the facilitator as self-liberator and enabler:

ethical responsibility in communities of philosophical inquiry

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abstract
From its inception, philosophy for/with children (P4wC) has sought to promote philosophical discussion with children based on the latter's own questions and a pedagogic method designed to encourage critical, creative, and caring thinking. Communities of inquiry can be plagued by power struggles prompted by diverse identities, however. These not always being highlighted in the literature or P4wC discourse, this article proposes a two-stage model for facilitators as part of their ethical responsibility. In the first phase, they should free themselves from assumptions and closed-mindedness. They should liberate themselves from pedagogy of fear and "banking education" in order to act freely in an educational space characterized by improvisation that cultivates participation of the children. Here, the text is based on normalizing education principles, counter-education and diasporic-education approaches in order to ensure openness and inclusiveness. In the second, they should embrace enabling-identity views and practices in order to make the community of inquiry as identity-broad and -rich as possible, recognizing and legitimizing the participants' differences. Here, the text is based on principles such as recognizing power games as part of the community, ensuring multi-narratives human environment and enabling epistemic justice in order to ensure perspectival multiplicity, multiple identities, and the legitimization of difference characterized by pedagogy of search.

keywords: philosophy for/with children; self-liberated facilitator; enabling identit; pedagogy of fear; counter-education; diasporic education.

o facilitador como auto-liberador e possibilitador: responsabilidade ética em comunidades de investigação filosófica

resumo
Desde seu início, a filosofia para/ com as crianças (FpcC) tem procurado promover uma discussão filosófica com crianças com base nas próprias questões destas últimas e um método pedagógico projetado para incentivar o pensamento crítico, criativo e cuidadoso. Entretanto, as comunidades de investigação podem ser atormentadas por lutas de poder motivadas por diversas identidades. Nem sempre destacadas na literatura ou no discurso da FpcC, este artigo propõe um modelo em duas etapas para os facilitadores como parte de sua responsabilidade ética. Na primeira fase, eles devem se libertar das suposições e da mentalidade fechada. Eles devem se libertar da pedagogia do medo e da "educação bancária" para agir livremente em um espaço educacional caracterizado pela improvisação que cultiva a participação das crianças. Aqui, o texto se baseia na normalização dos princípios da educação, da contra-educação e das abordagens de educação diaspórica, a fim de garantir abertura e inclusão. No segundo, eles devem abraçar visões e práticas possibilitadoras de identidade, a fim de tornar a comunidade de investigação tão ampla e rica quanto possível, reconhecendo e legitimando

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as diferenças dos participantes. Aqui, o texto é baseado em princípios como o reconhecimento de jogos de poder como parte da comunidade, garantindo um ambiente humano multi-narrativo e possibilitando justiça epistêmica, a fim de assegurar a multiplicidade de perspectivas, identidades múltiplas e a legitimação da diferença caracterizada por uma pedagogia de busca.

palavras-chave: filosofia para/crianças; facilitador auto-liberado; habilitação da identidade; pedagogia do medo; contra-educação; educação diaspórica.

el facilitador como autoliberador y posibilitador: la responsabilidad ética en las comunidades de investigación filosófica

resumen
Desde sus inicios, la filosofía para/con los niños (Fp/cN) ha tratado de promover el debate filosófico con niños y niñas a partir de las propias preguntas de éstos y de un método pedagógico concebido para fomentar el pensamiento crítico, creativo y solidario. Sin embargo, las comunidades de investigación pueden estar plagadas de luchas de poder provocadas por las diversas identidades. Como no siempre se destacan en la literatura o en el discurso de la Fp/cN, este artículo propone un modelo en dos fases para los facilitadores como parte de su responsabilidad ética. En la primera fase, deben liberarse de las suposiciones y de la mentalidad cerrada. Deben liberarse de la pedagogía del miedo y de la "educación bancaria" para actuar libremente en un espacio educativo caracterizado por la improvisación que cultiva la participación de niñas y niños. En este caso, el texto se basa en los principios de la educación normalizadora, la contraeducación y los enfoques de la educación diaspórica para garantizar la apertura y la inclusión. En el segundo, deben adoptar puntos de vista y prácticas de habilitación de la identidad para que la comunidad de investigación sea lo más amplia y rica posible en identidades, reconociendo y legitimando las diferencias de los participantes. En este caso, el texto se basa en principios como el reconocimiento de los juegos de poder como parte de la comunidad, la garantía de un entorno humano multinarrativo y la habilitación de la justicia epistémica con el fin de garantizar la multiplicidad de perspectivas, las identidades múltiples y la legitimación de la diferencia caracterizada por la pedagogía de la búsqueda.

palabras clave: filosofía para/con los niños; facilitador autoliberado; identidad habilitante; pedagogía del miedo; contraeducación; educación diaspórica.

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introduction

Communities of inquiry (COI) are marked by an inherent tension between the two poles of community and inquiry: to which should greater space be allocated and can both be maintained simultaneously? This article examines the ethical responsibility COI facilitators bear for providing the young participants with the opportunity and space to give expression to their identities. Although multidimensional, each child's identity enters the classroom or discussion circle with him or her.

This article suggests that in order to achieve a higher level of authentic dialogue that avoids what I refer to as the repression of participant identity, COI facilitators should seek to become first self-liberating and then enabling. Herein, I would like to discuss how the COI facilitator is tasked with enabling full expression of identity as an ontological basis for establishing the students' statements at a later stage. The first sections address the facilitator as self-liberated, explaining the various stages of freeing the self from conceptual constraints as a precondition for allowing the participants freedom of expression and speech. The following sections treat the facilitator as enabler, elaborating on the various phases of identity and narrative enablement.

the facilitator as self-liberator from "banking education"

COI facilitators are not blank slates. According to Freire (1970), the majority of schoolteachers serve as agents of the "banking education" system. This is a method of teaching and learning where students simply store the information relayed to them by the teacher. In a "banking educational" environment, the classroom is structured so as to encourage the student to remember and accurately recall the information provided by the instructor. Employing the approved terminology and textbooks, the teachers take pains to ensure that students believe that texts rather than thinking—and certainly not independent thought—are the most important part of education.

Discussing this "banking" model of education, Freire identifies nine characteristics: the teacher teaches, the student learns; the teacher knows everything, the student nothing; the teacher thinks, the student forming the objects of this process; the teacher speaks, the student listens; the teacher educates, the student is educated; the teacher chooses and imposes this choice upon the student, who complies; the teacher acts, the student has the illusion of acting through the teacher's action; the teacher selects the curriculum, the student accommodates him or herself to it; the teacher is the subject of the learning process, the student the object.

Teachers may only "play" with the COI elements of education while ostensibly continuing to espouse the "banking" approach. Teachers need to be freed of the fundamentals of conservative education being promoted by the central educational systems in many countries across the globe and assimilated by standard curricula and regulatory boards, so as to liberate not only themselves but also the COI participants.

Freire's (1970) "banking education" theory sets human beings apart from the world around them, whereas COIs are designed to allow for an authentic dialogical process. Freire (1970) warns that even those committed to the idea of educational freedom may find themselves mired in an atmosphere that encourages the "banking education" system, on occasion implementing its principles or failing to prevent its dehumanizing potential. Self-liberating education rests on recognition rather than the transfer of knowledge. COI facilitators should thus engage in a process designed to liberate themselves by resolving the teacher-student divide, promoting a form of education that sets problems at its center—i.e., discusses challenges like socio-economics problems, gender tensions etc.

the facilitator as self-liberator from the pedagogy of fear

P4wC situates learning in a space of questions rather than in a corpus of answers, promoting a community that facilitates a form of thinking and learning that resists an educational hierarchy that claims omniscience. The coordinator is a participant in the learning process rather than a "judge," learning taking place in the (real) present rather than working towards the (unknown) future. Improvisation is

regarded as a better way of learning than predetermined content, liberating the learner from disciplinary boundaries (Kizel, 2016b).

These dimensions delineate P4wC as a pedagogy of searching. Based on a pursuit of meaning that facilitates personal development, this fosters self-direction and capability. It thus stands in stark contrast to the "pedagogy of fear" (Kizel, 2016c: 28), which makes perpetual demands on the learner, discourages risk taking, diminishes competence, and creates the constant need for an omniscient "guide".

This stage of self-liberation is closely tied to an imaginary dread of the collapse of the social, national, communal, religious, traditional order. Lying at the heart of the self-protection mechanism upon which the facilitator relies, wittingly or unwittingly, and on the basis of which she or he operates, it appears to be a safe, stable essentialist place free of fluctuations. On closer inspection, however, it is revealed as an educational space that, over the years, has been characterized by fear, instability, questioning, doubt, and the undermining of presumptions. According to Gur-Ze'ev, non-liberated education is in effect a

> collection of praxes and theories relating to the formation, shaping, and disciplining of the human subject so that he becomes such and not another, something rather than someone, oblivious to the demands that he be something else and the calls to accept others—to the point that he forgets his own purpose and goal. (2004: 14)

The concept of fear has been discussed extensively over the generations. In Plato's parable of the cave, those imprisoned welcome the seer back with scorn, contempt, and mistrust. This response may be interpreted as a fear of philosophical knowledge of the truth—a sense that impinges upon the ability to learn about the truths of the world from those who know them. Socrates elaborates on Plato's conception of fear in his defense speech in the *Apologia*.

Nietzsche argues that fear prompts people to discover what they know in the midst of what is foreign rather than to search for the true meaning of things. Self-recognition is self-observation without the external mediation of general schemes, aiding people in identifying their uniqueness as individuals bound by neither external nor internal imperatives. These mandates having a historical origin, the cause of compliance being fear or lack of self-thought, Nietzsche perceives fear as inducing

people to hold onto the familiar, which interferes with the pursuit of truth. He believes that the will of power makes people attentive to others and what is new, distinguishing this from the power of the mind based on the search for general knowledge.

Rousseau contends that people must be taught to

> live rather than avoid death: life is not breath, but action, the use of our senses, our mind, our faculties, every part of ourselves which makes us conscious of our being. Life consists less in length of days than in the keen sense of living. A man maybe buried at a hundred and may never have lived at all. He would have fared better had he died young. (1762: 1; cf. English & Stengel, 2010)

According to Dewey, fear is signified by an emotional response that, *inter alia*, takes the form of shrinking, withdrawal, evasion, concealment. Later, it transmutes into reluctance and contraction.

In recent decades, conservative educational systems over the world have been motivated by the pedagogy of fear. Touching on the concept of childhood, the child, and the rationale for his or her education, and practices relating to the pedagogy of his or her upbringing, this fuels the view that the child - as a child - constitutes a problem that must be diagnosed, defended, assisted, and, of course, "promoted," aided, and abetted.

The pedagogic view that has come to dominate educational discourse relates to two points of departure (vertices) that influence and complement one another:

> - The child as "not-knower": This contends that children are essentially "not-knowing" beings whom the education system can improve by raising their level of knowledge and instilling values in them so they become "knowing"— i.e., acquire intellectual and behavioral knowledge. Viewing the child as a "candidate for," "not yet fit," it denies that he or she is autonomous and able to direct his or her life in a relatively independent fashion (Lipman, 1991). Some traditional educational systems are thus marked by a double discourse—an external discussion of the belief in the child's capabilities (some of which accord with the educational structure) and an internal debate within the school based on the belief that the child is "still not ready," school being the place in which he or she matures.

> - The model of demand from the child as the pedagogic basis for the operation of the conservative educational system. Here, the school is perceived as the ideal place for learning—a beit midrash (study house), in traditional Jewish terms. According to this logic, the sacred hall of learning offers optimal teaching-learning processes conducted in a professional educational language that grants them social legitimacy.

> The school may demand—at any and all times—that the student meet the standards set by adults and attain measurable achievements as a way of preparing to enter adult life. This in effect constitutes an act of swimming in a sea of demands and commands (Kizel, 2016c).

In this context, teachers view themselves as lifeguards tasked with saving children from the world outside the classroom—and thus engaged upon a sacred mission. This terminology is reflected in such programs as "No child left behind" and "War on poverty"—"Teach for America" and "Knowledge is Power Program" (KIPP) also drawing some of their educational ideology from the same pedagogical source.

the facilitator as self-liberator from normalizing education

The process of liberation falls under what Freire (1970) calls radical pedagogy—freedom from certainty. The more extreme a person becomes, the more he or she seeks to penetrate this reality; the better known it becomes the easier it is to change. He or she is not afraid of confrontation, listening, or seeing the world unmasked.

The foundational elements in this radical pedagogy process are freedom from compliance and adaptability. The facilitator's first commitment is to release him or herself from the constraints laid upon him or her by the central conservative educational system. Developing a critical sensitivity and awareness, he or she seeks to resist confining him or herself to inculcating knowledge in the students. The facilitators who experience this process can free themselves from the conflictual gaol in which they have been imprisoned by their teacher education and training, the conservative educational system in which they work, the school in which they serve, and the head to whom they are responsible. Hereby, they come to understand that they are in being transformed from autonomous thinking subjects into objects that merely pass information onto the student.

This is not an easy realization; the conservative education they received functions as the organizing principle of their working life and dictates the logic behind their professional identity, teaching methods, and commitment to a "normative" form of education. Gur-Ze'ev refers to the latter as critical dialogue as opposed to normalizing educational models: "The more effective education becomes, the more people seek comfort under the fetters that prevent them from what they could have

become and hide from them the violence of the mechanisms that shape what they are" (1999: 11).

Before self-liberation, these teachers are incarcerated within normalizing education, unable to free themselves from what they

> still are or are not yet but can only fluctuate between the competing forces and dynamics that give birth to changes and new possibilities within the confines of the systems in which people assume the identity imposed "upon them" from outside. (Gur-Ze'ev, 1999: 11).

Following Gur-Ze'ev, this self-liberation is likely to "create alternatives that contribute to the power struggles that dominate the educational agenda and the knowledge perceived to be necessary, thus forming the basis for different criteria for the evaluation and assessment of knowledge—that rivals that presented to this point as relevant and legitimate." (2004: 20)
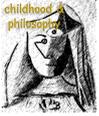
the facilitator as an active counter-educator

In my view, rather than addressing issues in order to examine reality, the self-liberated facilitator should also seek to become an active counter-educator. Herein, he or she should allow questions that encourage a discourse that interrogates existing reality. This basic critique of social, economic, and class realities enables students to challenge reality rather than take it for granted.

In this way, active counter-education resists the symbolic violence of normalizing education:

> Counter-education is a concrete not abstract utopia, serving as the demythization of reality. It appears as the negation of the existing order and criticism of the action of operating mechanism and the production of goods, manufacturers, and consumers. Counter-education can and must assume a dialogic and subversive expression, providing an alternative to existing reality even if an essentially negative one. (Gur-Ze'ev, 1999: 17)

I would like to turn this idea of utopia—including Gur-Ze'ev's concrete form of it—into a practical dialogical suggestion, and propose that self-liberated and critical facilitators seek to free themselves from the confines and structure of the pedagogy of fear. In the context of COI, they may oppose the existing system in general and its

modus operandi in particular. When they simultaneously partner with the students in order to create a place for questions, the COI can become a dialogical space.

Active counter-educators (e.g., self-liberated facilitators) forge communities that serve as spaces for diasporic education. Herein, they can promote critical thinking skills "in a multicultural world dominated by the logic and practices of capitalist globalization" (Gur-Ze'ev, 2004: 194). Facilitators may also perceive themselves as part of a wider phenomenon enhancing self-liberation and emancipation.

In diasporic educational practice, the facilitator thus engages in self-observation for purposes of reflection and self-correction. Thereby, it "necessarily turn[s] into education for creativity whose ability to improvise is unlimited by changing reality … it trains students to work within it on various, even contradictory, levels of life" (Gur-Ze'ev, 2004: 194). Within this framework, facilitators can free themselves even when surrounded by the logic of capitalist globalization and instrumental rationality. Diasporic facilitators and active counter-educators find ways to become flexible, act critically, observe reality from many angles—and thus enable the students in the community to do the same. Diasporic education acts against rigidity and obstruction.

the self-liberated facilitator as an improviser

Conservative learning methods conceive of the learning space as pre-planned, engineered, and prefigured, this structure forming one of the advantages of a systematic learning that is orderly, organized, internally logical, and goal (future)-oriented. This is the complete antithesis of P4wC's principles of self-determined learning as a legitimate, fertile, and living and breathing form of improvisation within the context of dialogue.

Two aspects of improvisation are fostered herein: the learner's creative capacity to engage in variations on a standard theme—inventing something "on the fly"; and doing so within a dynamic, interactive context with others in the community—listening, anticipating what others might say or do, taking advantage of serendipity, and interweaving their own improvisation with that of others, thereby stimulating and inspiring new levels of creativity. In this sense a dialogical classroom functions as a type of performance ensemble.

the facilitator as self-liberator and enabler: ethical responsibility in communities of philosophical inquiry

Following Frost and Yarrow (2007), COIs cultivate spontaneous responses to the "here and now," responsibility and commitment to improvisation as a relational encounter, and re-creation of the interface between inner reality and the outside environment. Requiring less instructor control and course structure, improvisation allows learners to engage in more self-directed learning (Canning & Callan, 2010; Kenyon & Hase, 2010). Cognitive development commensurate with learner maturity and autonomy—a requirement for critical reflection and discourse—can also be integrated into this process (Mezirow, 1997).

Following Gur-Ze'ev (2010), the heart of improvisation lies in the movement of co-poiesis prompted by the love of life—giving birth to the totally new and wholly unexpected as a form of non-instrumental playfulness that manifests responsibility to life at its best. It thus combines non-dominating, dialogical relationships with experience and openness.

 P4wC contains all these elements, cultivating improvisation within the COI. As members raise questions and choose which to discuss, they embark on a process that allows for diverse creative philosophical answers. These in turn raise new questions and responses—both positive and negative. The whole process allows opening conditions that allow for improvisation as a basis for free thinking and creativity based on imaginative and inventive thinking.

the facilitator as enabler

Following the stage of self-liberation, the facilitator can enter the next phase—the most central in the COI—of enabling. In the wake of recognizing his or her process of formation and the false certainty in which his or her attitudes were shaped and molded—in particular his or her assumptions and prejudices within the "home" in which these were honed and the pedagogy of fear which forms its foundation—the facilitator must seek to participate openly and critically in the COI.

When a facilitator comes to work with students, he or she must understand that his or her charges bring their own identities to the COI. Identity is a complex issue. While possessing a pre-fixed deterministic essentialist element—ethnic background, gender, etc.—it can also be hybrid and liquid (Bauman, 2000). Bauman argues for a

metaphorical antithesis between the firm/solid and the liquid. The latter does not keep its shape, changing form from minute to minute; the former is marked by a stable spatial dimension.

Borrowing this metaphor, I wish to apply it to identity. Both liquid and hybrid, identity is labile and fluid. When the facilitator makes this assumption, part of his or her ethical responsibility and action within the COI must be to ensure that the members of the philosophical discussion group are not treated—or regard themselves—as blank slates. When the P4wC movement emerged, many people regarded the preoccupation with philosophy as starting from zero—i.e., students come to the thought-provoking process free of national, religious, communal, gender, local, or other identities. This thesis has now been rejected, it now being understood that every student's identity/identities enters the room with him or her.

the facilitator as enabler in power games and multi-narratives environment

In the framework of P4wC, COIs originally attached great importance to the asking of questions, the choice of which to discuss, and full, authentic, and (sometimes) summarizing dialogue. Despite this goal, COIs frequently suffer from covert power struggles (Kizel, 2016a), not always being sensitive to the participants—many of whom come from lower socioeconomic or non-mainstream cultural/ethnic backgrounds.

Participants from weak or marginalised sectors who do not belong to the hegemony are subject to two forms of oppression:

1. External—dictated by the hegemonic discourse represented in the COI by children and teachers from hegemonic homes;
2. Internal—imprinted on children who are made aware of the "right order" by the operation of power relations (Kizel, 2016a).

As Foucault notes, the regime of knowledge that represents the "proper" order conceals a power play: "It's not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power … but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time" (1980: 133).

In every encounter—even between children—silenced voices are thus present in the room, circle, or community, whose owners feel incapable of making themselves heard in a way they can call their own (Kizel, 2019). As Ndofirepi and Cross observe:

> Silenced children cannot confront violence and abuse that may be committed against them. The capacity to learn is constrained in the absence of opportunities to probe, question and deliberate. In situations where adult decision-makers do not listen to children, the former will fail to notice the presence and character of the barriers affecting the lives of the latter. (2015: 235)

While COIs are customarily conducted in a more open climate than organized lessons, being designed by definition to offer a safe place (Lipman 1997), the hegemonic voice and its power relations also serve as a strong, powerful, and influential force within them (Kizel, 2016a). Children from weak sectors rapidly recognizing their position in relation to the people surrounding them and the hegemonic voice/narrative, they tend to mute their inner voice—i.e., their background—on the suspicion that it is illegitimate or perhaps even forbidden, asking inauthentic questions in order not to betray their Otherness (the state of being other or different). Burying their interests—all the things they would like to bring to the discourse and the community—their distinctive identities and voices are blurred and subjected to a form of internal oppression or even colonization (Fanon 1967).

Comprised of diverse identities and narratives, all COIs are in fact characterized by open and covert power games. The self-liberated facilitator must thus recognize the network of personal narratives that represent identities. The narrative that members bring with them contains two intertwined dimensions—personal memory and collective memory. People order their reality in line with the story they tell themselves, also being influenced by what those others tell about themselves. Narratives/identities thus perpetually interact—impacting, exerting power over, and changing one another (Foucault, 1980).

On the level of personal memory, narrative enables the construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of identity. Through narrative, individuals either come to terms with human suffering (creating an environment of trust) or sink under the weight of protracted pain (leading to bitterness, lack of trust, and a sense of deprivation). On the level of collective memory, narrative serves cultural and national endeavors, functioning for the most part as a meta-narrative (Lyotard, 1984).

A central component of discourse, narrative wields a large measure of power that derives from what I refer to as a "narrative network" (Kizel, 2014). As in the

boxing ring, narratives fight over memory resources, historical truths, and the allocation of means, struggling primarily against attempts to stifle and gag them by rival narratives.

While narrative is a source of esteem, it is also subject to manipulation, reproduction, and constant refashioning. It thus constitutes one of the key tools in the shaping of (individual and collective) identity. In many ways, narratives form our way of viewing the world through concave or convex lenses, offering micro and macro perspectives (Sarbin, 1986; Riessman, 1993; Solis, 2004).

When the conditions for the interaction between the self-liberated facilitator and the COI exist—namely, that the latter welcomes all identities and narratives—the next stage can be introduced. Some people will be wary of such a mixture of identities, regarding COIs as fertile ground for conflict and clashes, intimidating vulnerable and sensitive students and allowing assertive ones to dominate and dictate the agenda.

Grounded in a sense of trust and legitimacy, multi-narratival dialogue makes the individual a subject and creates a collective space that incorporates self and other, with all their differences:

> What is essential is the familiar experience of a narratability of the self, which, not by chance, we always perceive in the other, even when we do not know their story at all. In other words, in personal experience, the narratable self is at once the transcendental subject and the elusive object of all the autobiographical exercises of memory … It is enough to say that each one of us lives him or herself as his/her own story, without being able to distinguish the I who narrates it from the self who is narrated. We are thus left with a kind of circular memory, which simply appears, in perfect and total familiarity. This is why we have defined the narratable self as something familiar." (Cavarero, 2000: 34 [original italics])

P4wC and multi-narrative environments enable those who engage in them—facilitators and students—to tolerate multiple perspectives. Shifting the focus away from the search for an all-encompassing meta-narrative towards a liquid reality marked by open-endedness, it values questions over answers and feelings of uncertainty and contingency over comfort.

The reciprocal relations between P4wC and narrative theory can be presented via three key concepts that link the two fields: perspectival multiplicity, multiple identities, and the legitimization of difference (Kizel, 2013). Multi-narrative

environments presume a plethora of identities, assuming that knowledge is composed of narratives endlessly created by a process of social interaction in which the richness of particularity is acknowledged—this in turn giving rise to new emergent possibilities for individuals and the group alike. This circumstance highlights multiplicity and variety as fundamentals of human existence, aligning with Lyotard's (1984) claim that human knowledge is no longer subject to meta-narratives that represent monolithic universal outlooks—the knowing subject who constructs his or her knowledge upon previous information and experience as a time- and space-dependent observing being.

According to this perspective, knowledge is a chain of narratival processes to which new materials are constantly being attached from an ever-changing cultural world, identities and knowledge being perpetually formed and accumulated via the contingent joining together of stories. Narratives thus serve as both the starting point and the teleological terminating point. This identity pool enables the individual and collective alike to construct identity freely, unrestricted by external forces. As Henry Louis Gates observes,

> People arrive at an understanding of themselves and the world through narratives—narratives purveyed by school teachers, newscasters, "authorities," and all the other authors of our common sense. Counter-narratives are, in turn, the means by which groups contest that dominant reality and the framework of assumptions that supports it. (1995: 57)

the facilitator as enabler of identities

Facilitators who seek to serve as enablers should recognize the potential this mix of identities and narratives embodies—for action as well as encounter and acquaintance. When discussed, identity diversity in the community can be named rather than passed over in silence. I propose that it be called "enabling"—on route to "attentiveness." Herein, the facilitator must take care not to blur or ignore the array of identities in the COI, whether broad or narrow, not only being aware of them all but also allowing the participants to express them.

No need exists for engaging in a superficial, artificial presentation of each one. All that is required is to enable the members of the group to ask openly, from within

their own identity perspective, "about themselves" in the sense of "their full selfhood," uncensored. The facilitator can do this by beginning the discussion with a statement like: "Everyone brings his or her whole self here—home, community, background, religion, gender—and we respect all, even regarding it as an important contribution to the open discourse between us." This may be followed with sentence such as: "We don't leave parts of ourselves outside this room. We enter the community as we are—whole, full individuals with all the varied aspects of our identity." This allows walls to be broken down and legitimizes the plurality of identity—in particular that within the COI.

P4wC enhances this richness by paying attention to child cognitive development within the discourse community. Teachers trained in P4wC possess the skills necessary to enable children with different social identities to feel sufficiently secure as to be able to express themselves independently and democratically rather than being forced to comply with any meta-narrative. P4wC thus offers an enriching and accepting environment that supports identity development through the construction and sharing of identity.

The COI facilitator and community should seek a space that breaks walls down, promotes plurality, and champions the integration of thought and action. Enabling a philosophical activism based on sensitivity, it should serve as a place stimulating change. As Freire (1970) notes, changing the world is not the responsibility of the individual but the right of every person, whoever they might be. Human encounter within the COI must begin from a place in which each participant feels safe and welcome in his or her identity(ies), not needing to hide parts of him or herself or leave them outside the classroom.

What, then, is the difference between identity discourse and COIs that encourage and enhance self-expression? Identity discourse allows each person to express him or herself without it being questioned, bringing it to "trade" in a "free market" setting, as it were, by setting up his or her own "identity stall." While the outcome is colorful and pluralistic, on occasion it can also create cultural ghettos. With their open and explicit identity pools, COIs enable questions containing identity to be asked. In other words, an individual might declare: "As a Palestinian, I want to say

that the issue that comes to my mind when I see this picture is … But I can understand that as an Israeli you see something else." As Taylor (1989) remarks, personal identity can only develop in conjunction with other identities, authentic identity not being achievable on one's own.

Taylor (1989) applies the concept of dialogical recognition to personal and collective identity alike. COI participants do not hide their self-identities when questions are asked. Allowing themselves to address issues from multiple perspectives and employing critical thinking, they can shift between "identity chairs" rather than being fixed to one or becoming mired in a conceptual or identity ghetto.

Creating conditions for dialogue, following Freire (1970) the enabling facilitator should adopt a loving and humble attitude in this stage, asking him or herself: "How can I enter into a dialogue if I constantly treat others in a condescending fashion without even being aware of doing so?" This humility is a prerequisite for respecting identity within the group. The facilitator must eschew the national, cultural, religious, and gender arrogance from which he or she may suffer, unwittingly expressed in his or her physical behavior, gestures, or comments.

According to Freire (1970), dialogue also demands a strong faith in a person—in his or her ability to create and recreate and destiny to be more human. The latter is not the exclusive right of an elite but the birthright of every individual. The dialogical pedagogue thus believes in the other before he or she even meets him or her face to face.

Does this diminish the facilitator in any way? Does it privilege the students in the COI? In my humble opinion, the answer is no. Not being condescending or pulling rank places all the participants on an equal footing. Rather than artificial, this egalitarianism constitutes a balance of power that encourages mutual trust, enabling the COI members to form close ties as they act together to change the world.

Although COI facilitators frequently declare their commitment to others and themselves—to lead lovingly, humbly, respectfully, and dialogically—their actions often belie their words. In particular, working with those younger than themselves can create a strong sense of responsibility and need to protect the child against him or

herself, his or her world, or the adult realm. Here, condescension can naturally creep in in the guise of responsibility (Kizel, 2016c).

Adults translates this task into terms of helping the child, giving aid, protection and defense. This attitude interferes with enabling dialogue, identity expression, and the communication of childhood and the child-like state of philosophizing. Children are not meant to be artificially protected. The safe space the self-liberating—and in particular the enabling—facilitator creates is intended to foster a secure rather than custodial atmosphere. As a "responsible adult," as it were, such a facilitator acts in a colonial fashion towards the child because, despite his or her good intentions, he or she thinks she knows what is best—right or wrong—for his or her young charge: how he or she should behave or think. In this sense, he or she draws on age, experience, and maturity to pull rank.

the facilitator as enabler of epistemic justice

I suggest that situations in which children cannot express their identity and narrative form what Murris (2013: 245) calls cases of "structural epistemic injustice." This essentializes and normalizes discourses about children, fostering deafness towards their unique voices. Following Fricker (2007), Murris argues that

> Teachers do not believe a child, because it is a child who is speaking, with typical responses such as: s/he is not telling the truth, or is immature, or at the other (sentimental) end of the scale: endearment: smiling, laughing, or expressions such as "oh, how sweet." Credibility deficit is related to age, in that being a particular age has significant impact on how much credibility a hearer affords a speaker, and when and how s/he is silenced systematically. (2013: 248)

Murris also elaborates on Fricker's definition of hermeneutical injustice as "having some significant area of one's social experience obscured from collective understanding owing to a structural identity prejudice in the collective hermeneutical resource" (2007: 155):

> […] power relations and structural prejudice undermine [the] child's faith in their own ability to make sense of the world and constrain their ability to understand their own experiences. Children's situated lived experiences of learning, their friends, family or community are irrelevant to the "real" work in class. As a result, [the] child will lose

confidence in her general intellectual abilities, to such extent that she is genuinely hindered in her educational development. (2013: 248)

Enabling facilitators should refrain from attempting to act as "saviors" à la revolutionary leaders (Freire, 1970). Failing their charges when they do so, they must rather learn and acquaint themselves with reality together with their students in order to come to understand the ways in which the latter perceive themselves and their world. Borrowing this idea, I suggest that facilitators should abandon such pretensions and focus on enabling identity, thereby allowing the COI to develop naturally as per the literature in the field of P4wC over the past decades.

Enabling facilitators should also seek to avoid what Freire calls "oppression"—anti-dialogical behavior in the framework of which those who espouse this approach are committed to overwhelming the Other with all the means at their disposal. As Freire (1970) comments, even the subtlest activity—such as paternalism—can be repressive.

As I have outlined the task above, enabling facilitators should thus turn their backs on "saving" and "rescuing" COI participants on the grounds that they know what is best for children in favor of engaging in a mutual learning process. This stage is particularly challenging for the facilitator, who frequently thinks—even if he or she does not acknowledge this fact, either to him or herself or to others—that he or she occupies higher ground than the student, due primarily to his or her greater age and experience. This "privileged status" in fact forms part of the conceptual prison outlined above—a state of certainty regarding knowledge, proper conduct, the social order, etc. Caught in such a dialectical trap, the facilitator oscillates between calling on his or her great experience and limiting its influence.

conclusion

An COI facilitator's ethical responsibility involves passing through two stages in order to achieve an authentic encounter. The first—self-liberation—demands sensitivity and awareness of the fact that he or she is frequently mired in a conceptual snare, and needs the courage to break out and seek a form of counter-education to

replace the normative system that has shaped him or her and bound him or her with the fetters of the pedagogy of fear.

In the second phase, the facilitator should work towards enabling multiple identities in the hybrid COI narrative network. Rather than protecting the students with the hidden goal of imposing a self-evident social order fuelled by the pedagogy of fear, he or she should carefully foster awareness and respect for all the participants' identities. Thereby, they can ask questions that reflect their cultural, national, gender, background, etc., and avoid sterilization, as it were. In this way, free philosophical inquiry can cultivate personal and collective authenticity.

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