain conditions are prerequisites: the readiness to reason, mutual respect (of children towards one another, and of children and teachers towards one another), and an absence of indoctrination. Since these conditions are intrinsic to philosophy itself, part of its very nature, as it were, it is not surprising that the classroom should become a community of inquiry whenever it serves as an arena for the effective encouragement of children's philosophical reflection. (Lipman and Sharp, 1978, p. 88).

To encourage a shared philosophical inquiry and reflection, the CoI sits in a circle with all its members, including the facilitator. Sitting in a circle is a significant aspect of a P4C session as it makes it possible for all members to treat each other as equals. Thus, they are encouraged to share their ideas on the same platform. The goal is to give children an opportunity to share thoughts with each other whom they are on a par with. Having discussions in the CoI that requires sitting in a circle encourages the members to hear one another's ideas, experience each other's thinking processes, change their minds, discern other's curiosity and lack of knowledge, and help build up their thoughts by listening to each other, asking questions and being able to think within a community. This arrangement of the session also promotes open-mindedness, epistemic humility, self-expression and furthermore, fosters intellectual courage, and respect for others.

Through embracing all these constitutive elements, a P4C session improves thinking and reasoning skills together with social skills. On the whole, a P4C session

includes Socratic Dialogue and enables the community of inquiry to engage in philosophical discussions with the help of the facilitator so that children have the opportunity to inquire, ask questions, think, respond to each other, and hence become an active member. For illustrative purposes, selected excerpts from a session on lying are going to be shared and referred throughout the thesis.

The community of inquiry of that session consisted of ten people including the homeroom teacher, the facilitator, and the primary school children aged eight. The mentor text, “Gingerbread Man”, was introduced to the group in the form of a video.<sup>12</sup> In the video, the Gingerbread Man manages to escape from all the villains and avoids being eaten. Then, he comes across a fox who says to the Gingerbread Man that he does not want to eat him because he does not look tasty. Tired of running from the villains, Gingerbread Man does not feel threatened by the fox and agrees to walk with him. While the Gingerbread Man enjoys his company, the cunning fox plays a trick and ends up devouring him.

This classic children’s tale was introduced to several communities of inquiry and it acted as a catalyst regarding philosophical concepts, such as lying, honesty, self-interest, deception, and ownership. This fairytale contains more than one philosophical concept that children may identify. The community of inquiry of this session focused on the issue of lying and dwelled on the concept of lying. After watching the video, one of the members started the discussion with the following probing question: “Why did the Gingerbread Man believe the fox? Foxes are liars!” This question brought up a discussion on whether the fox lied to the Gingerbread Man or not. Children exchanged different views regarding the behavior of the fox

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<sup>12</sup> There are different versions of the fairy tale “Gingerbread Man”. The video version that was used during the above mentioned session is available on YouTube; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U89dkGrsYZY>

and had debates on them. Eventually, they started to discuss what lying is and is not. In analyzing the concept of lying, related issues and concepts, such as deceiving, hiding and withholding information, and keeping secrets were introduced to the discussion by different members. By means of dialogue, conversations, questioning, and sharing ideas, the community had discussions in order to gain a deeper understanding of lying. They pondered on each other's ideas and mentioned personal experiences. They contemplated issues such as whether keeping secrets is lying and whether withholding information is lying. Furthermore, the CoI discussed ethical problems such as whether lying is always bad. Some members changed their ideas, some others gained more knowledge about lying and got acquainted more with lying. The discussions went on with sharing commentaries, questions, answers, ideas, and experiences. This is a proper example of a productive P4C session. Throughout this thesis, it will be brought into discussion for illustrative purposes and used to demonstrate the role and significance of curiosity in a P4C session.

## 1.2 Why is curiosity significant for Philosophy for Children?

The underlying assumption in this study is the acknowledgment of the significance of curiosity for P4C practices. The significance of curiosity for P4C is addressed in the literature to a certain extent. Examples from the P4C literature that demonstrate children as natural inquirers and questioners will be given in the foregoing pages. Inquiry and questioning are essential tools for the sessions and, moreover, children display and develop their inquiring and questioning skills in the sessions. In addition to this, children are depicted as being naturally curious in the P4C literature.<sup>13</sup> There

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<sup>13</sup> Although children are demonstrated as curious by nature in P4C literature, I think this presupposition is open to criticism. Are humans curious by their nature? This question may well be raised in deciding whether children are naturally curious or not. In this thesis, I will not delve into this problem, but at any rate, would like to say that I do not take sides on this issue. I would like to thank

are studies that hold the importance of fostering children's natural curiosity and moreover, demonstrate the success of P4C in fostering them. To put it in other words, the P4C movement recognizes and takes seriously children's curiosity and the sessions are said to cultivate them.

### 1.2.1 Curiosity in Philosophy for Children literature

The general information about P4C reveals that the sessions are built on discussion, inquiry, and questioning. Karin Murriss discusses the issue whether children can do philosophy and strongly claims that: "children do not learn *about* philosophy but *do* philosophy" (Murriss, 2000, p. 275). Splitter and Sharp maintain that "...abstract concepts to do with conservation, causality, the mind, reality, personhood and truth may be within the grasp of young children provided that they can find pathways to and from their own more concrete experiences" (Splitter and Sharp, 1995, p. 22). Children engage in doing philosophy and inquire about philosophical concepts in the P4C sessions.

Children inquire into these concepts and do philosophy by means of questions. In the literature, children are depicted as inborn inquirers and questioners. Lipman states: "It is a fact often noted and commented on with regard to very young children as they begin their formal education in kindergarten that they are lively, curious, imaginative, and inquisitive" (Lipman, 2003, p. 12). In "Philosophy for Children", he defines: "A curious child is like a coiled spring in that he contains his own energy, his own dynamism and his own way of opening or unfolding" (Lipman, 1976, p. 15). Lipman demonstrates his appreciation of the fact that children are curious and draws attention to this. Wartenberg shares the first P4C session experience of facilitators: "They

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Assoc. Prof. Chryssi Sidiropoulou for bringing this issue to my attention who is skeptical about the commonly shared view which she thinks comes from Aristotle that humans are by nature curious. Inan has also expressed similar ideas in his *The Philosophy of Curiosity* (2012).

learn first hand that children have a lot to say and are both intelligent and curious” (Wartenberg, 2007, p. 335).

It is highly probable that P4C movement was influenced by Gareth Matthews and John Dewey’s ideas about children’s natural curiosity. Lipman acknowledges children’s curiosity and also points out the problem that children lose their curiosity due to educational issues. Lipman holds: “The lively curiosity that seems to be an essential part of the child's natural impulse is sooner or later beaten or battered out of him by the intransigencies of the educational system” (Lipman, 1976, p. 22). Lipman claims: “Since the child’s first five or six years were spent at home, and since this did not seem to impair the child’s background for a subsequent loss of curiosity and imagination. It’s more likely due to the nature of schooling” (Lipman, 2003, p. 12) One may find Lipman’s similar criticism towards the education system: “Educators have underestimated the amount of preparation necessary to arouse a child’s curiosity” (Lipman, 1976, p. 28). Here, he does not elaborate on the importance or the necessity of arousing children’s curiosity. He diverts from this point and points to the importance of finding the ‘proper trigger’.

Lipman problematizes the fact that children lose their natural curiosity because of flawed educational approaches. P4C movement takes these educational problems seriously. Therefore, arousing and fostering children’s curiosity is among the main concerns of P4C movement. The P4C program is said to benefit from children’s natural curiosity. Conlan refers to Lipman: “To foster children’s thinking skills and take advantage of their natural curiosity, he advocated ‘thoughtful dialogue stimulated by the sharing of literature’”(Conlan, 2013, p 20). Also, the P4C program fosters children’s original curiosity for some purposes. Murriss indicates that: “He [Lipman] speculated that early intervention through a logically, not empirically

sequenced specially-written curriculum would tap into children's original curiosity, sense of wonder and enthusiasm for intellectual enquiry, and strengthen their philosophical thinking" (Brackets are mine. Murriss, 2008, p. 668). In addition to this, Ann Margaret Sharp sees curiosity and questioning as necessary features for discussions. She claims: "You've got to be curious and questioning about them [meaning], and know how to think about them carefully, and to dialogue about them with others who think and feel differently" (Brackets are mine. Gregory, 2011, p. 201).

The success of P4C in fostering curiosity is explicitly maintained in the literature. Oral holds: "These programmes help students...be more curious and questioning about their own experience and its meaning" (Oral, 2013, p. 363). Trickey & Topping claims: "Teacher observations (blind to condition) indicated the P4C groups were perceived as displaying markedly more motivation, curiosity, commitment, and concentration" (Trickey & Topping, 2004, p. 373). P4C helps children be more curious and the communities of inquiry are said to display more curiosity. Together with these, the methods in the practice such as Socratic Dialogue and inquiry are regarded as means of fostering curiosity: "...the "Socratic question" persists as a way of interrupting human complacency, a way to awaken curiosity" (Turgeon, 2015, p. 291.).

Drawing attention to the fact that children are curious and emphasizing the need for fostering their curiosity are pivotal gains for education. However, the rationale of this need is not discussed in detail. The explanation as to why children's curiosity is important is missing in the P4C literature. That being the case, the discussion I will be putting forward on the necessity and fundamentality of fostering

children's curiosity may be utilized to enrich the literature. In this thesis, I argue that curiosity is essential for successful P4C practices.

### 1.2.2 The roles of curiosity

Curiosity in P4C is important and necessary with respect to multiple roles it plays in the sessions. Firstly, curiosity primarily motivates children to ask novel questions. This neglected issue on the relation between getting curious and asking questions, in fact, clarifies the role of curiosity in developing questioning and thinking skills. Secondly, curiosity acts as a motivator for getting children to become engaged in the discussions. Getting them to be curious is one of an essential ways to establish inner motivation and thus engage them in the activities. Thirdly, curiosity is a tool in achieving the goal of developing and sharpening children's thinking skills. Thanks to their curiosity, children ask questions, think on concepts and issues, have discussions and, consequently, take part in thinking and inquiring in P4C sessions. Thus, curiosity and fostering it are significant concerning these roles it has in a P4C session.

My aim is to lay down the theoretical basis concerning the concept of curiosity in the second chapter and then illustrate the significance and role of curiosity in P4C in the third chapter by making use of sample sessions from my actual practices as a P4C facilitator. For this purpose, the philosophy literature will be utilized for providing the discussion with a theoretical background. The next chapter will begin with a section on the value of curiosity. The discussions on the value of curiosity, a newly flourishing topic in virtue epistemology, will pave the way for a better understanding of the concept of curiosity. Particularly, there are a

few virtue epistemologists who regard curiosity as a virtue.<sup>14</sup> Their arguments will be presented in the theoretical part.

The fundamental point in the second chapter is the role of curiosity as being an impetus behind the asking of a question. This point will be discussed with reference to the emerging field of Philosophy of Curiosity. Producing the first book-length treatment of curiosity within Philosophy literature, Inan provides us with an account of curiosity. In “The Philosophy of Curiosity”, he states: “It was our curiosity that led us to become inquiring beings in the first place. And an inquiry that is motivated by curiosity starts off with a question” (Inan, 2012, p. 39). Being curious becomes an important step in the process of asking questions, engaging in inquiries, and also for learning since the asking of a question is a crucial way for us to get knowledge. Accordingly, when a person gets curious about something, it is probable that she will ask a question(s) in order to satisfy her curiosity. The notions of ‘inostensible concept’ and ‘awareness of ignorance’ will be presented within the framework of his theory of curiosity. His account will elucidate the role of curiosity in P4C sessions concerning the asking of a question and inquiry. The role of curiosity as a motivator for the asking of a question and engaging in inquiry renders curiosity significant for P4C practices in which questions and questioning are essential to its’ discussions and sessions.

The last part of the second chapter will be devoted to the topic of philosophical questions. Philosophical questions are necessary for fostering P4C discussions and, moreover, children ask philosophical questions during the sessions. With respect to the fact that not only questions but philosophical questions are of

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<sup>14</sup> Yiğit puts forth that although the value of curiosity is addressed in the philosophy literature, curiosity is not counted in the list of the established intellectual virtues in virtue epistemology area (Yiğit, 2019).

concern in the sessions, introducing the related arguments and thereby attempting to render an understanding of philosophical questions will be beneficial. The discussion will continue with the presentation of *philosophical curiosity*. I will argue that philosophical curiosity could generate the asking of a philosophical question. This notion could serve to evaluate the sessions and appears to reveal beneficial and valuable outcomes in educational terms.

All the theoretical background regarding the concept of curiosity and philosophical questions provided throughout the second chapter will culminate into the last sections of chapter three in which I will introduce the two notions that Inan and I have developed.<sup>15</sup> The first notion is *curiosity-arouser*, which I utilize to explain how the community of inquiry could better concentrate on and discuss the philosophical concept. Since curiosity has a role as a motivator for getting children engaged in the sessions, arousing children's curiosity is a way to scaffold the members of the community of inquiry to think, engage, participate, focus, and thus, enables a contented session together with establishing the goals. Therefore, it is necessary to arouse children's curiosity from the outset in the sessions. Given this, I will put forth that it is better for the materials or the attention-grabbers that present the philosophical issue to the community of inquiry to play the role of a curiosity-arouser.

The second notion is *joint-curiosity*, which we have developed in analogy to the trans-disciplinary notion of joint attention. Taking into account the positive outcomes of joint attention, joint-curiosity could appear to be effective for

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<sup>15</sup> Ilhan Inan and I developed these notions in our philosophical conversations. I introduced these notions for the first time in my article "The Concept of Curiosity in the Practice of Philosophy for Children" with the aim of enriching the P4C literature. Since Inan and I will use these notions in different areas of studies, I would like to make it certain that these notions are established in tandem. For further discussion see Inan's reply to my article in his *Afterthoughts on critiques to the philosophy of curiosity* (2016).

developing more fruitful discussions and creating a more productive CoI. Joint-curiosity occurs when some or all members of the community of inquiry are curious about the same philosophical concept or issue and become aware that other members are also curious. It helps the curious members question the philosophical concept or issue together by building up questions like building up ideas. I will claim that establishing joint-curiosity must be the aim of the P4C facilitators for having fruitful and productive discussions.

According to my understanding, explaining the roles and significance of curiosity in P4C by way of using Inan's account of curiosity, along with an appreciation of the value of curiosity and an understanding of philosophical questions could help this practice reach its fundamental goals. I believe, having a grasp of curiosity-arouser and joint-curiosity will be highly beneficial for the practitioners to achieve the fundamental purposes of P4C movement. Introduction of these notions will serve to demonstrate and assure the role and significance of curiosity in P4C. The notions of curiosity-arouser and joint-curiosity may be expanded and used in additional areas of education. In my opinion, using curiosity-arousers and getting children to be curious jointly would produce effective outcomes not only for P4C but also for various educational concerns.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF CURIOSITY

#### 2.1 The value of curiosity

NASA's famous robot Curiosity has been searching for signs of life on Mars for more than seven years. Its name may well be considered to be a good indicator of the emphasis given to curiosity for scientific discoveries and improvements. Curiosity is indispensable to the progress and advancement in science and relevant studies. Given the limits of this thesis, I put aside a general discussion on the value of curiosity and confine myself to its significance in philosophy literature.

Curiosity is valuable since it paves the way for humans to experience, learn, and acquire knowledge. Hume is known as the first philosopher (in history) to praise curiosity and devote a whole chapter to it. He makes a connection between knowledge and curiosity (Hume, 1888). He does not elaborate on this connection but his thoughts on curiosity led philosophers of education and epistemologists to dwell on this concept.

The Philosophy of Education milestone John Dewey claims that children are naturally curious. Dewey devotes a part to the topic of curiosity, which, according to his account, is a natural resource for training thought in chapter three of his renowned book *How We Think*. He states:

The curious mind is constantly alert and exploring, seeking material for thought, as a vigorous and healthy body is on the *qui vive* for nutriment. Eagerness for experience, for new and varied contacts, is found where wonder is found. Such curiosity is the only sure guarantee of the acquisition of the primary facts upon which inference must base itself. (Dewey, 1910, p. 31)

Dewey thinks curiosity is necessary for children to acquire the facts. He continues with introducing the term 'intellectual curiosity' that is a higher state of

curiosity and is necessarily marked by asking ‘why’ questions. He holds that children’s natural curiosity grows into a higher state in which they ask questions to gain information.

The afore-mentioned philosophers maintain that curiosity is valuable for motivating us to get knowledge. Moving to the concerns of some virtue epistemologists, they consider curiosity as a virtue. Elias Baumgarten thinks: “An important feature of curiosity is its fecundity: it tends to lead to other virtues. The virtue of curiosity does not depend on its leading to other virtues, but its having this instrumental value is morally significant” (Baumgarten, 2001, p. 3). He continues: “But beyond its connection to these other goods, curiosity helps one to live well because it addresses the most fundamental existential task that human beings face, the need to see their lives as meaningful” (Baumgarten, 2001, p. 10). According to him curiosity “is a moral virtue. Though curiosity is not a necessary feature of any well-lived life, it is a quality that is generally conducive to it” (Baumgarten, 2001, p. 2).

Nenad Miscevic puts forth curiosity as the central and foundational epistemic virtue. It is foundational since it bestows epistemic value and central since it organizes other epistemic virtues. Miscevic explains “it seems that if curiosity is directed to the ‘new, ambiguous, complex, obscure, uncertain, mysterious, contradictory, unexpected, or otherwise not understood’ then its central goal is achieving understanding, rather than arriving at isolated items of knowledge, and I think it is epistemically quite a good thing” (Miscevic, 2016, p. 155). Miscevic also agrees with Baumgarten’s idea that curiosity leads to other virtues “that it organizes and mobilizes other virtues, both abilities related and morality-related” (Miscevic, 2016, p. 414).

A characterization of curiosity as an intellectual virtue is provided by Safiye Yiğit and Lani Watson. Yiğit emphasizes the importance given to the concept of knowledge in virtue epistemology and gives an account of the substantial relationship between being curious and knowledge acquisition or the motivation to get knowledge. By taking into account this relation, she claims that curiosity is an intellectual virtue: “no genuine intellectual pursuit would be possible if we lacked curiosity” (Yiğit, 2011, p. 74). Yiğit further claims that curiosity is also an ethical virtue “ethical makes our lives more worthy of living through enriching our life experience and making human fulfillment possible. She acknowledges that “curiosity as a process, regardless of the outcome, is worthy for us”. Curiosity is valuable because we “could treasure the intrinsic value embedded in curiosity that makes us take pleasure in it, no matter what the final product is, or whether or not it is reached, or even within reach” (Yiğit, 2019, p. 126)

Watson puts forth that curiosity is an intellectual virtue and she gives an account of a curious person: “virtuously curious person is characteristically motivated to acquire worthwhile epistemic goods that she believes she lacks” (Watson, 2019, p. 296). She claims: “...education for intellectual curiosity requires placing an emphasis on student motivation to learn” (Watson, 2019, p. 304). The usefulness of being curious for someone is to be motivated to learn.

Frederick Schmitt and Reza Lahroodi explore the value of curiosity for inquiry and knowledge parallel to Dewey’s value of curiosity. They state:

Curiosity has epistemic value because it is instrumental to and determinative of an estimable distribution of knowledge. First, it is instrumental to our acquiring knowledge that contributes to an estimable distribution of knowledge, both because it drives us to inquire into topics of practical and epistemic interest and because it drives us to inquire into other topics. Second, curiosity contributes indirectly to an estimable distribution by adding to the determination of what counts as an estimable distribution for us. (Schmitt and Lahroodi, 2008, p. 130)

According to them, what makes curiosity epistemically valuable is that it leads us to question and inquire. Another noteworthy idea in this paper that will be used later in the third chapter is the notion of ‘tenacity of curiosity’. They claim “the tenacity of curiosity seems quite important for its instrumental value for inquiry...Curiosity is needed to sustain an intense attention to a topic, and by its tenacity it brings with it curiosity about related matters” (Schmitt and Lahroodi, 2008, p. 138). They think tenacity is a type of curiosity, not necessarily for each and every curious state. Together with this, when curiosity is tenacious, it will lead one to deepen her knowledge by getting curious about the related issues regarding what one is curious about. Concerning the P4C sessions, the discussions are enriched with students’ tenacious curiosity that reinforces us to analyze the concepts or issues in depth. Our in-class discussions are not limited to a specific issue, question, or concept but include debates and inquiries about related matters. Therefore, tenacity is important in two senses. First, it enriches and deepens the in-class discussions. Second, it helps to reach a continuation of children’s curious states about thinking, questioning, inquiring, and engaging in concept analyses.

“Throughout much of intellectual history, curiosity has been marked out as a vice, a form of pride, particularly scorned in the early Christian context of Medieval Europe” (Watson, 2019, p. 293). It is possible to claim that the concept of curiosity is unvalued in the histories of philosophy and education. In the long run, it becomes instrumental in the current education system of the twenty-first century. “Teachers use the Socratic method of instruction to cultivate an inclination to evocative questions. Stimulating curiosity is central to education and learning” (Schmitt & Lahroodi, 2008, p. 125). Curiosity is accepted as a motive for gaining knowledge. Here, I would like to touch upon briefly the pedagogical link between curiosity and

learning which gains prominence in the progressive education<sup>16</sup> that is constituted under the influence of Dewey's ideas.

Students are at the center of their learning processes in progressive education. The student-centered approach brings about the change to place curiosity in the frontline. Now, the student is experiencing, making inferences, and is learning thus she is developing her certain skills. In this approach, curiosity needs to be fostered for keeping the student at the center of her own learning. Curiosity needs to be stimulated "as it motivates children to do all kinds of frame-directed research" (Opdal, 2001, p. 332). Curiosity is placed as being one of the most important dispositions highlighted by the PYP (primary years program) that is a highly respected education program.<sup>17</sup> It is clear that being curious is accepted as one of the most crucial traits that a student should have. Organizing a learning environment in which children can enjoy their curious states and cultivate their curiosity smooths the way that children become their own captain in their learning voyages and besides, it enables them to have more experiences.

With respect to being curious, we incline toward knowledge acquisition and learning. Given this, curiosity is claimed to be a necessary character trait, a good motivator, and a powerful stimulator. As far as P4C is concerned, curiosity instigates students to take part in discussions, contribute to them and be involved in deeper thinking activities. By way of doing these, they extend their knowledge and eliminate their ignorance in the sessions.

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<sup>16</sup>The definition of Progressive Education is:

A set of reformist educational philosophies and methods that emphasize individual instruction, informality in the classroom, and the use of group discussions and laboratories as instructional techniques. Retrieved from: <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/progressive+education>.

<sup>17</sup> For more information, see: <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/what-is-an-ib-education-2017-en.pdf>.

Inan's theory of curiosity in which he states that curiosity motivates one to ask questions also emphasizes the centrality of the two notions; awareness of ignorance and the inostensible concept as necessary for someone to get curious. In P4C sessions, children have the opportunity to realize their ignorance, experience their processes of question formation, ask questions, and thus have inquiries about the things that they are curious about. Curiosity and questioning are inevitably necessary for the development of thinking skills. In the first chapter, Lipman's list of the thinking skills that P4C develops is given. P4C also promotes open-mindedness, epistemic humility, self-expression and furthermore, intellectual courage, and respect for others. As stated in the foregoing part, there are virtue epistemologists who regard curiosity as a virtue. Virtue epistemologists are listing intellectual virtues some of which they do not agree on. Even so, they think that epistemic humility and open-mindedness are two respected intellectual virtues. These two values share a common aspect with curiosity. Awareness of ignorance, that is being aware of the lack of knowledge or realizing that you have had a false belief, is a necessary step for having these intellectual virtues. To be aware of your ignorance, you have to appreciate that there are things you do not know and also there are things that you think are true which in fact may turn out to be false. This awareness has the power to enable you to be open for new and additional knowledge and to welcome and accept a change in your own thoughts. Awareness of ignorance is a precondition for epistemic humility and open-mindedness and also for curiosity since it is a crucial point in explaining how one gets curious. In the next part, Inan's account of curiosity will be laid out. He demonstrates in what ways curiosity precedes the asking of a question and clarifies awareness of ignorance and realization of an inostensible concept as preconditions.

## 2.2 The asking of a question, inostensible concept, and awareness of ignorance

P4C was originally designed to engage children in a philosophical inquiry by way of questions. Inquiring as a community develops their thinking and reasoning skills as well as social ones. Together with these skills, P4C intends to render children as substantial questioners who critically evaluate the knowledge and experience they gain. I maintain that questions are indispensable to inquiry and developing children's thinking and questioning skills. Here, the relation between curiosity and the asking of a question is worthy of consideration.

Inan provides an account that thoroughly examines the role of curiosity in the asking of a question. In his account, curiosity has an indispensable place in the process of asking questions and engaging in inquiry. He focuses on illuminating human curiosity. According to him: "We could even perhaps conceive of the human species having evolved in a radically different way such that their members expressed their curiosity differently. Given the way we have evolved, we ask questions" (Inan, 2012, p. 40). He claims that curiosity is one of the impetuses for the emergence of a syntactic form of a question. The mainstream understanding regards the asking of a question as a speech act. However, one could ask and answer questions without producing sentences. Inan holds: "I will assume that one may ask a question to oneself, as a private mental act, without even consciously bringing before one's mind any words, let alone a full interrogative sentence" (Inan, 2012, p. 41). He claims that curiosity is a fundamental impetus for humans to ask questions even without producing sentences. So, the asking of a question is not simply a speech act according to him but also a mental act.

He acknowledges the variety of ways in which a speaker could be motivated to ask a question. "One may ask a question whose answer one knows just to test

someone's knowledge of the matter, one may ask a rhetorical question to make a statement, and one may even ask a question whose answer one wishes to find out but not because one is curious about it all" (Inan, 2012, p. 40). Similarly, not all inquiries require curiosity. "Someone may inquire into something, not because he is curious, but because his job requires him to do so, or he wishes to get some satisfaction by it, or to find something novel, or to gain power, and so on" (Inan, 2012, p. 19).

Although there are different kinds of motivations behind the asking of a question and inquiry, these do not change the significance of curiosity. This is because curiosity is a basic motivation that has led us to begin an inquiry into the unknown (Inan, 2012). Inan claims that it is possible to express curiosity by different means such as mimics and gestures. He states: "At times we could communicate our curiosity by a simple gesture, just like we could at times make an assertion by simply nodding our head" (Inan, 2012, p. 40). Still, the asking of a question is the fundamental way of expressing human curiosity. Curiosity is a crucial motivation for questioning.

In the P4C sessions, children come up with questions about the issues presented vis-a-vis materials and in the course of discussions. Here, it is better to provide some explanatory questions from the sessions. During a discussion about the concept of lying, a student asked: "Does changing colors make a chameleon a liar?". "Do we need language to lie?", "Do animals have language?", "Do animals lie?" were other striking examples from a fruitful discussion about the concept of language. While unpacking the hard-to-define concept of nothing, one of the children asked: "What do we really mean by nothing?". It appears that all these questions were in fact asked out of sheer curiosity. Curiosity is not the sole motive for each and every question. Inan points out the diverse motives behind the asking of a question. In the session, children were not forced to ask questions; nor were they supposed to

get a prize or gain power by asking them. In line with Inan, children may also ask questions as a repetition of what they have heard from others or to draw the attention of the class or to simply get on the good side of the facilitator. However, they asked the afore-mentioned questions as a result of the materials or the discussions that grabbed their attention and led them to think on the issue. At first, they found out that they were missing some knowledge. They wanted to gain that knowledge and became curious about it. Essentially, children asked these questions to themselves firstly as a mental act. These are novel and profound questions. In order to ask novel questions, such as the aforesaid ones, you have to ask it to yourself. This demonstrates the fact that they asked these questions to themselves. They did not have the answers. Shortly afterward, they expressed their curiosity in the form of a question as a speech act in the community of inquiry.

The utterance of these interrogative questions are expressions of curiosity. “What do we really mean by nothing?” initiated a novel discussion in the session. This question is an example of a discussion starter. In that novel discussion, members of the community of inquiry shared their answers and commented on each other’s answers. The community of inquiry engages in an intellectual effort to find answers. Questions about the concept of language deepened the ongoing debates. They managed to draw the attention of the other members including the facilitator and additionally revived the sessions. This is because not only the questioners but also the members ask those questions to themselves as a mental act. After hearing the questions, the ones who got curious asked those questions to themselves, too. Here, there are two ways of asking a question as a mental act. First, you may come up with a profound question and ask it to yourself. Second, you may hear a question that arouses your curiosity and then you ask that question to yourself. Both ways are

examples of asking a question as a mental act. The session provided them with the opportunity to express and share their curiosity in the form of a question and go after for satisfaction of their curiosity. Those questions have essential roles, such as initiating debates, deepening discussions, and arousing the attention of others or, to put in other words, getting them curious. Given this, I strongly argue that curiosity and its expression as questions are necessary for fruitful discussions.

Inan claims that one has to have an inostensible term to ask a question curiously.<sup>18</sup> The notion of inostensible lies at the heart of Inan's account of curiosity. Then, what is inostensibility? According to him;

In order to inquire into something, and later to be able to discover it, one must have at hand something that guides him...this guide, on my view, is neither any kind of knowledge, nor any kind of true belief, but it is rather a complex term that I call "inostensible" (relative to the inquirer). (Inan, 2012, p. 32)

His explanation of ostensible and inostensible terms is as follows:

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

Inan's example is below:

Suppose that the book I left on my table is gone, and I ask, "Who took the book that was on my table?" What I wish to find out is the referent of the inostensible term "the person who took the book that was on my table", which expresses a singular inostensible concept...If I ask, "Where is the book that was on my table?", I wish to know the referent of "the location of the book that was on my table"... And when I ask, "Why was the book that was on my table taken?", I wish to find out the referent of "the reason the book that was on my table was taken" or, in some contexts, "the cause the book that was on my table was taken". (Inan, 2012, p. 43)

For a better grasp of inostensible reference, here are some further examples. Suppose you wonder who conducted the first P4C session in history. Perhaps it is Matthew

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<sup>18</sup> To provide Inan's exact words: "for every question a subject asks out of curiosity there is a corresponding term for the subject that is inostensible for him and whose content is an inostensible concept; this I take to be a requirement for asking a question out of curiosity" (Inan, 2013, p. 41).

Lipman, perhaps not. Then, the term ‘the person who conducted the first P4C session’ is inostensible for you because you do not know the person who is the referent of this description. You understand the expression, in other words, what the term means. However, you do not know the referent of the term. That is you do not know the first facilitator of a P4C session. That being the case, the term is inostensible for you.

Let me explicate with another example. I am curious about the first homo sapiens living on earth. We discovered more or less some information about them but we still do not know who they are, where and when they lived. I do not know the answer to the questions “Who are the first homo sapiens?”, “Where did the first homo sapiens live?”, and “When did the first homo sapiens live?”. I do not know the referent of the inostensible term “the first homo sapiens lived on earth”. Also I do not know the referent of another inostensible term “the place where the first homo sapiens live”, and the referent of the inostensible term “the time first homo sapiens lived on earth”. I understand all these linguistic expressions and grasped the meaning. However, what these term refer to are unknown to me.

The preceding examples of inostensible terms are in the form of singular descriptions that denote specific particulars; curiosity expressed by such an inostensible term is about a specific person, an object, a place, a cause, etc. What is more relevant for our purposes is the inostensibility of a general concept expressed by a general term. Inan applies this distinction to concepts that the general terms express:

We use general terms in everyday speech having extremely little knowledge of their referents. We talk about different kinds of animals, herbs, atomic parts, or what have you, not really knowing them. Given that such knowledge is available and in our reach, we feel at home. The more frequently such terms are used, the more a false sense of acquaintance with their referents emerges. Just because someone uses the term “rye” in his everyday affairs

regularly, to buy bread for instance, it does not follow that this person knows the kind of cereal it refers to. If he has an interest in the topic and is open minded, then he could bring himself to be curious about rye. Such curiosity does not have to be curiosity about this or that particular property of rye, but it could be curiosity about rye itself, that is, what kind of thing it is. (Inan, 2012, p. 145)

Inan indicates that to be curious about rye is to be curious about the thing itself, in other words, to get curious about the necessary and sufficient conditions of a thing to be the rye. Inan continues by emphasizing the necessary and sufficient conditions:

I am inclined to believe that fundamental concepts we use daily such as *knowledge, beauty, justice, and truth* are ostensible for most of us, and there is a good sense in which we know what they refer to even if that is not taken to be complete knowledge. So when Socrates is asking what virtue is, we need not immediately jump to the conclusion that his concept of *virtue* was inostensible for him. Rather by posing such a question his intention may have been to find the nature of virtue or the essence of virtue, or something similar. The fact that the concept of *virtue* is ostensible does not imply that the concept of *the nature of virtue* is ostensible as well, for one may know what is being referred to by a term without knowing the nature of that entity... It seems to me that Socratic questions in the form "what is X?", which have served as paradigmatic forms of questions in the history of philosophy, should be interpreted in this way. For instance, when epistemologists search for an answer to the question "what is knowledge?", it does not have to be a precondition of their inquiry for the concept of *knowledge* to be inostensible. For someone may know what the term "knowledge" refers to, without knowing the nature of knowledge, or the necessary and sufficient conditions for someone to know something... Although our common notion of *knowledge* may be ostensible for most of us, it does not follow that the concept of *the necessary and sufficient conditions for someone to know something* is ostensible as well. This may then be taken to be the inostensible concept that underlies the first question of epistemology. We seek its object, but we do not know it. We seek the referent of an inostensible term, but we do not know it. If we find it and come to know it, our curiosity will be satisfied. Our original inostensible term then will be converted into an ostensible one. (Inan, 2012, p. 37)

One of the concepts that we discussed in the P4C sessions is identity. Even though I have a very good grasp of the concept of identity, I figured out that I do not know the necessary and sufficient conditions of two things being identical. Since then I have been thinking about what identity is. I understand the word 'identity'. I grasped its

meaning. Understanding the meaning of an expression is to grasp the concept expressed by that term. I understand the concept. However, I do not know, I am ignorant of the reference, not the meaning. What the concept of identity refers to is unknown to me.

Identity is a multi-layered concept. Inan's inostensible conceptualization is important for my analyses in this thesis because concepts are discussed philosophically in P4C sessions and moreover, the CoI tackles with philosophical concepts such as identity. The CoI engages in concept analysis and searches for meaning and definition in the sessions. In other words, children realize that they do not know the necessary and sufficient conditions of two things being identical or the necessary and sufficient conditions of lying. So, they give an effort to define the necessary and sufficient conditions of those concepts.

Inan claims that the inquiry will end when the inostensible concept is transformed into an ostensible one. In the sessions, the CoI has been philosophically discussing various concepts, such as lying, nothing, identity and change, value (value theory), knowledge, and technology. The children are all familiar with these concepts in different degrees. Their personal experiences enable them to have an understanding of what those concepts mean and stand for. That is, they have a degree of ostensibility about these concepts.

It is crucial to point out that there are degrees in ostensibility and curiosity (Inan, 2014). A concept being inostensible for someone means that there are (more) things to know about that concept. To exemplify, children are familiar with the concept of lying, they know what lying is to a certain extent however, they do not know the necessary and sufficient conditions of lying. They have lack of knowledge about lying and have difficulty in defining the concept of lying when they consider

different aspects of lying. They cannot tell whether a case is an instance of lying or not. When related concepts, such as deceiving, withholding information, and keeping secrets are introduced, it becomes more complicated for them to distinguish the examples and decide which example is an act of lying.

Inostensibility of a concept is relative to the person and the context. Degrees of inostensibility may change from person to person and from context to context. In different contexts, the same concept will be more or less ostensible for a person. Complete ostensibility seems impossible to achieve in most contexts. For someone who knows what there is to know about lying, the concept of lying would be completely ostensible. Most likely, there is hardly anyone having all the information and knowledge about lying. Even for a grown-up who has more acquaintance with lying, the concept would still be inostensible but less so compared to a child's situation. For children, this concept is inostensible because there are things that they do not know about lying and also, they may possibly have false beliefs which they are not aware of. There is a difference between a grown-up and a member of our community of inquiry. These two examples differ because inostensibility of the concept comes in degrees. Since there are degrees in ostensibility, there is to learn for those who do not understand the concept and there is still more to learn for those who are familiar with it.

Children realize the inostensibility of the concept of lying with the help of the materials and questions. The fact that there are lots of questions to ask regarding the inostensible concept demonstrates the degree of the inostensibility. Children do not exactly differentiate the instances of lying. They asked questions such as "Is deceiving lying?" and "Is keeping information lying?". The concept of lying is inostensible for the child if there are lots of questions that she does not have exact

answers. Children raise certain questions about lying in the sessions such as “My classmates ask me my best friends’ secrets. I never tell them that. Am I lying?” and “What if I need to lie to save some’s life?”. They do not have the answers. They realize the inostensibility of the concept meaning there is more to learn about lying. Acquiring knowledge and gaining new experiences, that is familiarity with lying, increase the degree of ostensibility. For concepts, especially philosophical concepts, there is a fair amount of knowledge to get and a deeper understanding is necessary. Thus, an increase in the degree of ostensibility, even if the concept is not fully ostensible, is still a remarkable achievement.

At this point, paramountly important is to be aware of the lack of knowledge. In other words, above-mentioned questions will be asked only after a realization of the fact that there are things that they do not know about lying. It will not be possible to have inostensible references unless one does not become aware of his ignorance. One will get curious about the concept of lying if he realizes that there are things that he does not grasp. He may have realized his partial knowledge about the concept or that he has had false beliefs. Only if one is aware of his ignorance, then he may have the mental representation of an unknown that is he may have an inostensible reference. In this sense, awareness of ignorance which is a genuine metacognitive action, is a precondition for curiosity and the asking of a question.

To sum up, Inan puts forth that getting curious is essentially a motivation for us to engage in questioning. For someone to get curious about something, that something must be inostensible for her, that is, she must have been lacking knowledge about it. This lack of knowledge may be much or less since there are degrees in inostensibility. Inostensible reference is a technical term which means to have a mental representation of something unknown. Awareness of ignorance

meaning awareness of the partial or any knowledge is necessary for someone to have a mental representation. So mentally representing something that is not known requires to have awareness of ignorance.

In light of Inan's theory of curiosity, I would like to put forward a new analysis for the P4C sessions. Inan states: "From this we may conclude that inquisitive learning (i.e., learning that is achieved by answering a question asked out of curiosity) is a process of transforming our inostensible concepts into ostensible ones by gaining experience" (Inan, 2012, p. 64). Following Inan, I claim that P4C session enables children to realize that the concept in question is inostensible for them to some extent i.e. there is a degree of inostensibility in the central concept of discussions. In other words, children come to the realization that they are many things they do not know about lying, many questions about lying to which they do not have answers and they also discover that they have had sometimes false beliefs about lying or wrong answers to questions. The session allows children to discuss, to question, to provide answers, to make comments and to evaluate on the inostensible concept, to listen to each other's interpretations, ideas and to hear their own voices. By means of these, P4C has the power to make children realize the partial knowledge or the false beliefs they may have about a concept, eliminate their false beliefs, and to render the concept as ostensible as possible for the members of the CoI.

Claiming that a concept becomes more ostensible for a child in a P4C session with holding that it is not necessary to render the concept completely ostensible is in line with Lipman's ideas. Lipman holds: "The stress in the philosophy for children program is on the *process* of discussion, and is not aimed at achieving one specific conclusion..." (Lipman et al, 1980, p. 103). According to Lipman, the P4C do not aspire to reach a definite answer to the questions or a clear-cut solution to the

philosophical issues. The emphasis is on the process in which the degree of inostensibility of the concept shifted for each child to a higher degree of ostensibility of that concept. Within this context, Inan's inostensible and ostensible reference, especially the degrees of inostensibility, elucidates Lipman's understanding of a P4C discussion. It should be noted here that increasing ostensibility may not be a requirement for a P4C session to be successful. Raising new questions in children's minds, making them realize that they have no answers for these questions, making them become aware of their ignorance and even merely making them perplexed, are also signs of progress even if none of these provides them with new knowledge that they did not previously have.<sup>19</sup>

Examining a sample P4C session in light of the inostensible concept and awareness of ignorance will be helpful for a better grasp of my analysis. The attention-grabber of that session was The Ship of Theseus. This philosophical paradox brought forward discussions about the concept of identity and change. As mentioned above it is better for the concepts discussed in P4C to be the ones that children are familiar with. Children undergo changes and discover their differences and also get curious about these changes. They are aware of their own identities. So, there is a degree of ostensibility meaning children are accustomed to the concept of identity and change. They have personal experiences about changes and each of them has a partial grasp of it at different levels. After watching the video version of The Ship of Theseus<sup>20</sup>, a member of the CoI asked curiously: "Which one is the original ship?" This indicates that he got curious about the paradox. He asked this question to

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<sup>19</sup> I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Erhan Demircioğlu for bringing this issue to my attention.

<sup>20</sup> The video can be found on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGAnLY46zAk>

himself as a mental act and could not find an answer to it. Then, he expressed his curiosity with that question in the CoI as a speech act.

One of the purposes of that session is to render those children become aware that there are many things that they do not know about identity and change than they thought they knew. The concept of identity and change being inostensible for a child means that she does not know certain things about the concept of identity and how change effects identity. They became aware of the inostensibility of this concept and this metacognitive activity is by itself efficient for educational purposes<sup>21</sup>. After the probing question, the CoI analyzed whether the ship that was made of from the old planks (stands on the left of Theseus) is the original or the one that has undergone changes of its planks (stands on the right of Theseus) is the original. Some members thought the ship on the left is the original, while some others thought the ship on the right is the original. They had different reasons for their ideas. Interestingly enough, some members thought that the two ships are identical. They claimed this because the same ship master made those ships. This idea shows that their understanding of identity is very much different from the others. The introduction of different ideas and comments enabled a realization of the inostensibility of the concept of identity and change and the challenge of concept defining. Throughout the discussion, the CoI gave the effort to understand the originality of the ships. What the concept of identity and change stands for was a topic of debate for that CoI because there were things that they did not know about change such as when did the first ship stop being original and become something else? They became aware of their ignorance regarding the necessary and sufficient conditions of something to be original. Also,

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<sup>21</sup> Inan's account is a metacognitive account given that on his view awareness of ignorance is a precondition of curiosity. I would like to thank Professor Emine Erkin who is a specialist in Mathematics and Science Education for pointing out the significance of metacognition within education in general.

they had different views regarding the changes in their own bodies. They debated on the question “What makes us the same after all those changes we lived up to now?”. Throughout the discussions, the children analyzed some cases and the changes that they underwent. They shared their personal experiences and tried to determine the definitions of the concepts. Throughout this P4C session, the concept of identity and change became more ostensible for the CoI since they got more acquainted with identity and change.

If a child thinks that she understands the concept, most likely she will not ask questions about it. For a child, reaching an awareness of ignorance is a threshold in the process of inquiry and asking a question. If she thinks that she knows what the concept stands for, why would she feel the need to ask questions about it? In order to ask questions, they need to realize that there are issues to question meaning there are gaps in their knowledge. In the P4C sessions, the child may realize that there is much more about the concept in question than her knowledge about it, that is, she has partial knowledge about the concept or she realizes that she has had false beliefs about it. This realization demonstrates that the child reaches a certain kind of an awareness of ignorance.

It is possible to maintain that Socratic Dialogue helps this realization. According to Kahn; “his [Socrates] own modest claim is simply the recognition of his own ignorance; and his own endeavor in discussion with others is to help them achieve this same recognition” (Brackets are mine. Kahn, 1998, p. 73). Engaging in Socratic Dialogue, sharing ideas, giving approval and counterexamples, and commenting on each other’s sayings; namely having discussions helped children realize their awareness of ignorance and inostensibility of the concept. For instance, differentiating the concepts lying, deceiving, keeping secret, and withholding

information by discussion and evaluating the cases helped the CoI have clearer ideas about what those concepts mean.

Before concluding this section, I would like to touch upon the notions “attention” and “interest”. For children to get curious apprehending that the given concept is inostensible, that is they reach a certain level of awareness of ignorance, is necessary but not sufficient. Inan’s novel account of curiosity is: “curiosity is simply the mental state one enjoys by the entertainment of an inostensible concept about something that is of interest” (Inan, 2012, p. 129). To get curious, the child has to pay attention and also feel interested in the topic. As Inan puts it “to become curious one must also have an interest in the topic that the concept is about” (Inan, 2012, p. 42). The relationship between curiosity and interest is a uni-directional one. “For everything we are curious about we have an interest, but we are not curious about anything we have an interest in” (Inan, 2012, p. 126).

Accordingly, the session has to be arranged with respect to drawing the attention of the children to the concept and making them feel interested in it. The materials help the facilitator present the concepts to the CoI at the beginning of the sessions such as the story of the Gingerbread Man. The important thing is to choose the concepts that children are already acquainted with. Likewise the concept of lying, it is better to bring concepts to the sessions that are ostensible for children to a certain degree. Besides, the facilitator should prepare the materials according to the cognitive levels of children. Mentioned in the first chapter, Lipman emphasizes that children should reason about their own problems.<sup>22</sup> Bringing issues that children face in daily lives to the discussions and sessions will help children feel

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<sup>22</sup> Lipman et al. hold: “...the teacher should be viewed as a facilitator whose task is to stimulate children to reason about their own problems through classroom discussion.” (Lipman et al., 1980, p. 102).

interested in the session. So, the materials and the way the concepts are presented have vital roles for the sessions because the children pay attention to the concept and to the sessions by means of the materials and their presentation. Paying attention will prepare the way for a realization of the inostensibility of the concept. The notion of attention will be elaborated in the third chapter by bringing joint attention to the discussion to explain curiosity-arouser and joint-curiosity.

I claim that Inan's account of curiosity paves the way for an understanding of the role and significance of curiosity in P4C sessions. In line with his account, getting curious is fundamental for a child to be an inquirer and ask questions. In P4C sessions, the CoI discusses concepts and issues philosophically through asking questions and engage in inquiries by way of questioning in the sessions. Thus, questions and questioning are of great value for P4C. In most sessions, philosophical questions acted as discussion starters. This means philosophical questions are of concern for the members. That being the case, philosophical question gains prominence in analyzing the sessions. I regard it necessary to know what a philosophical question is both as being a facilitator and for my aim in this thesis. In the coming section, I will provide arguments about philosophical questions from the literature and state my views regarding the notion of philosophical curiosity.

### 2.3 Philosophical questions and philosophical curiosity

As mentioned in the foregoing pages, questions are regarded as a way for humans to express their curiosity. Together with being an expression of children's curiosity, questions play an important part in the P4C sessions, such as opening up discussions, deepening the debates, perplexing children, fostering their participation and thinking,

getting them to be curious and etc. One of the goals of a P4C session is to foster children's curiosity with the help of questions. The session encourages children to assert their curiosity by asking questions and also utilizes questions to empower them to have philosophical discussions about (philosophical) issues and problems.

In addition to this, children ask philosophical questions about concepts, issues, and problems and mostly generate their discussions around those questions in the session. Since P4C is a Philosophy lesson, not only questions but philosophical questions are of concern. Philosophical questions provoke philosophical discussions and philosophical thinking activities. There are two ways in which children ask philosophical questions. First, already existing philosophical questions are brought to discussions. Second and more strikingly, children may come up with, produce, or to put it differently, invent novel philosophical questions. Bearing these in mind, one of the aims of a P4C facilitator should be enabling children to differentiate the questions and issues belonging to the area of philosophy. In elementary-level, it is expected from the students to understand and tell the main idea of a story, its characters, and its plot with the help of asking WH (who, what, when, which, whom) questions. I claim that equipping them with an understanding of philosophical questions will enhance their questioning skills and also improve children's discovery and creation of philosophical questions, both existing and novel. So enhancing their questioning skills will be beneficial both for P4C sessions and children's educational development.

If my position is taken into account, then consequently, one may conclude that it is better for the P4C practitioners to know what a philosophical question is. Also, getting acquainted with philosophical questions and knowing what a philosophical question is will improve children's questioning skills, therefore it is

better for the P4C practitioners to recognize diverse question types including the philosophical questions in order to bring them to the discussions and to realize children's philosophical questions. The literature review demonstrates that what a philosophical question is, is an issue of debate in philosophy. Although the phrase 'philosophical question' has been popularly used in the literature, very little effort was given by the philosophers to explain this phrase. In this part, two respectable papers that give accounts of philosophical questions will be introduced.

To begin with, Nermi Uygur gives the effort to describe and layout the structure of philosophical questions. According to him, describing philosophical questions are neglected in the history of philosophy. Uygur ponders on this disregarded issue in greater detail and provides us with a formula to clarify the structure and certain nature of philosophical questions.

Uygur's account is based on the form and content of philosophical questions. He claims the superficiality of 'everyday questions' and insists on the difference of philosophical questions which are transcending daily interests. Then, he puts forth the idea that "the what-is determines the very construction of philosophical questions, what-is gives us a token to distinguish them from other kinds of questions, especially from those of everyday life" (Uygur, 1964, p. 69). Because there are everyday and rhetorical what-is questions, he coined the name 'philosophical what-is' for the specific structure of philosophical questions. "In philosophy, the what-is asks the meaning of concepts...The what-is adheres, as it were, to the 'meaning'. The what-is amounts to 'What is the meaning of ...?'. All philosophical questions-if they really are such-can be moulded on this scheme" (Uygur, 1964, p. 72). The importance and distinctiveness of philosophical what-is are that it asks the meaning of concepts. He claims:

They ask *neither* about the world as world *nor* about language as language. The core of their function may be briefly put by saying that they initiate *deepening-of-the-field-of language-directed-to world*. It must be stressed that the totality of philosophy is permeated in this peculiar deepening. (Uygur, 1964, p. 73)

Uygur maintains that philosophical questions actually ask the meaning of the concepts. Presenting a formal structure to the philosophical questions, Uygur thinks that ‘what-is’ is the form of them. In P4C sessions children put heads together and ponder to the questions, such as What is lying?, What is an occupation?, What is philosophy?, What is freedom?, What is justice?, What is beauty?, What is nothingness?, What is happiness?, etc. These questions ask the meaning of a concept and children give a cognitive effort actually to describe these concepts. To put it differently, these questions ask for the definitions of the above concepts and children try to determine the necessary and sufficient conditions of those concepts.

Uygur proceeds with the claim that any question about philosophy can be traced back to a philosophical what question. He claims: ‘How many kinds of ways of knowing are there?’ can be traced back directly to the question, ‘What is knowledge?’, for there exists no essential difference between that asked separately by both question” (Uygur, 1964, p. 68).

I conducted many sessions in which questions about the concepts “learning”, “information”, “book”, “library”, and “school” culminated in discussions around the concept of knowledge. In our discussions about the concept of knowledge, the debates generally intersected on the fundamental question: What is knowledge?. For instance, children asked questions, such as; Do animals have language?, How do animals communicate with other species?, Is it possible to teach animals our language?, How come we communicate with animals without knowing each other’s language?, How do we learn our language?, etc. Similar to the example of the

concept of knowledge, discussing all those questions about language ultimately reveals the need for a better understanding of the concept of language. All of those questions bear a relation to What is a language?. Therefore, I paralleled Uygur's elucidation of philosophical what-is questions to the in-session questions which take aim at conceptual analysis.

According to Uygur's understanding, What is a language? is a philosophical what-is question. His understanding sheds light to the point that all the discussions regarding the concept of language must make a reference to that fundamental philosophical what-is question as it has been the case in the P4C discussions in which the concept of language was under debate. It is possible to say that conceptual analysis in P4C sessions culminates in a philosophical what-is question which asks the meaning of a concept. All the afore-mentioned questions of children about communication and language are steps on the way to the fundamental question. Using both Inan and Uygur's accounts, I would claim that in P4C sessions children realize the inostensibility of a concept, reach an awareness of ignorance, and ask questions to express their curiosity about that inostensible concept. After then, CoI starts a discussion in which fundamentally the meaning of that inostensible concept is searched for. The CoI makes an effort to transform the inostensible concept into a more ostensible one by discussing the meaning of the concept. In other words, the members attempt to determine the necessary and sufficient conditions of the inostensible concept. Eventually, the members will have a certain amount of understanding about what the inostensible concept stands for at the end of a session.

In P4C discussions the CoI delves into the concepts and tries to have a better understanding and a possible definition of them. According to this, bringing philosophical questions to the session means to promote discussions for determining

and grasping the meaning of concepts. In my opinion, thinking about the meaning of concepts and clarifying them are cardinal for children since they get acquainted with lots of new concepts in their early education and early lives. Realizing their ignorance and then encountering different aspects of the concepts lead them to search for the meaning of these concepts together with their peers, grasping them more than what dictionaries can provide, and apprehending that there are concepts which definitions are open to discussion are valuable achievements of P4C. These should be part of early education. Putting in a nutshell, Uygur's account of a philosophical question as a concept analysis under the form of what-is elucidates some of the questions taken place in P4C and reveals the importance of those questions.

In another attempt to give an account of philosophical questions, Floridi emphasizes a resource-oriented approach which stresses the requirements necessary to provide answers in determining philosophical questions. While Uygur proposes a morphological characterization of philosophical questions, Floridi takes the resources necessary to provide an answer into consideration. Floridi develops his idea with reference to the computational theory. He holds that:

What I wish to borrow, from computational theory, is only the simple yet very powerful insight that the nature of problems may be fruitfully studied by focusing on the kind of resources required in principle to solve them, rather than on their form, meaning, reference, scope, and relevance. (Floridi, 2013, p. 199)

Floridi divides questions into three groups with respect to the requirements necessary for giving answers. According to him, some questions require empirical information, some others require logico-mathematical information and the third group of questions consists of open questions that can be answered neither by the first nor by the latter group's requirements (Floridi, 2013). These are philosophical questions that he defines:

...not answerable empirically or mathematically, with observations or calculations. They are open questions, that is, questions that remain in principle open to informed, rational, and honest disagreement, even after all the relevant observations and calculations have become available and the answers have been formulated. (Floridi, 2013, p. 199)

One can conclude that disagreements occur while inquiring into the open questions. Quite likely that different points of views, several thoughts, and thus various answers can be provided to open questions. That is to say, open questions are open to debate and fair argumentation, they are up for discussion. Floridi finalizes his account of philosophical questions: “in principle open, ultimate questions, closed under further questioning, possibly constrained by empirical and logico-mathematical resources, which require noetic resources to be answered” (Floridi, 2013, p. 211). So, one needs to think and engage in cognitive endeavors, that is, an intellectual effort is necessary for answering a philosophical question.

Floridi's position stresses the disputability of philosophical questions and the intellectual requirements necessary to answer them. As a P4C facilitator, I usually underline the fact that most of the philosophical questions have not yet definite answers on which philosophers agree. There are many philosophical questions that philosophers have been addressing with an intellectual effort for thousands of years, such as; Does God exist?, What is justice?, How can we know?, Are dreams real?, even What is philosophy? and etc. Here, it will be useful to recall the sample session in which the concept of lying was at the center of the discussion. Children had discussions on What is lying?. Following Floridi, this is an open question because what lying is is an ethical issue on which children have difficulties in reaching a compromise. When Is lying always bad? is under discussion, personal experiences and examples diversify the answers provided to this question. Taking into account various circumstances, it becomes hard to decide upon this multi-faceted issue. In the

P4C discussions, some children think of lying as a good act when you are necessarily helping someone. Some propose that you have to lie if someone's life is in jeopardy. Indeed, children cannot decide on what lying is even though this is one of the ethical concepts that they are familiar with. Children had discussions to a greater extent in which the related concepts, such as deceiving, hiding information, and keeping secrets were analyzed. They could not decide whether an action is an act of deceiving or an act of lying. They partake in determining the necessary and sufficient conditions of those concepts. Not only ethical questions but the conceptual analysis also need a respectable amount of time and effort for the philosophers to get on an agreement. In this sense, Floridi's emphasis on noetic resources in defining philosophical questions seems plausible considering P4C discussions. Open questions are mostly starting points for a chain of questions and acted as the cornerstones in the discussions. In P4C sessions, philosophical questions have the role of acting as discussion starters and since there are no definite answers, they mostly create an environment in which children put their thinking caps on. Moreover, philosophical questions lead to other questions and enable a more profound thinking activity for the CoI. Children give a lot of intellectual effort in seeking answers to philosophical questions since they are open questions.

Uygun's contribution to philosophical questions as concept analysis that is asking the meaning of concepts and Floridi's understanding of philosophical questions as open questions are essential for bringing perspectives to the problem of what a philosophical question is. Their accounts elucidate the philosophical questions discussed and put forth in P4C sessions. As mentioned before, not all questions in the sessions are philosophical. Yet, it is crucial to discern the philosophical ones for having more subtle P4C discussions.

My consideration upon the very fact of understanding philosophical questions takes me to the notion of philosophical curiosity. Uygur touches upon a crucial point by holding that “what makes up a philosophical question is a question filled with wonder” (Uygur, 1964, p. 71). Harmonious with this, one may claim that the intention of the questioner may also have a leading role in determining the philosophical value of a question. Uygur situates wonder as a starting point for all philosophical questions. He does not concern himself with explaining how wonder culminates into a question which is philosophical. I would like to claim that there is a need for a better understanding of this issue.

In my humble opinion, a threefold explanation will be of use to illuminate what a philosophical question is. Not only the requirements necessary to answer a question, its form, and content, but also the intention of the questioner may also be counted as a condition to determine a philosophical question. It may well be the case that philosophical curiosity behind the asking of a question could be responsible for rendering the question philosophical. Maybe, philosophical curiosity could generate the asking of a philosophical question and one may conclude that philosophical questions are asked out of philosophical curiosity. It can be inferred that a discussion on what a philosophical curiosity is is necessary. This is beyond the scope of this thesis, however, I would like to put forth that the notion of philosophical curiosity will be a topic of further studies.

As mentioned before, Inan claims that curiosity is a fundamental impetus in the asking of a question. Following Inan, it may well be the case that philosophical curiosity is the fundamental impetus in asking of a philosophical question. It is beyond my aim to make a generalization that philosophical questions are the ones that are asked out of philosophical curiosity. What I wish to do is to bring a different

perspective to the issue. It may well be the case that most of the philosophical questions are the ones which are asked out of philosophical concern.

After having done many sessions it is possible to claim that the discussions are more profound and rich when participants are curious, especially jointly curious about the concept. However, when they ask questions out of their curiosity, especially when all or most of the members of the CoI get curious about the issue, the discussion becomes more deep and lively. Given this, one is inclined to claim that philosophical curiosity may well be the motivation behind philosophical questions.

In conclusion, I put forth that equipping children with the skill of differentiating question types, including philosophical questions, must be one of the aims of a P4C practitioner. Besides, the discussions and questions in the P4C sessions may contribute to our understanding of what a philosophical question is. Understanding philosophical questions as concept analysis (asking the meaning of the concept) and openness (debatable and requiring thinking to give answers) have the power to be important contributions for the P4C literature. These contributions shed light on P4C sessions since children engage in concept analysis when they are searching for the meaning of a concept and engage in thinking to provide different ideas, views, solutions, and answers to philosophical problems. Philosophical questions are essential to P4C sessions not only because they are at the center of the discussions but also children are capable of generating new philosophical questions. In P4C sessions, the ultimate goal of asking a philosophical question is not finding an answer but to be indulged in an intellectual inquiry to develop thinking and reasoning skills. Both Uygur and Floridi's account demonstrate in what ways philosophical questions help P4C reach the fundamental goals.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE ROLE OF CURIOSITY IN PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

In this chapter, the theoretical background of the concept of curiosity and philosophical questions provided in the second chapter will be used for an analysis of the role of curiosity in P4C sessions. Employing specific excerpts of the sample sessions from my actual practices, the detailed analysis of the role of curiosity in a P4C session paves the way to take the discussion forward in which the newly-coined notions ‘curiosity-arouser’ and ‘joint-curiosity’ will be introduced. My overall aim is to demonstrate that an understanding of these notions will help P4C achieve the goals of the movement. The P4C followers and the facilitators may equip themselves with an understanding of these notions to have fruitful P4C sessions.

#### 3.1 Analysis of sample discussions

There are various benefits of P4C. It creates an environment in which children develop their thinking and social skills. In the sessions, children think, ponder on issues and concepts, ask questions, inquire, get perplexed, become curious, enjoy their curiosity, develop new attitudes and points of view, and change their ideas and minds. At the same time, they hear different opinions, respect each other’s right to speak and have ideas, listen to each other, respond to each other’s ideas, develop their listening and speaking skills, and expressing their thoughts and feelings. To list more educational concerns, the discussions enable children to engage in formulating new concepts, re-define words, recognize differences of opinions and conflicting opinions, reach a metacognitive level, and the sessions overall develop their thinking skills, encourage open-mindedness, foster their creativity, promote certain ethical values such as tolerance and empathy. In the scope of this thesis, I concentrate on the

benefits of curiosity with an emphasis on the concept of curiosity, recognizing the inostensibility of concepts, reaching to an awareness of ignorance, and asking novel questions.

Here, I would like to present a discussion from the session on the concept of lying. Let's recall the story presented as the attention-grabber. The session began with watching a cartoon version of a fairy tale in which the Gingerbread Man manages to escape from all the villains and avoids being eaten. Then, he comes across a fox who says to the Gingerbread Man that he does not want to eat him because he does not look tasty. Tired of running from the villains, Gingerbread Man does not feel threatened by the fox and agrees to walk with him. While the Gingerbread Man enjoys his company, the cunning fox plays a trick and ends up devouring him. After the video, one of the children asked the question: 'Why did the Gingerbread Man believe the fox? Foxes are liars!'. The conversation below demonstrates that the children were having semantic disputes about the concept of lying. The conversation went as follows:

A: The fox deceived the Gingerbread Man.

B: He said, "You do not look tasty". That's a lie!

C: No, he was hiding something. He did not tell the truth. He wanted to eat the Gingerbread Man from the beginning. When we hide something from our parents or friends that means we lie to them.

B: Keeping secrets is hiding. But keeping secrets is not lying.

D: We have the right to hide the things we know. This is keeping secrets. If you say the opposite of what you are hiding, this is lying.

A: The fox did not have a secret. He did not tell the truth. He wanted to eat the Gingerbread Man. He deceived him by lying to him. (Taken from third graders discussion, aged eight.)

The question “Why did the Gingerbread Man believe the fox?” is an expression of the child’s curiosity. The child believes that foxes are liars and cannot understand why Gingerbread Man (GM) fell into his trap. He got confused with GM’s behavior. He realized that he did not understand why GM had acted this way, in other words, why GM had believed the fox. He thought about it, asked this question to himself first as a mental act, and then shared it in the CoI.

Seeking the reason behind GM’s action, the community discussed the way to describe the behavior of the fox. The singular term “the way to describe fox’s behavior” is an inostensible term for the community. Is the fox lying or deceiving or hiding information? CoI analyzed and tried to define the way to describe fox’s behavior. In the discussion, the community realized that members had different understandings about this singular term. All the participants claiming a definition of the behavior of the fox were confident about themselves and did not realize that their thoughts may be false. Sharing ideas, hearing your own words and confronting with other’s comments help the members realize that they may have misdescribed the behavior of the fox. Children tend to have firm ideas. However, it became apparent that the behavior of the fox is an inostensible term for the CoI since members had contrasting views and ideas.

The reason for this is that children participating had contrasting views and ideas about what lying is. Having a discussion on the way to describe the behavior of the fox, what this singular term refers to, the CoI became aware of their ignorance regarding the concept of lying. Not only the singular term but also the concept of

lying had a degree of inostensibility for the members although children put forth definitions and specific explanations which demonstrate that the concepts of lying, keeping secrets, deceiving, and withholding information are ostensible to a certain extent. The degree of ostensibility is relative to the child and the context, thus each child had different degrees of ostensibility. Therefore, they have different definitions and experiences regarding those concepts. The discussion helped them discover that there are issues to question regarding the concept of lying such as whether keeping a secret is lying or hiding means lying. These issues open up novel discussions. The children who thought that they knew what lying is now confronted with aspects of lying that may challenge their thoughts and lead them to possibly revise their opinions.

Before taking part in the discussions, generally, students look very confident about their knowledge. When you ask a child the meaning of lying, she can easily put forth a definition since she is familiar with this concept. The P4C session creates an environment in which the concept of lying is brought up for discussion. With the help of the question and discussion, the session enables children to realize that they do not know the necessary and sufficient conditions of lying because there are things about lying that they did not consider before. Also, children realized that the concepts of deceiving, keeping secrets, and withholding information are not clear for them. They do not know the necessary and sufficient conditions of these concepts. In the session children got familiar with different aspects and issues about lying, that is, the concept of lying became more ostensible for the members. Throughout this session, the CoI tried to construct definitions for familiar words and worked on formulating concepts.

Well then, what aspects of lying have children become aware of as a result of this discussion? They became aware of their ignorance regarding the necessary and sufficient conditions of lying. Moreover, children realized that the concepts withholding information, lying, keeping secrets, and deceiving are very similar in usage but have different meanings. That is they engaged in conceptual analysis and distinguished between these concepts by way of discussing. Throughout the discussion, members had difficulty in distinguishing between the meanings of deceiving, keeping secrets, and lying. They easily came up with examples to those concepts however, they had difficulty in determining which examples are about which concept. The difficulty is demonstrated by A's and B's contributions; A thought the fox deceived the GM whereas B thought he lied to GM. C introduced the concept of withholding information as a lie then, B and D furthered the debate with their opposite ideas and diverse definitions on keeping secrets. The concept of keeping secrets was introduced as a form of withholding information and was not considered as lying. When new concepts were introduced to the discussion, it became harder to include or exclude these concepts in explaining the concept of lying. D's contribution brought about the issue of intention. Some of the children defended that intention is an important aspect in deciding whether an action is lying or not. As seen in the below example, the intentions are provided for consideration in the discussion.

The children wanted to continue discussing the concepts withholding information, deceiving, keeping secrets and lying in light of sharing different examples and also their experiences. They tried to classify the examples with respect to different, however, related concepts. Child A thought about the way to describe the behavior of the fox and analyzed it. He shared his ideas and engaged in

discussion with others. After child B gave him a reply, child C and D joined the conversation. That discussion continued with further comments;

D: The fox lied because he wanted to eat the Gingerbread Man. Had he not lied, he could not have eaten the Gingerbread Man.

C: So, he lied.

D: Yes, but he lied to get what he wanted.

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

Facilitator: Is lying always bad?

G: There are different types of lies. For example, we tell white lies. Telling white lies is not deceiving. We tell white lies to not to upset our friends.

D: If we lie to get what we want, no, this is not bad.

E: But it is bad for the Gingerbread Man!

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

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

The members engaged in differentiating the concepts and defining them by way of sharing ideas, providing arguments, introducing new concepts and examples. The facilitator intervened with a question that helps children think about scenarios in which lying is not bad. These enabled children to analyze the concepts more thoroughly. Although children are familiar with the concept of lying in their daily lives, most probably they had not heard the facilitator's question before or had never asked it to themselves. Thanks to that question, members became aware of their ignorance about the concept of lying, and thus got curious and discussed it in the

CoI. At the same time, it reinforced their creativity in the sense that they were motivated to undertake creative thinking to come up with an answer.

Introduction of white lies was followed by the conceptualization of lies as black, pink, and yellow later in the discussion. To set the necessary and sufficient conditions of something to be a lie, they created new approaches to analyze the concept of lying. This conceptual analysis makes way for children to engage in creative thinking. They came up with creative ideas such as labeling lies with colors. Explaining different types of lying by analogy to different colors is an example of curiosity developing children's creativity.

Moreover, they discussed cases and had ethical discussions on whether lying is always bad. The session enabled a realization of the inostensibility of the concept of lying in ethical terms so that they asked questions and shared their opinions about ethical issues regarding this concept. While child D justifies the validity of lying in the story, children E and F opposed this. Members asked questions since they became aware of their ignorance.

To clarify my argument further, I would like to provide quotations from another sample session that I facilitated. In that session, the topic of discussion was cooperation. The concept of cooperation is not a philosophical concept, however, is a good example of a concept that children discuss philosophically. The attention-grabber was a book about a fish searching for its lost family.<sup>23</sup> It is a story about a school of little fish that achieve something grand by means of cooperation. While we were discussing the concept of cooperation, one of the members said;

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

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<sup>23</sup> The material of this session was the book called *Swimmy*. Lionni, L. (1963). *Swimmy*. New York. NY: Pantheon.

This sentence reduced the members of the CoI who were discussing the issue enthusiastically to silence. Every member began to think about this remark. Although we were discussing cases where cooperation at times may not work and may be unproductive, none of us had mentioned committing a crime by way of cooperating. After this comment, the members continued the discussion by giving similar cases as examples:

X: People can cooperate to kill someone!

Y: They can hurt animals by cooperating.

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

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

It is clear that the members gained new insight about what the concept of cooperation stands for. They realized their ignorance about the concept of cooperation, that is, they did not consider that cooperation can be used for achieving harmful ends. Until this contribution, the community did not think and address any negative connotation of cooperation. Some members realized their false beliefs, such as child Z, after considering this remark. The ones, who had thought that cooperating was always used for good ends, realized that this was not true. This is a striking example of a P4C discussion in which most of the children became aware of their ignorance. By means of discussing the concept of cooperation, child W thought and came up with that remark. His contribution affected the thoughts of the members. Thus, some

of them declared the change in their ideas after evaluating and acknowledging that remark.

One of the members made a noticeable remark in this discussion. He said that cooperating is bad for the person whose belongings are stolen, however, it is a good thing for the thieves. Noteworthy that he approached the issue from a very different point of view. His remark deepened the discussion and contributed to the way we take the issue at hand. This remark is important in the sense that it brought another approach to the analysis of the concept of cooperation.

In light of the interventions of the facilitator in those two discussions, I would like to emphasize the role of the facilitator. She tries her best and encourages children to raise questions. Raising questions and sharing it with the members is an expression of curiosity. In the first sample discussion, the facilitator asked the thought-provoking question: Is lying always bad? This may well be accepted as a philosophical question with respect to Floridi's account in which philosophical questions are open to discussion and calls for noetic endeavors. The facilitator's aim with asking this is not to test the children's knowledge of the matter. She has a curiosity towards the children's thoughts about the issue. In fact, she asked this question to herself and could not find an answer. Then, she shared it with the community having the intention of directing the discussion. In a sense, she expressed her curiosity by asking that question. Expressing curiosity toward a better understanding together with the CoI may well be an expected behavior of the facilitator since she is also a role model for children. A facilitator who asks questions, expresses her curiosity, acknowledges that there are things she does not know, and searches for an answer is a very powerful role model for children.

What is more, in the second sample discussion one of the facilitators is the homeroom teacher. She realizes that she has been teaching the concept of cooperation with an emphasis on the good and favorable outcomes of cooperating. She acknowledged her awareness of ignorance and shared this in the discussion. Becoming aware of her ignorance and sharing it in the CoI is a good model for children. So, it is better for a facilitator to show these attitudes to have more fruitful discussions and to reach the general goals of the P4C movement.

I argued that in successful sessions, the children realize their awareness of ignorance and the inostensibility of the concepts in question. The materials of P4C together with questions, discussions, and witnessing the thoughts and experiences of others have the possibility to make the children realize the inostensibility of the concept in their own intellectual journey. These sessions serve the purpose of making the inostensible concept more ostensible for each child. In other words, children get acquainted with different aspects of familiar concepts and raise their awareness in the sessions.

Do the sessions complete the transition of the concept from inostensible to an ostensible one? Neither the sessions complete the transition of the inostensible concept into an ostensible one, nor, the goal of the sessions is to complete it. The purpose of the program is to discuss the concept in question philosophically in which a complete analysis of the concept is not a requirement. In the sample session, the CoI did not come to a decision about what lying is or about whether lying is always bad or not. However, they thought about these issues, shared their ideas and experiences, heard each other's comments, came up with new ideas, and compared different thoughts about the same issue. To put it in a nutshell; a fair amount of knowledge and opinion were shared and children got more acquainted with lying by

means of discussion in that session. Those are what enabled the transformation of the inostensible concept, lying, into a more ostensible one for the children. At the end of the session, to a certain degree, they have a certain understanding of what lying is and is not.

On the other hand, aiming to make the concept ostensible for each child will bring up the issue of didactic teaching. Achieving complete ostensibility of a concept requires having all the knowledge about it beforehand and the task of transmitting it during the session. However, the CoI discusses the concept under the guidance of the facilitator, works on finding out what the concept stands for and even may come up with new ideas. The issue here is not to teach or transmit them all the knowledge about the concept but to increase the degree of ostensibility by discussing it. The goal of introducing philosophy and doing philosophy with children is not to teach them the ultimate truth, not to set reaching a complete ostensibility of a concept as a goal for them, but rather equip them with reasoning skills and skills of arguing for rationality and truth.

In this respect, the midwife analogy sounds quite suitable for P4C sessions. “A number of metaphors have been developed to illustrate the role of the teacher...the teacher is seen as a...midwife” (Splitter and Sharp, 1995, p. 140). The facilitator leads the session, asks questions, and creates an academic environment where students are welcomed to express their curiosity, ask questions, and say their thoughts and comments aloud. Not only the facilitator but also the discussions and the session, in general, have the potential of acting as a midwife. Children are eager to talk and share their experiences. They have opinions and want to hear the thoughts and ideas of other members; that is to say, they want to learn what the other participants think. The session enables them to hear the members’ and also their own

thoughts by means of Socratic Dialogue, discussion and sharing ideas. P4C gives them the opportunity to state what they think and provide answers to the questions. Children have the chance to take their thoughts out of their minds. By means of creating a community in which thinking and sharing opinions are fostered, the session acts as a midwife.

P4C sessions act as a midwife and there is much more to it. In addition to acting as a midwife, the sessions are a breeding ground where children give some thought to their ideas and opinions, paving the way for their development. By enabling them to hear other minds, building up on to other's thoughts, evaluating arguments, drawing inferences, finding examples, sharing experiences and self-reflection, children come to a certain decision or understanding regarding the philosophical concept and get acquainted with philosophical discussions.

Hearing other minds, building up on to each other's thoughts, criticizing other's ideas and evaluating the arguments can be extended to be the signs of the theory of mind. Children participating in the sessions claim that they reach certain opinions based upon the ideas and thoughts of other members. These could be counted as being further examples of the theory of mind because children recognize others have thoughts and ideas. In the early developmental stages of childhood, children give signs about the realization that people around themselves have beliefs, desires, emotions, knowledge, and etc. Theory of mind concentrate on these attributions. However, curiosity as being a mental state is an important attribution together with ignorance.

So, I would like to claim that together with thinking about their own mental processes, children are witnessing the curiosity and thinking processes of others throughout the discussions. They experience the questioning processes of members

and witness how members enjoy their curiosity. At the same time, they observe that other members also get curious and ask questions. When the child expands his theory of mind he understands the beliefs, desires, and knowledge of the others. He realizes that others have a mind too, likewise himself. Moreover, in the P4C session, the child realizes that his friends and teacher also have thoughts, ideas, opinions, and questions. From this point it may well be said that children also realize others' ignorance, lack of knowledge, and curiosity in the P4C sessions along with realizing their own ignorances and curiosity at a metacognitive level.

According to my understanding, this is crucial in developing children mental abilities. This realization of other's curiosity, ignorance and questioning is in a sense putting yourself in someone else's mental shoes and a hallmark before learning to feel empathy towards others. This development of awareness brings together the understanding that people may have false beliefs or lack of knowledge, and people have different ideas and feelings, and moreover ideas can change. Actually, in the sessions, the facilitator is trying to build up this understanding. Here, the aim is to make children experience at a very early age that minds can change and it is normal for people to have different ideas. Most importantly they develop an ethical and intellectual reaction to these issues. So, expanding the theory of mind in P4C sessions, children engage in metacognitive activity and develop the awareness that others have thoughts and feelings. Additionally, they realize that others have different thoughts and feelings, even false beliefs. Thanks to this realization and discussion on ideas, children learn to think about other people's thoughts.

If my position is taken into account, then, an analysis of the concept of curiosity would be essential for P4C sessions in which there is a fair amount of questioning and inquiry. When P4C sessions are analyzed under the light of Inan's

theory of curiosity, it is seen that, P4C sessions have the power to foster children's inclination to be curious by offering them discussions that are centered on a philosophical concept (or a concept which can be discussed philosophically) which they come to realize that it has a degree of inostensibility for themselves. The P4C session helps children realize that they do not know everything about the concept in question and also that it is impossible to know all that there is to know about that concept. Through the discussions in which children ask questions and inquire into the concept, the sessions serve the purpose of increasing the degree of the ostensibility of the concept for each child.

The crucial point is the occurrence of awareness of ignorance together with the inostensibility of the concept, which may possibly guide the child mentally to think, become curious, and ask questions. When the child realizes the inostensibility of the concept, it is more likely for her to question the issue and be an active member of the CoI. Thus, she is able to try to make the concept more ostensible for herself and also invigorates the discussion by her contribution. Becoming aware of the fact that the concept in question is inostensible is very crucial in the process of getting curious and thus, asking questions. However, this is only part of the story. To deepen the discussion on the concept of curiosity, we need to emphasize the importance of two closely related notions, namely, attention and interest. As Inan suggests, "only when awareness of ignorance concerning a specific matter is accompanied by a certain kind of interest in that matter could it result in curiosity" (Inan, 2012, p. 126). It is also necessary to draw the attention of the children to the concept and arouse their interest for the sake of getting them to be curious.

### 3.2 More than an attention-grabber: curiosity-arouser

Inan claims that attention and interest are necessary for someone to get curious.

Fulfilling a realization of the inostensibility of the concept, first, the materials have to draw the attention of the children. According to Lipman:

The child has little future to count on; they only know that the present makes sense or does not make sense, on its own terms. This is why they would appreciate having educational means which are meaning-laden: stories, games, discussions, trustful personal relationships, and so on. (Lipman, 1978, p. 256)

When the materials designed according to the needs and cognitive levels of the children are presented in the sessions, it becomes easier to draw their attention to the issues and concepts. Typically, short stories or passages from stories are used in the classroom in order to present the issues or concepts. Other materials, such as videos, toys or skits may well be used in the sessions in order to bring concepts to the class and draw children's attention. In relation to that, "attention-grabber" seems a suitable umbrella term for P4C materials whether they are books, passages, short stories, videos or skits. The reason why these materials are brought to the session is to draw the attention of the children to the philosophical issues or concepts contained in these materials.

For arousing their attention, not only the material itself but also the presentation of the material has a leading role. While presenting attention-grabbers, it is useful to ask one or two questions for clarification. Grasping the issue, keeping his interest, and thus becoming curious is difficult for the child when there are unclear or ambiguous points. Before pondering on the concept, the child has to understand the content of the material. Asking questions during the presentation of the material is also practical to engage the distracted children to the story. The sum-up questions such as, "What has happened so far?", "What do you think will

happen next?”, and the questions for emphasizing connections between two things are helpful. The above-mentioned discussion began with the story of the Gingerbread Man that was introduced with a video that includes lively images, colorful scenes, and animal characters. These features make the video an appealing material for the community, thus, the CoI watched it with enthusiasm. The video successfully arouses children’s attention since it was appropriate for their ages and cognitive levels.

After the presentation of the video, one of the children asked, “How can a Gingerbread Man run faster than a horse?” This question indicates that the child was confused. Another child asked, “Why did the Gingerbread Man believe the fox?” This question indicates that he understood the story and questioned the actions of a character. What is the difference between these two questions? In both cases, children paid attention to the video. However, the child who asked the second question both paid attention to the material and felt interested in the issue. Both questioners were in an attempt to understand. However, the child who asked the second question was curious about the issue. Thanks to his questions, the CoI started the discussion about the concept of lying.

This example indicates that paying attention may not be adequate by itself to get children to be curious. Children that pay attention to the material can experience difficulties in understanding the story and this may lead them to have problems in further parts of the session. Being perplexed may well be the case for the child who asked the question “How can a Gingerbread Man run faster than a horse?”. It seems that he was perplexed about the logical issue such as how a cookie can run faster than a horse. The distinction between curiosity and perplexity is worth noting here. Perplexity is for the good of arousing curiosity. When a child is perplexed, she is

more likely to ask questions that are supposed to make the issue clear for her. Children could ask questions out of perplexity when they are in need of clarification. A perplexed child is also the attentive child who cares about the topic and needs clarification because she is on the way of grasping the issue. It is necessary for the facilitator to take into account the reasons behind children's questions so that the facilitator could make the clarifications. It is useful for the facilitator to distinguish between curious states and perplex states of children. When the issue is clear for more members, it would be possible to have a sound discussion with more participants. As mentioned before in the second chapter the P4C session encourages students to be inquisitive and curious, and at times it may simply be sufficient to just make them become perplexed and let them be in a state of intellectual confusion.

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

Joint attention is used and defined by developmental psychologists and linguists: joint attention which occurs when a group of people perceives the same object together is attributed to mind functions in which one understand the intention and goal-directed behaviors of other people around. Its effectiveness in improving human capacities is proven (Martell 2010, Kidwell and Zimmerman, 2007). Studies are conducted on infants, especially mother and their children. In a famous study,

Tomasello and Farrar indicated that “during periods of joint attentional focus both mothers and children talk more, the dyad engaged in longer conversations, and mother used shorter sentences and more comments” (Tomasello and Farrar, 1986, p. 1459). In *Joint Attention as Social Cognition* Tomasello claims that:

“...what underlies infants’ early skills of joint attention is their emerging understanding of other persons as intentional agents; that is, their understanding of human activity in terms of the outcomes it is designed to achieve. When infants begin to view others as intentional they begin to comprehend that: Other persons may attend selectively (intentionally) to some things in the environment and ignore others; Other persons may intend for them to selectively attend to some things in the environment and ignore others; With certain behaviours they may induce other persons to intentionally attend to new things in the environment.” (Tomasello, 2014, p. 103)

Understanding the intention of others and choosing to attend to a specific thing are important achievements of an infant. As far as P4C sessions are concerned, when joint attention is established in the CoI children become aware of the attention and thinking processes of other members. That is, children are aware that other members think and share their ideas and comments in the discussions. In this sense, joint attention is a metacognitive activity. Since joint attention includes selecting the thing to attend and ignore the others, it smooths the way for the members of the community of inquiry in engaging in all parts of the session. Taking into account the positive outcomes of joint attention, it is fruitful to establish joint attention in the sessions if the goals of discussing in a community are supposed to be reached. Firstly, joint attention is conducive to becoming a community because all of the members or at least the majority together attend the session having the awareness of other participants’ attention and these are necessary factors in creating discussions. By means of joint attention, children pay attention to the materials and think about it together, listen to each other and share with each other on an intellectual level. Accordingly, children affect each other in a positive way and this enables sound and

more fruitful dialogues, conversations, and discussions. If a P4C facilitator wants to get children to be involved in discussions and develop their thinking and social skills, it is better to establish joint attention during the session. Thus, I argue, it is better for an attention-grabber and in general the session, to create joint attention in the CoI.

As aforementioned, every child, who pays attention, is not necessarily curious about the topic in question. Paying attention and being curious are relational; however, paying attention is not always followed by curiosity. If arousing curiosity is a goal, then, I propose that it is meaningful for an attention-grabber to create joint attention, and also arouse children's curiosity in P4C sessions. For the effectiveness of a session, it is vital for the material to function as a curiosity-arouser. In other words, presenting the philosophical concept or issue with a curiosity-arouser helps children get curious about it; thus, enables them to think and inquire on the topic and ask (philosophical) questions. To fulfill this, the materials and the sessions have to make children feel interested in the topic. In order for an attention-grabber to being considered a curiosity-arouser, children have to feel interested in the content of it. Thus, a curiosity-arouser has to draw children's attention to the concept, make them feel interested in it, enable a realization of the inostensibility of it and thereby, arouse their curiosity.

Although drawing the attention of the children to the concepts poses no difficulty with the proper materials, accomplishing the task of both drawing their attention to the concept and arousing their interest require greater effort. In order to accomplish these, it could be better to introduce the philosophical issues or concepts that children are already acquainted with. Discussing concepts, which children have been instructed during other lessons or they encounter in their daily life, arouse their interest more easily. "Children look for meaning and they are hungry for those that

might be relevant to -and might illuminate- their lives” (Lipman et al., 1980, p. 17). In this manner, discussing the concepts that they are acquainted with would enable children to feel interested in those concepts.

An attention-grabber that is used to draw the attention of the members has to be organized and presented in such a way that it could also enable a realization of the inostensibility of the philosophical concept presented. It has to enable a realization concerning children’s awareness of ignorance about the subject. The definition I put forth is that: an attention-grabber is a curiosity-arouser when it leads the members of the CoI to realize the inostensibility of the philosophical concept and also their ignorance, and manages to draw their attention, arouse their interest and in effect make them curious. The P4C facilitator creates a context in which an attention-grabber becomes a curiosity-arouser. Here, the context is important since the curiosity-arouser will get children curious about a specific philosophical concept or issue. As mentioned in the second chapter, arousing children’s curiosity is a general aim of the current education systems so curiosity-arouser can be beneficial in different areas of education.<sup>24</sup> For P4C sessions, it may well be the case that an attention-grabber becomes a curiosity-arouser when it instigates philosophical curiosity.

Following this definition, I would like to bring certain arguments claiming that curiosity helps us fix and sustain our attention. As mentioned in the Value of Curiosity part, Hume praises curiosity by emphasizing its role as an attention fixer (Hume, 1888). In P4C sessions, children ask questions curiously and those questions mostly lead the community to have discussions. Such a question fixes the attention of

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<sup>24</sup> Curiosity-arouser is an important notion not just for P4C sessions but also for any form of education. I would like to thank Assist. Prof. Ebru Zeynep Muğaloğlu who is an expert in science education to provide me with the information that this notion is relevant for chemistry education.

the questioner together with the other members. They get curious about the same issue that the question poses and attentively think in search of an answer.

The views of Schmitt and Lahroodi were touched upon in the second chapter concerning the value of curiosity. Along with attributing curiosity an epistemic value, they claim "...an appetitive account of curiosity, viewing curiosity as a motivationally original desire to know that arises from having one's attention drawn to the object and that in turn sustains one's attention to it" (Schmitt and Lahroodi, 2008, p. 125). That is, there is a two-sided relation between curiosity and attention when there is a motivationally original desire for knowing something. They also claim that: "Curiosity frequently gets the better of us and unexpectedly draws us to a topic in which we have little antecedent interest. In this way, curiosity *broadens* our attention and ultimately our practical and epistemic interests" (Schmitt & Lahroodi, 2008, p. 140). According to their understanding, after we get curious, we become more interested and attentive. This means, there is an increase in the degree of interest. It seems highly possible that getting curious has a positive influence on children to be attentive.

Taking into account these arguments, I would like to claim that rendering attention-grabbers as curiosity-arousers will also be helpful in fixing children's attention more firmly and then to sustain it. Getting curious will smooth the way for a child to keep her attention for a longer period of time in the discussions and sessions. As a P4C practitioner, I observe from children participating in the session that curiosity has a favorable impact on the depth of the philosophical discussions which necessitates the members to pay attention to and feel interested in the issues or questions. Children's attention and interest seem fully engaged when they are curious about the matter at hand.

I would like to take the discussion on the necessity of fostering curiosity in P4C sessions forward and put forth that curiosity is a significant motivator for children not only to ask questions but also to dwell on the philosophical concept, issues and engage in the sessions. Though unmentioned in the P4C literature, this is another powerful role since it motivates children to feel obliged to participate. Arousing their curiosity in the session keeps their inner motivation high which paves the way for them to be an active member of the CoI and thus, curiosity has a role in the performance of the CoI which has durable and fruitful philosophical discussions. A child participates in the session in many ways, such as by giving answers, asking for reasons and clarifications, sharing opinions, commenting on other's thoughts and ideas, identifying fallacies and connections, making distinctions and building on each other's thoughts, even by trying to get rid of her perplexities and confusions. So, being curious leads the child to take any of these actions and thus, renders her an active participant in the sessions.

### 3.3 The context of fostering curiosity: joint-curiosity

Inan's account of curiosity elucidates the need for fostering curiosity in P4C sessions. According to this, a child's realization of the inostensibility of the concept together with her attention and interest get the child to be curious about it. In addition to these, I proposed that jointly attending the sessions and using an attention-grabber that is a curiosity-arouser are advantageous and helpful in increasing the intellectual performance of the community. I would like to introduce a new concept to this picture. In a P4C session, there is a special type of curiosity which is different than individual curiosity. The term joint attention indicates that there is a fair amount of difference between paying attention and paying attention jointly regarding their

outcomes. When there is joint attention, the members of the CoI attend to a certain concept or an issue that they choose and are aware that other members are attentive. In the P4C sessions, children are attentive as a community. It is not sufficient for two or more children to attend to the same thing together, they have to be aware that others are attending to the very same concept or issue, too. Joint attention is said to be more influential for developing certain skills and creating a sound communication. Taking into account the positive outcomes of joint attention, joint-curiosity could appear to be more effective in comparison with getting curious individually, for developing more fruitful discussions and creating a more productive CoI.

It is naive to expect a philosophical study about joint-curiosity when there is so little work on the Philosophy of Curiosity. It seems the P4C literature and the literature on curiosity could be enriched by a concept, which we would like to name “joint-curiosity”. For P4C, the ideal could be that joint attention and joint-curiosity are established during the sessions. Similar to joint attention, creating joint-curiosity could be effective for a sound discussion within a group. In P4C sessions, children constitute a thinking group, a CoI and generate discussions in which all the members actively participate. In this CoI, children listen to each other’s thoughts, ideas, experiences, and questions and hence, the session creates powerful discussions in which there is questioning out of curiosity. Theoretically, if joint attention is a more effective tool than merely individual attention, then joint-curiosity would be effective in different ways compared to individual curiosity in the sense that children become aware of other’s curiosity and thinking processes. This enables sharing, questioning each other’s thoughts and building up onto each other’s ideas. Other’s thoughts, ideas, and comments are driving force behind the production of novel ideas. Therefore, it would lead to more effective and deeper discussions. When

children are jointly curious, there are more members who are willing to participate in the discussions. Awareness of others' curiosity may possibly lead the members to engage in the discussions. The more the CoI enjoys joint-curiosity, the more in-depth questions and fruitful discussions will come out. When there is joint-curiosity during the sessions, building up onto each other's sayings and asking questions to each other could bring more fruitful discussions and analyses.

I would like to explain further the concept of joint-curiosity with a conversation from the sample session we discussed earlier. As the CoI was discussing the concept of lying and the community of inquiry differentiated between the concepts of withholding information, keeping secrets, deceiving, and lying, the conversation developed as follows:

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

C: Keeping secrets is not lying. Sometimes when you keep a secret, you do it for other people. The same thing happened to me and I was the birthday boy!

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

C: Yes, I first got angry but then when they told me they were talking about my birthday present. I did not feel angry anymore. When I got the present, I felt happy.

A: Sometimes boys come near us and ask what we talked about. If we have a secret, I do not tell it. This is a secret and I have the right to keep it.

B: But this is telling a lie. Why do not you say: "This is a secret and I cannot tell you?"

D: Yes I agree with B. Why do not you tell the truth?

A: (Thinks for a while). Because they will not give up and let me go. They will keep asking and bugging me.

B: Have you ever tried to tell the truth to them?

A: No, because if I did so, they would not leave me alone.

D: How can you know if you did not try?

A: (Feeling uncomfortable, starts to move on her chair). I am sure this will happen.

B: But how can you know without trying!

A: Ok, I never thought about it that way.

C: Although you would not tell a lie when you say it is a secret, you are still hiding something from someone.

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

Throughout this sample session, children are attentive to the concept of lying. In this example, there is joint attention; these children's attention was on the issue of what lying is. A, B, C, D are all attentive to this concept and aware that other members are attentive. By means of their joint attention, the discussion became more fruitful and vivid in the sense that more members of the CoI shared their thoughts about a specific concept. Different ideas and comments were heard in the discussion. This discussion could have been somewhat effective also if only two children would have talked. However, with the contribution of others, new concepts were introduced

and more questions were asked. Joint attention enabled more members to participate. Thus, these made the dialogue and the discussion more fruitful.

Further, this example indicates the constructive effect of joint-curiosity. B and D were not only attentive jointly but also curious jointly. They were curious about the same concept and concentrated on the same example. They were aware of each other's curiosity and thinking. Their joint-curiosity led them to question the issue together. They built up questions like building up ideas. As mentioned above, children consider and think about other's comments and ideas and those are driving force behind the novel ideas. In the sessions when there is joint-curiosity, children take into account and ponder on other's questions and those questions are the driving force behind the asking of novel questions. C shared his experiences and thoughts while A was participating actively in the discussion. However, D and B were curious about the same topic so that they asked questions. B's questions out of curiosity and A's answers, that is their dialogue, created a proper condition for D to enjoy his curiosity and ask questions. To put it in a nutshell, the harmony in these questions indicates that there is joint-curiosity in this session.

My aim is to demonstrate how joint-curiosity progressively affects the discussion. By means of joint-curiosity, the discussion became fruitful and lively. In addition to having an influence on the discussion, joint-curiosity led children to formulate and ask questions, reply to each other's comments and generate novel ideas. Thus, it helps to stimulate the session. Not only at the beginning of the discussion but throughout the session, joint-curiosity enabled children to formulate and to ask questions. As mentioned in the first part, Lipman emphasized the fact that getting acquainted with philosophy makes formulating questions possible for children. The questions raised by children during the session both indicate this fact

and help them improve their critical thinking abilities, which is one of the main purposes of P4C.

In a typical P4C session, it is possible to create joint-curiosity. Similar to the positive impact of joint attention on child development, I argue that joint-curiosity has positive outcomes for children's inquiry and questioning. As being a metacognitive activity, getting jointly curious help boost academic engagement.

In P4C literature Vansieleghem states that: "It is a general aim of Philosophy for Children to include the voices of every member of the community on the grounds that the more voices are heard, the greater will be the possibilities of reaching a general and appropriately representative consensus" (Vansieleghem, 2005, p. 20). For the realization of this picture, especially for reaching a representative consensus joint-curiosity seems unavoidable. Joint-curiosity is actualized in most of the sessions, however, getting jointly curious is not taken into account as a crucial notion. The understanding of the concept of curiosity and focusing on getting children curious jointly would be efficient for having a substantial and rewarding P4C sessions both for the facilitator and for the children.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

A deep-rooted curiosity towards curiosity enabled me to generate the ideas and defend them in this thesis. Philosophy for Children, both as an understanding and an activity, is fascinating in itself. What is most captivating is witnessing the lively and unimpaired curiosity of children who, as far as I see, have the potential to greatly contribute to our understanding of curiosity, philosophy and many more issues and concepts that it would be too long to name them all here. Perpetuating children's curiosity together with fostering it is my final cause in this thesis and as a P4C facilitator.

Curiosity has certain roles in P4C sessions that render the concept of curiosity significant for the movement. Inan's account of curiosity can be used to explicate how curiosity motivates children to ask novel questions. In P4C sessions, when children ask such questions they come to realize that they do not know the answers. His account stresses that realizing their ignorance along with inostensible conceptualization are necessary for them to get curious. Questioning and philosophical inquiry are vital parts of the sessions. Moreover, (philosophical) questions and having philosophical inquiries help children develop their questioning, and in general thinking skills in the sessions. The P4C sessions provide an environment in which children enjoy their curiosity by asking questions and search for answers in the philosophical discussions with their peers. Those discussions are shaped around the questions asked. To put it differently, curiosity provokes children to come up with questions that trigger philosophical discussions in which children develop their thinking skills. In line with this, curiosity plays an important role in

cultivating their thinking skills. For accomplishing these roles, curiosity is also a motivator for getting children to become engaged in the discussions. So that children think upon issues, ask questions, listen to other's ideas and share their own thoughts, thus participate in the sessions.

I argued that realizing these roles of curiosity in the sessions together with an understanding of philosophical questions enhance the effectiveness of the sessions. An analysis of philosophical questions indicates that what a philosophical question is still a philosophical question since there is no consensus on the definition of it. I hold that future studies on the concept of curiosity and philosophical questions will be furthered by analyzing the notion of 'philosophical curiosity' which may well be the motivator behind the asking of philosophical questions.

A literature review on P4C presented in the first chapter demonstrates the importance of curiosity for the movement and the lack of its analysis with regard to the role it plays in the sessions. To fill this gap, I made use of certain excerpts from facilitator and children exchanges from actual sessions, mostly taken from my own experiences as a P4C facilitator, in order to provide an analysis of the role that curiosity plays and its significance. I tried to demonstrate that children ask questions curiously and getting them to be curious is influential for them to have deeper discussions. Curiosity gives rise to in-depth questioning since children, who ask questions out of curiosity, ask their questions not to be active, talkative, draw the attention of others or just give a response but because of their interest in the topic and their natural wonder about things in general. Their curiosity leads them to think, inquire and engage in dialogues and they are willing to learn and think more about the concepts or issues. Although there are different kinds of motivations behind the asking of a question and inquiry, these do not change the significance of curiosity.

This is because curiosity is a crucial motivation for questioning. Curiosity motivates to question, to participate and also fixes the attention. Regarding the roles and significance of curiosity, I claim that it is vital for the materials of the sessions to be more than attention-grabbers and be curiosity-arousers.

Together with these, I propose the significance of actualizing joint-curiosity in the sessions. Likewise the fruitful outcomes of joint attention, joint-curiosity stimulates children to formulate and ask questions together, reply to each other's comments, have debates and engage in discussions, generate novel ideas and questions and thus, helps to maintain the enthusiasm. Getting jointly curious has a positive influence on the quality and profundity of the discussions. Not only at the beginning of the discussion but throughout the session, joint-curiosity plays a crucial role by enabling children to formulate questions, ponder on the same question together, and actively participate in the session. Members build up questions likewise they build up ideas. Therefore, it seems the P4C literature and the literature on curiosity could be enriched by a concept we would like to name 'joint-curiosity'.

All in all, emphasizing the significance of curiosity for P4C by presenting a theory of curiosity could help this practice reach its fundamental aims. I tried to elucidate the necessity of fostering children's curiosity that is implicitly stated in the P4C literature, however, is left unexplained. Together with this aim of closing the gap in the literature, we developed two concepts: curiosity-arouser and joint-curiosity. These concepts may be expanded and used in additional areas of education. In my opinion, using curiosity-arousers and getting children to be curious jointly would produce effective outcomes not only for P4C but also for other educational concerns.

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