PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S INQUISITIVENESS IN EARLY SCHOOL EDUCATION – INSPIRATION FOR DIALOGUE, ASKING QUESTIONS, AND CRITICAL THINKING

Filozoficzne aspekty rozwijania dziecięcej dociekliwości w edukacji wczesnoszkolnej – inspiracja do dialogu, stawiania pytań i krytycznego myślenia

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Abstract

The article presents issues related to the development of children's inquisitiveness in a philosophical context. Its essence and purpose is to emphasise the great importance of philosophy as a science that develops wisdom of thinking, independent and critical thinking, cognitive curiosity, introduces to dialogue, discussion and multidirectional communication, which opens the way to multi-intelligent cognition of the world. The period of early childhood education is presented as an open teaching-learning process, in which the teacher creates situations and opportunities to pose varied and variable questions, reasoning, logical thinking, problem-solving, exploratory and searching independence, active action. Student acquires a variety of skills, changes the attitude under the influence of experience, performs tasks, derives reflection from them, critically summarising what has happened, draws conclusions from the analysis, implementing the results of actions, changing the specific understanding of the world and behaviour. Crucial are deliberate and insightful observations, and educational experiments, emphasising creative learning, exercises, tasks, images, multi-faceted activities, and the creation of especially difficult questions by students and the search for answers.

Keywords: children's philosophizing, early childhood education, inquisitiveness, communication, dialogue, questions, critical thinking.

Streszczenie

Artykuł prezentuje problematykę związaną z kształceniem dziecięcej dociekliwości w kontekście filozoficznym. Jego istotę i cel stanowi podkreślenie ogromnego znaczenia filozofii jako nauki rozwijającej mądrość myślenia, samodzielne i krytyczne myślenie, ciekawość poznawczą, wprowadzającej do dialogu, dyskusji i wielokierunkowej komunikacji, otwierającej drogę do wielointeligentnego poznania świata przez jednostkę. Okres edukacji wczesnoszkolnej zaprezentowano jako otwarty proces nauczania – uczenia się, w którym nauczyciel tworzy sytuacje i okazje do stawiania zróżnicowanych i zmiennych pytań, rozumowania, logicznego myślenia, rozwiązywania problemów, samodzielności odkrywczo-poszukującej, aktywnego działania. Uczeń nabywa różnorodnych umiejętności, zmienia swoją postawę pod wpływem doświadczenia, wykonuje zadania, wywodzi z nich refleksję, podsumowując krytycznie, co zaszło, wyciąga wnioski z analizy, wcielając w życie wyniki działań, zmieniając swoiste rozumienie świata i zachowań. Kluczowe są celowe i wnikliwe obserwacje oraz edukacyjne eksperymenty, akcentujące twórcze uczenie się, ćwiczenia, zadania, obrazy, wielostronną działalność oraz tworzenie trudnych pytań przez uczniów i poszukiwanie na nich odpowiedzi.

Słowa kluczowe: dziecięce filozofowanie, edukacja wczesnoszkolna, dociekliwość, komunikacja, dialog, pytania, krytyczne myślenie.

Introduction

At first glance, the juxtaposition of the words that make up the title of these reflections seems strange, because in general philosophy is identified with a difficult scientific field available to a small group of educated thinkers, and not for children. Where did the idea for the philosophy of childhood come from? Why is it so important in the early years of childhood? Is it even possible that children engage in philosophy? What role do communication, dialogue, inquisitiveness, questioning and problem-solving play in their development? I will try to consider this type of doubt. I think that the starting point for my interdisciplinary research should be the concept of philosophy itself as a science, extremely important in our lives, teaching critical thinking from an early age. Philosophy is a science 'which was born in a distant historical era, and moreover, throughout history, it underwent various transformations and modifications, they complicated its image, making it diverse and rich' (Kasprzyk, Węgrzecki, 1977, pp.15–17; Walczak, 2017, p. 4). It grew out of the circle of everyday human affairs, of a human experiences and observations. The reality itself, the secrets of which people slowly and laboriously penetrate, made him reflect on what surrounds him. It was only with the passage of time that human thought became abstract, and a professional philosophical language was developed, using terminology, sometimes very hermetic and difficult, which was not commonly understood. Hence, the suspicion arose that all philosophy was a highly speculative science, standing outside the limits of everyday human affairs. In my opinion, this kind of belief is not always right, it can only refer to some forms of philosophizing, while there are a number of philosophical issues that we can deal with together with children, remembering that it is philosophy that tries to build a general concept of the world, man and his cognition. Its special dimension should be noticed from an early age, starting from kindergarten.

Philosophy is primarily cognitive intellectual activity, it is a specific nature of reasoning, which, in turn, runs between two poles: question and answer, and consists in solving problems. For this cause, reasoning is called rational or interrogative thinking and is associated with creative thinking. Questions and problems are the impetus for philosophizing. I agree with the vision presented by A. Pobojewska (2011, pp. 116–117) that philosophizing meets the basic requirements for scientific thinking. It has the nature of rational reasoning, it is carried out using the rigors of logic, with the use of adequate procedures of criticism and checking. Important activities include the formulation of problem questions by the teacher and the search for answers by the youngest. The specificity of philosophizing consists of self-reflexivity at various levels of abstraction (critical thinking), various assumptions, holistic, theoretical, dialogical and historicity. The overarching goal of education, which is the comprehensive development of a child, achieved thanks to the harmony between teaching, developing skills and upbringing, fits in with this philosophy. Education is then not understood as filling the pupil's mind with empty knowledge, but as satisfying cognitive curiosity, introducing people to intellectual and moral independence, which allow them to understand the world and take justified actions. J. S. Bruner paid special attention to the abstract meaning of the philosophy of knowledge in the classroom and to understanding and explaining other minds. In his reflections, he posed the question: How do young children learn to interpret the thoughts, feelings and intentions of others, what others mean by what they say? Understanding other minds, according to this eminent psychologist, is an interpretative process. In turn, he treated explanation and understanding as two different styles of giving meaning. He attached an enormous role to the idea of reflection as comprehending meaning and learning with understanding. According to J. S. Bruner (2006, p. 128), child gradually moves from understanding the meaning to the 'meta' level, returning to what he has previously learned through expressing and exposing works, through thinking about his own thinking. It is a way of going beyond the information provided, openness of interpretation, understanding the text and relating problems to the Past – Present and Possible. Interpreting a text and interpreting other minds is 'being in the world' and understanding yourself in the perspective of the world of the text. The idea of reflection is the perception of the subject's mind as a thinking subject that undertakes an intersubjective exchange focused on searching for meaning and understanding. This understanding is achieved through direct and indirect narration.

Openness and sense of philosophizing with a child

J. Gaarder (1995, pp. 28–31) spoke very clearly about the relationship between philosophy and childhood, claiming that 'the only thing we need to become good philosophers is the ability to be surprised at the world. All young children have this ability'. As we grow up, we get used to the world as such, we lose the ability to wonder at it. Then

we lose something important, which philosophers try to stimulate to life again, because somewhere deep within ourselves there is something that tells us that life is a great mystery. For children, the world and everything that happens in it is something new that raises surprise. The philosopher also does not really get used to the world, which remains something mysterious for him. It can be said that he maintains the sensitivity and openness of the child throughout his life, so it makes sense to philosophise with children and learn from them a philosophical view of the world. The German scholar E. Martens (2015, p. 2) argued that 'Children are certainly capable of philosophizing. Hence, it does not follow at all that children are genuine philosophers, that they spontaneously undertake thorough, systematic reflection. Rather, it can be assumed that among them, step by step, the process of joint philosophical reflection can be carried out and that participation in such a process is an extremely instructive experience for them'. In his opinion, for this to happen, two conditions must be met: when philosophizing with children, on the one hand, one cannot delve into narrow, hermetic philosophical concepts. On the other hand, the concepts of philosophy should not be shallow, simplified and trivialised. The whole project also involves giving up some dark, questionable sources. Finally, it implies saying goodbye to naive, romantic illusions about what childhood is or should be. Due to the child's specificity and unpredictability, strongly contrasting with rationalism and self-control in the adult world, children were usually placed in line with poets. They have always aroused fears and concerns for adults – and, at the same time, hopes for a happier and safer life. The romantic vision of childhood contrasts strongly with Enlightenment rationalism. This vision has regained its appeal nowadays when rationalism finds itself in a deep crisis. It was resurrected by M. Ende in 'Momo' and 'The Never-ending Story', and it was also finally revived by the originators of an authentically childish philosophy, who treated the youngest like the 'noble savages' of Jan Jakub Rousseau and saw in them the embodiment of innocent (yet) wisdom. Today, no one is looking for an oasis of innocence in some other wonderful world. We are looking for it in the human interior, deep below the surface of the scientific and technical rationalism on which European civilisation is built. Tendencies to retreat and flee from this rationalism have intensified so much that home-grown psychology, meditation, fashion for orientalism, etc. are flourishing. These are also the sources of the new 'childhood utopia', which is to serve as another substitute solution. It is worth noting here that some adults are inclined to treat 'childish philosophy' as a promise to alleviate the longings for their own childhood. Contrary to these illusions, philosophizing with children presupposes that they are able to navigate in the world of thoughts and that they need orientation in this world precisely because they are not fully mentally formed and did not come from a paradise lost with the mission of saving us, adults. On the contrary, children are reliant on the help of adults, and vice versa: adults have to face the challenge of philosophizing children. Above all, adults have to break stereotypes in their heads and

reorient their thinking: philosophical children can help them considerably (Kowalska, 2014). Wishing to look for new ways of thinking, us, adults cannot, however, apply any accidental, actual norms to children's reflections just because these norms exist in the world of 'adults'. What is needed is a measure set by Socrates, and expressed above all in the Kantian categorical imperative, formulated in the Enlightenment. According to this measure, basically everyone is entitled to autonomy and rationality: everyone – that is, also children. A child's ability to reason not only can but should be nurtured and developed. It should be improved using appropriately selected philosophical methods of education. Meanwhile, the idea that children are or can be philosophers is also associated with adopting a specific philosophical attitude and asking specific questions. Adults and children can get together by being open-minded and asking fundamental questions. The essence of philosophy includes a sceptical attitude towards the alleged self-obviousness (Walczak, 2017, pp. 3–15). Philosophy is not naive in so far as it scrupulously examines and examines these self-evidence. At the same time, to the extent that, against all signs in heaven and earth, it insists on such ideas as truth, justice or humanity, philosophy in its content and attitude seems naïve. According to E. Martens (Martens, 2015) philosophizing with children would assume a common recall of that original, only sensed but already endangered knowledge. This brings to mind the Socratic anamnesis, recalling the 'idea' and especially the 'idea of good' in tedious, long-term conceptual and argumentative work. E. Martens does not say a word about 'something we have seen very clearly before'. Not all children are philosophers: also, all philosophers are children. The academic philosophy is committed 'with childish earnestness' to the defence of 'childish themes such as freedom and dignity' against the sophistic attacks of Skinner-style behaviourists. It tries to 'institutionalize naivety' (ibidem, p. 4) again, using the three-stage scheme of unity, separation – alienation) and return – reconciliation.

Analysing the variety of interpretations of the semantic field of the concept of philosophy, I made an attempt to present its aspects: exoteric and enlightenment; the first – which addresses the expectations regarding the ability (philosophizing) from outside (beyond its limits), the second – refers to the philosophizing subject, his ability to (auto) reflect and (auto) change. According to M. Szczepska-Pustkowska (2009, pp. 553–554), the accents arranged in such a way gain great importance in terms of shaping skills and attitudes rather than acquiring knowledge. We can then call philosophy the art of thinking or philosophizing in the context of skills and subjects. Consequently, philosophizing with children and philosophy for children can be considered as one of the educational alternatives in early childhood education and relate to developing critical and creative thinking. Childish dealing with philosophy, as the author continues, should be understood as a natural inclination to ask (philosophical) questions resulting from being surprised at the world and as philosophizing within an investigating community, such as a school class. Not everyone philosophizes

in the same way. The differences relate to the category of professional philosophizing (being rooted in the thinking of other philosophers, accepting reality as the object of reflection and reflecting on it) and unprofessional (thinking unconscious of its philosophical tradition and properties. in the space of unprofessional philosophizing.

P. Sloterdijk (2008) opposes the cynical world of adults with naive, childish philosophical questions: 'in the face of hard facts', the task of philosophy is to ask childish questions like: Why can't people put up with each other? What prompts them to separate themselves from each other and live like atoms? A philosopher is a man who takes his hardened, comfortable, cynical neighbour aside and explains to him in two or three sentences why this is so and why it cannot be changed with good intentions. The philosopher should give a chance to the child who lives in him, 'who does not understand it all yet'. Perhaps the one who 'does not understand yet, can ask the most appropriate questions' (Sloterdijk, 2008, p. 253). M. Horkheimer (1970) in turn, in one of his later interviews, speaks with extreme resignation and pessimism about the fact that in a world of boundless 'boredom', 'philosophy, this childish human matter' will end inevitably (Horkheimer, 1970, p. 89). Depending on the culture and time, each life path begins with something completely specific, runs along its own path and is marked by personal experiences. However, with all these differences, it is children who are new to this world who experience the need for orientation over and over again. They show the same trust invariably: primal, overwhelming, and enduring. They all believe in asking and looking for answers. Thanks to this, they are a few steps ahead of Socrates' interlocutors, known to us from Platonic dialogues. They do not pride themselves on the fact that everything is already well known to them, they do not resign arrogantly and haughtily from the will to know. 'They know they know nothing' and are ready to ask further. Children 'perceive' not only their ignorance and will to know, but also something three: they sense or suspect that there are answers and that adults are a little better aware of them than they are. Ignorance, the will to know, and cognitive trust – these are the three common hallmarks of children's and adult philosophies. What we expect answers and whether our thoughts and actions are guided by 'ideas', 'archetypal' human experiences or perhaps fairy tales and utopias, belongs to another of the great questions that draw the horizon of philosophy from Socrates and Plato to C. G. Jung and E. Bloch.

The stage of early education is a 'crystal' period of introducing students from grades 1–3 to the world of philosophy, thanks to which they satisfy their specific cognitive inquisitiveness, engage in philosophical thinking, develop and derive satisfaction from it in many ways. It originates from the phenomenon of wonder and doubt. According to M. Lipman, A. M. Sharp, S. Oscanyan (1997, p. 47), children are surprised, and their surprise takes the form of an inquisitive question, and from that moment they start thinking philosophically, looking for an answer. The questions they pose, as E. Martens (1996, p. 44) claims, expressing their curiosity in learning about reality, correspond to the questions posed for centuries by eminent philosophers.

The philosophy of childhood is therefore a multiplicity, variety and richness of discourses, it tries to capture the specific nature of empirical research and analysis, looks for philosophical tropes, being a field of scientific inquiry. The questions which are focused on philosophy of childhood relate to various theories of childhood, development (cognitivism, moral aspects), the essence of childhood, interpret the attitude of parents towards childhood and children themselves, the way of thinking and creating reality

Communication, dialogue and children's questions

Modern school is designed to prepare students in grades 1–3 to actively receive information, to conduct a constructive dialogue, develop scientific thinking, give a chance to reach an agreement, favours showing their real views, aspirations and teach effective resolution of doubts as well as didactic and educational problems. At this point, I would like to draw attention to two-way or multi-directional communication, which consists in psychological contact with the class and its individual students. Information, messages, opinions should not only be conveyed, but also subjected to triggering a cognitive conflict and discussion against the background of the entire group. The teacher encourages mutual communication, correcting possible mistakes, explaining incomprehensible phrases. Mutual communication (Śnieżyński, 2008) between students leads to an exchange of thoughts and positive intellectual disputes. It enables sharing observations and remarks not only with the educator, but also with peers. The method of multi-directional communication releases intellectual potential, prevents stage fright, reduces shyness, and reduces the role of the teacher to creative inspiration, searching and expressing well-thought-out opinions. Mutual partner communication not only shapes positive interpersonal relations and a harmonious relationship with each other, but also determines behaviour, developing a positive atmosphere of confronting messages. When it comes to one-way communication, it does not involve mutual communication, and is limited to one-way transmission of information. Does not reckon with the other person, imposes views, applies prohibitions and orders, decides when to start and end the conversation and to terminate it J. Karbowniczek, A. Klim-Klimaszewska (2016). In this case, students become only passive recipients of information. The following features are important in acquiring communication skills by students of younger classes and interpersonal relations:

- openness, a direct, open way to convey your own thoughts, getting to know what you are thinking about,
- kindness, acceptance, interest in the welfare of others, kindness, friendly disposition, expressing one's attitude towards others,
- empathy – the ability to understand others, empathise with their situation, their emotions, feelings, the ability to see the world through the eyes of others,

- directness – self-confidence, expressing judgments about people and their actions, straight 'in the eye' here and now,
- authenticity – acting in accordance with your own system of values, being 'yourself' in every situation, the reality and truthfulness of actions,
- specificity – objectivity in taking goals and performing tasks, objectivity of actions, transparency and precision of their implementation,
- initiative – undertaking tasks, activities, clarity and quality of their execution, establishing contact with others, problem solving, compliance, motivation, creativity,
- confrontation – comparison with others, juxtaposition, 'being' in front of 'someone', 'something',
- self-knowledge – getting to know oneself, observation and analysis of one's own behaviour and the inner world of thoughts and feelings,
- self-esteem – a variable phenomenon, self-esteem, attitude towards oneself, towards one's own abilities and socially valuable features.

The listed features affect the intellectual activity of individuals, facilitating efficient and effective communication, such as:

- presenting your own opinion,
- argumentation and defence,
- negotiation and compromise,
- problems solving,
- making contacts with others.

If communication with students has been established, and as a result also interpersonal relations between the teacher and the student, then the next step, representing the highest level of communication with students, is introducing to the educational dialogue.

Dialogue is a mutual transfer of thoughts of at least two people, in which the roles of the sender and recipient are interchangeable with full respect for the right to subjectivity of their participants, the right to their own views, in order to get to know each other and understand each other (Śnieżyński, 2008, p. 94). Interpersonal contact between the teacher and the student and peers is a condition for dialogue. In the course of such a dialogue meeting, attitudes, feelings, views, needs and aspirations are confronted. The purpose of the dialogue may be to obtain information and its participants to work out a common position on disputes. An example of an educational dialogue are the mutual interactions between the teacher and the student in the course of teaching. The content of this dialogue may be factually consistent information, related to elementary particles of knowledge, divergent information, causing mutually contradictory attitudes of partners, convinced of the possibility of solving the problem. It can also be knowledge understood as thought in motion, in which the problematic comes

to the fore (Śnieżyński, 2008, p. 27). Pre-school child (4–5 years old) enters the 'question age, and his/her quantitative and qualitative development of these questions is situated in the space of the emerging 'dialogic speech'. Taking various situational actions, he engages his/her partners to cooperate. Then it creates a powerful factor of dialogue – the motive of speaking together, talking, discouraging. Children's dialogical speech, according to M. Szczepska-Pustkowska (2009, p. 559), often goes beyond the sphere of action. The subject of the conversation changes from situational to exploratory, and within its limits we find what interests the child, what absorbs them, ponders them, and what they cannot find answers to. As a result, he asks adults questions, whole series and strings, trying to explore the problem they are interested in with great inquisitiveness. The dialogical nature of philosophizing is much more than a typical free conversation, it is building meanings together by peers, understanding the world, and making sense of each other.

Constructive dialogue between peers opens up an authentic space of a philosophical inquiry community, shaped on the basis of the mutual relations that create it. More than the 'I' of a specific group member – the most popular and accepted person or his talents and talents – comes the joint effort of all those who seek and strive for a community solution (Łagodzka, 2014). Group participants become closer, creative, open to innovative ideas and alternative solutions. The prospect of fraternal teamwork is emerging, in which everyone has a unique contribution. An inquiring community is based on an open and spontaneous questioning and dialogical attitude. Children support each other, develop in dialogue, in the horizon of values, circle around these values and give them to each other. They enter into a discourse 'with the other' – awakening the possibility of discovering themselves and others. They become the creators of their own future. For them, the world is a field of endless possibilities. Their philosophical potential for multi-intelligent cognition of reality is also visible. Thinking becomes the lever of creativity and its logic becomes the guardian of thoughts. The teacher, in turn, co-creates this community and, as E. Filipiak rightly claims (2011), joins the line of action, tries to enter the student's world, enrich and develop with it what is new, create seeds for future knowledge and future skills, 'it helps children in inquiry – participates in the work of the community by asking questions that support their thinking and communication'. Cares for partners' discursive communication. It creates a favourable atmosphere for the formulation of original concepts and for building educational microsystems. The basis of an inquiry community in cooperative groups is harmonious teamwork and constructive thought-communication relations. The role of the teacher in the inquiry community is to care for the quality of conversations between children. Members of peer groups learn to draw from relationships different points of view, ways of thinking as well as learn about the experiences of others, share their own experiences. Any summary of the joint deliberations is not entirely relevant, it is open to modification, inquiry and continuation.

The school's task is therefore to create conditions for the pupil to ask questions and to teach the art that is to serve his development and further education. Talking and asking questions becomes an opportunity to teach democracy, so the school should be a place to encourage students to develop interrogative thinking. In didactic activity, the question is the beginning of wisdom, and in educational activity the beginning of people's understanding. Dialogue is a way of full, personal meeting of the entities of the educational process. School activities should develop students' exploratory passions, showing them the way to the truth, motivating them to take up problems about the contemporary world, country or region, on ethical and axiological topics. It is the students' questions that demonstrate their interest in educational areas and express their critical thinking. Good questions are questions that bridge between teaching and learning. This bridge in language is, according to J. Piaget, 'cognitive conflict', J. Bruner 'scaffolding', and R. Kwaśnica ,generative or key questions'. Instead of questions: whether? who? what? when? where? we formulate open-ended questions that stimulate our own thinking and explore a problem such as: discuss, present, what do you think about it? What's your opinion? What do you think? How do you know about it etc. The student asks, he wants to find out.

Effective questioning requires the following conditions:
- correct formulation and diligence of diction,
- purpose,
- unambiguity,
- conciseness,
- clear addressing of questions to students,
- adjusting the questions to the intellectual level of students,
- avoiding questions of resolution, and taking into account complement questions,
- avoiding excess of questions.

The quality of the student's answer often depends on the way the teacher asks the question (Dudzikowa, 1993; Śnieżyński, 2013, pp. 14–15). Dialogue is about mutual openness, honesty, closeness and acceptance of the other person. M. Sawicki (1996, p. 37) believes that the dialogue between the teacher, the student and peers can take the form of artistic expression on the part of the student: reciting poetry, playing stage roles, making music, singing, art, etc. He must assume absolute honesty between the partners. The educator and the pupil are to 'express themselves, not a program or a textbook'. R. Kwaśnica (2003, p. 14) draws attention to the feature of dialogue, which is people's respect for differences of opinion and views that may be shared by the people who talk to each other. In the author's opinion, dialogue is a hermeneutic conversation that enables understanding differences, a conversation that searches for sources of experimental meaning. Each dialogue grows out of respect for the difference, out of interest in otherness and readiness to reflect on it. In turn, Fr. J. Tarnowski

(1984) claims that an individual is a dialogical being, his whole life is dialogical by nature. To live in a family, kindergarten, school, in the modern world means to participate in dialogue, ask – listen – answer.

The school should prepare students for dialogue by:

– learning the culture of conversation,
– triggering faith in finding answers to bothering problems,
– asking questions,
– mutual partnership, the ability to understand and define educational situations,
– responsibility for words,
– effectiveness of educational behaviour – verbal and non-verbal,
– the realisation of feedback between the teacher and the student (cognition of the personality),
– the ability to establish contact with the student,
– proper reception and interpretation of educational messages,
– understanding the dialogical nature of the teacher-student relationship,
– the ability to shape the linguistic sensitivity of pupils,
– exposing the function of language as a communication tool,
– creating social bonds in the team.

An important element in early childhood education is the teacher's appropriate attitude towards students, especially his or hers interpretative and communication skills, which are expressed in the ability to understand and define educational situations and the effectiveness of communication behaviours, both verbal and non-verbal. They concern:

– possessing knowledge of various types of communication, including interpersonal, and the ability to use it for educational purposes,
– acquiring the ability to establish and maintain contact with the student,
– understanding the dialogical nature of the teacher-student relationship,
– improving the correctness, legibility and ethics of one's own linguistic behaviour, e.g. the ability to shape the linguistic sensitivity of students, revealing the function of language as a tool of thinking.

S. Dylak (2013, p. 169) after D. Zdybel (2016, p. 57) proposes writing as a form of dialogue with oneself, but a dialogue taking an externalized form, which allows the thought to be crystallized, to give it an observable, tangible form, to look at this form, clarify it, spot potential gaps or internal contradictions, re-arrange. J. S. Bruner (2006, p. 43) describes this process as 'externalization' – externalization gives a record of our mental efforts, something that remains 'outside of us' than 'in memory'. This frees us to some extent from the always difficult task of thinking about our own thoughts, often leading to the same result. It embodies our thoughts and intentions in a form that is more accessible to reflection. In this way, the thought process and its product interchange,

reinforcing, complementing and specifying each other. However, externalization under-stood in this way, involves not only writing down thoughts in the form of reflection on one's own practice, but also written commenting and interpreting pedagogical writings – which more closely resembles a dialogical form of polemics with the author. Dialogue as a desirable form of epistemological reflection is also emphasized by other authors, who see it as an opportunity to confront one's theories with someone else's point of view, collide them with a different perspective, and, as a result, clarify, refine or re-interpret them. The point is, as R. Kwaśnica (2003) suggests, to ask such questions that will help 'free oneself from the sense of obviousness', allow 'experiencing genuine un-certainty, which does not give you peace and prompts you to look for your own an-swers'. Questions which, by 'putting into brackets' the existing knowledge, make us reflect critically on its rationality, thus opening up space for thinking. As K. Forsythe rightly notices, modern teachers are not owners or transmitters of knowledge – 'they are and should be perceived as architects of knowledge' (Dylak, 2013, p. 170). The architect of knowledge is a 'strategic designer who opens new forms of work and learning space by developing new infrastructures for human interactions' – designs and develops an educational space in which there is a chance for meaningful communication. In order to become an architect consciously constructing the structures of the student's own knowledge and knowledge, one must not only be aware of the knowledge possessed, its validity and completeness, but also be able to confront this epistemological reflection with others, discuss and even question and rebuild its elements in if necessary (Zdybel, 2016, p. 58). Going back to the interpretation of the subject matter, it should be empha-sized that the reactions of adults to the idea of children's philosophizing are diverse. From scepticism and disbelief in children's possibilities of philosophical dialogue, to deep enthusiasm and appreciation for these types of educational ideas. The distrustful ones are not always convinced by the child's natural inquisitiveness, which is known to all, which is expressed in asking questions very often, often difficult and troublesome even for adults. Asking the questions, about what I wrote earlier is a cry for meaning. From an early age, through adolescence, adulthood and old age, a person faces many dilemmas. It would seem that the questions asked in particular development periods differ qualitatively (Kowalska, 2014, p. 3). The questions of an adult, e.g. about the meaning of existence, are placed on the same level as the child's about whether his hamster will go to heaven after death. One refers to the interviews of M. Kościelska in 'Faces of handicap', which indicate that people with intellectual disabilities often ask themselves questions such as for the purposefulness of human life. These are typically human problems, problems that hurt and to which each of us has a right.

Developing critical thinking

The originator of the idea of children's philosophy is the American children's philoso-pher, educator M. Lipman (1970) author of the program 'Philosophy for Children'.

The beginnings of its implementation in schools fall in the years 1969–1970. Currently, it is implemented all over the world, including Poland. As dialogue plays an essential role in the educational process, the curriculum focuses on a philosophical discussion (method of philosophical inquiry). It consists in a joint discussion of the participants by focusing on a problem selected by the group. There is no answer key here at the end of the 'methodology guide' or 'workbook', here each answer is good, accurate, right, provided that it is argued. The strength lies in the arguments and counter arguments, examples and counter examples, in the ability to logically refer to the words of the predecessors, in specifying one's thoughts, explaining and analysing concepts. Much emphasis is placed on the teacher-student relationship (Kennedy, Vangsieleghem, 2011; Monkiewicz--Cybulska, 2015). Everyone is a full participant of the dialogue, everyone can be wrong and make a mistake, everyone can change their mind or not change their mind. During philosophical dialogue and pragmatic activities, the teacher may find out whether a given concept is understood by the group similarly or completely different. The strength of this type of classes is, according to M. Kowalska (2014) a great opportunity for the teacher to get to know the students from a different side, perhaps unknown so far – developing their independence, openness and careful thinking. This program inspired the creation of its Polish version – 'Philosophical inquiries with children and youth' by B. Elwich, A. Łagodzka, B. Pytkowska-Kapulkin (1999). It was approved for school use in 1999 by the Ministry of National Education. The main goals of the program are to develop mental and linguistic skills, critical, logical and creative thinking, formulating independent and responsible judgments, practicing dialogue, asking questions and formulating answers, developing a sense of responsibility for your own cognition. Such classes begin with exercises that inspire dialogue. It can be children's literature, a scenario, film, show, it depends on the creativity of the teacher. The task of the students, however, is to ask questions that arose under the influence of the presented material. Out of the collected questions, students collectively choose the most important one and begin an inquiry. Critical thinking shows: how do we think about something? To teach critical thinking is to learn to ask when and for what? How to reason, when and by what methods? Reasoning is primarily the ability to think rationally, make sense, make conclusions, and prove. In the course of developing critical thinking, the student is able to analyse their experiences, make attempts to evaluate knowledge and ideas, present arguments, solve problems, discuss, negotiate, intelligently distinguish task situations, formulate and verify hypotheses. Student becomes a small realist, inquisitive researcher, his attitude to reality is clear and to the point. His fantasy has unlimited possibilities – he has no internal resistance; he fantasizes about everything Fisher and G. Czetwertyńska (2013). Critical thinking also includes specific attitudes, such as: the need to reason, the willingness to question, and the desire to discover the truth. A child gradually enters the world of intellectual, multi-intelligent curiosity. He learns reasoning by citing rational reasons, he also argues, waging a war of words, treating argument based on arguments as a challenge to reasoning rather than an invitation to a quarrel. Teacher should

penetrate deeply into the child's open mind. An open mind is the ability to question one's own concepts, a critical approach to present a different opinion, verification of evidence and decision making based on it, failure to be right on many issues. This type of openness increases children's value as the subject of the educational process. F. Zappa, a rock musician, believed that the mind is like a parachute, it does not work if it is not open. The child learns to express specific thoughts, views, evaluate judgments, provide evidence on which the statements or beliefs were based, and prove that different statements may be true. Thanks to the gradually acquired skills of developing critical thinking, one can learn the language of analysis, precisely, whether a child knows what it means: consistent, precise and meaningful. At school, in all educational areas in grades 1–3, teachers should systematically motivate questions by: asking themselves questions 'I wonder why?' by openness, demonstrating ignorance and doubts, searching for books, lexicons, encyclopaedias, articles that arouse curiosity, by creating different corners of interest, research corners, rooms of curiosities, places of silence, relaxation in classrooms. In addition, it is crucial to put the student to provocative, productive and open questions, to emphasise his independence – choice of questions, individuality of reporting, collecting materials useful for work, problem solving, the possibility of discovery – research, searching, giving the opportunity to explore, experience and experiment, and above all inquisitiveness. S. Szuman (1977) claimed that the emergence of questions is an expression of the mental awakening of a child. Free, spontaneous questions are an expression of those issues that are already sprouting in a child's mind, that are bothering him. The student's critical thinking in early education is manifested in various situations that activate his mental, didactic, scientific and educational activities, during which he recognises his feelings, questions the existing reality, considers various ways of acting and their causes, reflects on the consequences, compares opinions, ideas, tries to distinguish facts from opinions, justifies his ideas, checks facts. Above all, what is important here are changeable, differentiated situations that make it possible to discover something new, which causes a desire to learn and experience the world. These innovations include the analysis of events, phenomena, comparison, recalling old facts, drawing conclusions as well as the organisation of intriguing situations, teaching how to express specific thoughts, feelings, explanations, questions, assumptions, independence in solving the problem: introducing to searches, developing intellectual activities of the child, enriching his experiences by creating unknown situations: contrasting, constituting a further stage, continuation, comparison, specific detection, examination, etc. In such situations, students themselves should learn to respond to new circumstances, try to find a solution to the problem through trials and mistakes, exercise and be aware of 'what I know' and what 'I don't know yet', and therefore 'what I want to find'. Working with, for example, a picture story, discussing it, discovering cause-effect relationships presented in the pictures, they will search for these relationships in a new situation, watching the new series. In school practice, solving problems as tasks that require overcoming some practical--theoretical difficulties with the participation of a child's research activity is very valuable

from the cognitive side. Problem-based learning develops students' independent thinking, his logic and criticism. Position problem-solving in educating young children is to include them in multilateral teaching – learning. When students look for answers to problem questions, they feel curious and happy about a successful solution, which is similar to research. Attention is paid to develop thinking in the course of research, defining the child's research activities as mental activity during which new concepts and new operations are created. The main task of a teacher who uses a problem-solving strategy in his work is to design and arrange didactic situations in accordance with the curriculum. He must also be able to use for didactic purposes phenomena and events noticed or caused by the children themselves as a result of everyday life in a group, as well as phenomena that are 'bombarding' them from the outside (rain, storm, car whirring, dog barking etc.). An activated mind initially produces stereotypical, banal ideas, and then proceeds to create completely new and unusual thought combinations. Multi-intelligent activity is manifested in the students' tendency to learn, play and work without predicting the results, in artistic, physical, literary and musical expression. The basis of specific and pictorial thinking in early school age is situational thinking, enriching children's experiences and language development. The basic assumption of accurate education is therefore to support the cognitive development of a child by organising a stimulating educational environment: class, school and out of school. Another important element is supporting the child's education through teacher tutoring and peer tutoring. Peer tutoring is about supporting a lower-skilled learner by a higher-skilled learner. Working together and exploring together supports and enriches learning. In order to unleash creative activity in children, various methods and forms of work should be used in everyday work. The main method used in all forms of work is the organisation of multifaceted activities through independent experience, searching, tasks for children to perform, and exercises. Activating techniques and methods cannot be missing project methods, simulations, concept maps, situational/case method, observation, discussion, meta-plan, timeline, portfolio, laboratory method, pyramid of priorities, for and against, brainstorming, drama, board and computer games. The use of creative methods and techniques favours the deepening of the acquired knowledge, its efficiency and durability. Students are emotionally involved, active in the perceptual, motor, verbal and motivational spheres. Children's inquisitiveness is an opportunity to build a world of values, but also a way for parents and teachers to see how they develop their passions and interests. On the bookstore market, you can see many publications encouraging free, spontaneous inquiries by parents and teachers with children. They belong to them: 'But why? How to answer children's difficult questions' (Zoller, 2009), 'Our children are philosophers. How to talk to children about serious matters' (Fresse, 2008), book series 'With Socrates' (Bacchini, Marco, 2008), 'Philosophical tales. How to live on earth?' (Piguemal, 2015) and many more. Activities popularising philosophical education are also carried out by the 'Phronesis' Association for Philosophical Education.

Conclusion

From an early age, a child should be introduced to the world of philosophy and the secrets of philosophizing, shaping his inquisitiveness and creativity in critical thinking. Particularly important in this respect is the cultivation of philosophy by parents and teachers in everyday educational and didactic practice. Children should be taught to think reasonably and communicate, develop the ability to reason efficiently. Inquisitiveness in the methods of education and dealing with philosophy becomes a signpost for developing independence of thinking, acting, openness and inspiring for dialogue and multi-directional discussions on various interdisciplinary topics. We take philosophy as a science of intellectual wisdom integrally because its multidimensionality relates to epistemological, axiological, social, cultural, psychological, pedagogical and other contents. Cognitive openness, metacognition, philosophical dialogue, developing mental and linguistic skills, as well as learning to justify, explain, classify, infer, pose difficult questions that lead to searching and discovering the world of questions, educates the children's worldview and their specific beliefs, teaches criticism and ways of evaluating oneself and others. In the course of creative exercises and tasks that are activating the mind, students begin to make friends with philosophy in community and inquiry groups, getting to know its traditions, understanding and interpreting philosophical issues in their own way. They gradually come from infantilism and naive theories. The activated brain enters the world of logic, reflection, critical thinking, developing specific interests, cognitive abilities and passions. The little philosopher is fascinated by the world, its diversity and changeability, trying to find himself and his own way to the future in this complex modernity. Logical and critical thinking skills create the need for discussion, and the use of the method of philosophical dialogue, reflection, studying philosophical fairy tales from different cultures, games and activities, movies, on-line texts create individual and group inquisitiveness. The phenomenon of childish amazement, disputes, cognitive conflicts, provoking situations opens the possibility for logical argumentation of facts, looking for mutual relationships and various connections, for modifying and verifying views. Philosophical inquisitiveness is a message addressed to the early childhood education teacher, companion, moderator, trainer, caring about own and other's preferences, creating an inspiring environment and field for conducting an argument with students, based on developing activity and self-constructing and acquiring knowledge about the world. When looking for solutions, children activate their cognitive structures, cross the path from this wonder at the world and complicated, vague intuitions to formulating questions and presenting a multitude of beliefs, which they subject to specific analyses, interpreting the obtained results.

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