philosophy (and argumentation) for children:

some reflection for primary school

lucia scipione[1]
university of modena and reggio emilia, italy
orcid id: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3032-9416

abstract

the *Philosophy for Children* curriculum and other *Philosophy with Children* experiences all around the world have been active in promoting dialogical contexts in school with the aim of fostering higher-order thinking. Within a complex thinking model and a community of inquiry framework, Lipman (2003) upholds the idea that thinking does not consist merely in reasoning or logic itself, but is performed by different dimensions of thought – both intra- and inter-personal. The thinking space that might open in a philosophical discussion supports the exercise of reasoning in communities of inquiry, which, in turn, promotes cognitive, social and civic competence. Acknowledging the crucial role of the rational and social dimensions of thinking, current research on argumentation in childhood and in school settings is growing consistently. In this paper we will refer to "argumentation" as both a fundamental way of reasoning and a social practice, which finds its ideal context of development in the exercise of discussion (Muller-Mirza, Perret-Clermont, 2009). The aim of this paper is to highlight perspectives and criticisms on argumentation relevant to P4C and PWC in primary school. Arguing is more than just reasoning, justifying, negotiating, and explaining. Nevertheless, it can be all of these things, as is evident when children take part in dialogic interaction. Rational and social aspects of argumentative competence can be fostered in a philosophical context at primary school age. Philosophy appears to be a privileged tool in building a community of inquiry, in which children give and receive arguments as active participants in argumentative events. Between pre-school, when argumentation is manifested through communicative needs and argumentative reasoning, and high school, when argumentation is sought to develop argumentative discourse skills, there is primary school. It is at this stage that exercising one's rational and social skills through philosophy and dialogic teaching becomes crucial to developing and nurturing a more complex experience of argumentation.

keywords: philosophy for/with children, argumentation, discussion; primary school.

filosofía (y argumentación) para niños: algunas reflexiones para la escuela primaria

resumen

El currículo de Filosofía para Niños y otras experiencias de Filosofía con Niños de todo el mundo han estado promoviendo contextos dialógicos en la escuela con el objetivo de fomentar un pensamiento de orden superior. Con un modelo de pensamiento complejo y un marco de comunidad de investigación, Lipman (2003) sostiene la idea de que el pensamiento no consiste simplemente en el razonamiento o la lógica en sí, sino que se realiza por medio de diferentes dimensiones de pensamiento, tanto intrapersonales como interpersonales. El espacio de pensamiento que puede abrirse en una discusión filosófica apoya el ejercicio del razonamiento en las comunidades de investigación; esto, a su vez, promueve la competencia cognitiva, social y cívica. Reconociendo el papel crucial de las dimensiones racional y social del pensamiento, la investigación actual sobre la argumentación en la infancia y en el entorno escolar está creciendo de forma coherente con los estudios en Educación. En este texto nos referiremos a la "argumentación" como una

---

[1] E-mail: lucia.scipione@unimore.it

forma fundamental de razonamiento y una práctica social, que encuentra su contexto ideal de desarrollo en el ejercicio de la discusión (Muller-Mirza, Perret-Clermont, 2009). Con la intención de contribuir al campo de la educación, el objetivo de este texto es destacar las perspectivas y críticas sobre la argumentación relevante para FpN y FcN en la escuela primaria. Argumentar es más que razonar, justificar, negociar y explicar. Sin embargo, puede ser todas estas cosas, como es evidente cuando los niños participan en la interacción dialógica. Los aspectos racionales y sociales de la competencia argumentativa podrían fomentarse en un contexto filosófico en la edad de la escuela primaria. La filosofía parece ser una herramienta privilegiada para construir una comunidad de investigación en la que los niños dan y aceptan argumentos como participantes activos de eventos argumentativos. Entre el preescolar, cuando la argumentación se manifiesta a través de las necesidades comunicativas y el razonamiento argumentativo, y la escuela secundaria, cuando se busca la argumentación para desarrollar las habilidades del discurso argumentativo, está la escuela primaria. Es en esta etapa cuando el ejercicio de las habilidades racionales y sociales a través de la enseñanza de la filosofía y el diálogo se convierte en algo crucial para desarrollar y alimentar una experiencia más compleja de argumentación.

palabras clave: filosofía para/con niños, argumentación, discusión, escuela primaria.

filosofia (e argumentação) para crianças: algumas reflexões para o ensino fundamental

resumo

O currículo de Filosofia para Crianças e outras experiências de Filosofia com Crianças de todo o mundo estão promovendo contextos dialógicos na escola com o objetivo de fomentar um pensamento de ordem superior. Com um modelo de pensamento complexo e um marco de comunidade de investigação, Lipman (2003) sustenta a ideia de que o pensamento não consiste simplesmente no raciocínio ou a lógica em si, mas que se realiza por meio de diferentes dimensões de pensamento, tanto intrapessoais como interpessoais. O espaço de pensamento que pode abrir-se em uma discussão filosófica apoia o exercício do raciocínio nas comunidades de investigação; isto, por sua vez, promove a competência cognitiva, social e cívica. Reconhecendo o papel crucial das dimensões racional e social do pensamento, a investigação atual sobre a argumentação na infância e no entorno escolar está crescendo de forma coerente com os estudos em Educação. Neste texto nos referiremos a "argumentação" como uma forma fundamental de raciocínio/pensamento e uma prática social, que encontra seu contexto ideal de desenvolvimento no exercício da discussão (Muller-Mirza, Perret-Clermont, 2009). Com a intenção de contribuir com o campo da educação, o objetivo deste texto é destacar as perspectivas e críticas sobre a argumentação relevante para FpC e FcC no ensino fundamental. Argumentar é mais que raciocinar, justificar, negociar e explicar. No entanto, pode ser todas estas coisas, como é evidente quando as crianças participam de uma interação dialógica. Os aspectos racionais e sociais da competência argumentativa poderiam fomentar-se em um contexto filosófico na idade da escola inicial. A filosofia parece ser uma ferramenta privilegiada para construir uma comunidade de investigação na qual as crianças dão e aceitam argumentos como participantes ativos de eventos argumentativos. Entre a pré-escola, quando a argumentação se manifesta através das necessidades comunicativas e raciocínio argumentativo, e o ensino médio, quando se busca a argumentação para desenvolver as habilidades do discurso argumentativo, está o ensino fundamental. É nesta etapa quando o exercício das habilidades racionais e sociais através do ensino da filosofia e o diálogo se converte em algo crucial para desenvolver e alimentar uma experiência mais complexa de argumentação.

palavras-chave: filosofia para/com crianças; argumentação; discussão; ensino fundamental.

philosophy (and argumentation) for children:
some reflection for primary school

introduction

The promotion of dialogical contexts in school stimulates the ability to express and question opinions, to justify them, to confront them with differing opinions, and to cooperate in building a new theoretical position. Through the exercise of inquiry and thinking together, several studies promote philosophy at school within the dialogical context. The *Philosophy for Children* curriculum – P4C from now on – and other *Philosophy with Children* (PWC) experiences all around the world spearheaded the promotion of dialogical contexts in school with the aim of fostering higher-order thinking. P4C became the standard reference for revising curricula and teaching practices: on the one hand, it enhances thinking and reasoning skills, and on the other, it promotes the creation of a democratic space and the exercise of citizenship. Lipman (2003) upholds the idea that thinking does not consist merely of reasoning or logic itself, but it is performed by different dimensions of thought, both intra- and inter-personal. These are expressed by the two features which characterize P4C: a complex thinking model and a community of inquiry framework.

A school of freedom (Goucha, M., 2007) and a long tradition of *philosophy for/with children* both argue in favor of the educational potential of philosophical experiences since early childhood, although very few long-term studies have been conducted on this matter (Gorard, et al 2017).

Philosophy and philosophical discussion, thanks to their open contents and dialogical structures, seem to be effective ways of exercising, improving, and fostering different dimensions of thinking and of being a citizen (Santi, 2006; Soter et al. 2008; Giolo, 2010; Daniel, 2011; Reznitskaya et al 2012; Gorard et.al 2017).

Argumentation plays an important role as a dialogic activity characterized by both the rational and social meeting of different points of view, animated by the desire to face and solve an issue (Zadunaisky, 2011). Several studies investigate the development of this activity in early childhood. These studies show how taking part in an argumentative event is possible through the relationship with peers and parents – especially if argumentation is carried out in order to achieve a specific goal

by upholding a certain point of view (O'Keefe and Benoit, 1982; Eisenberg and Garvey, 1981; Zadunaisky, 2011; Arcidiacono & Bova, 2015). Other studies focus on the more *critical* dimension of argumentation by investigating how rational and evaluative criteria are applied in solving problems and in formulating judgments. This is taken to be the maximum level of mastery of one's thinking skills (Felton &Kuhn, 2001). Usually, the term "argument" refers to a statement or a series of statements that constitute a piece of reasoning in which a position is supported by premises (reasons and evidence). On the other hand, argumentation is a collaborative process of constructing an argument. Following Rapanta (2019), we will refer to both terms alternatively. Philosophical and psycho-pedagogical studies take argumentation as essential for the following processes: the construction of thought and the structuring of new knowledge; content understanding and the creation of contextual connections; the dynamic of relationship; metacognition (Rapanta et al. 2013).

Taking part in an argumentative discussion allows pupils to develop a constructive view on disagreement, because « each argumentative discussion in the classroom might become an occasion for young pupils to learn more about argumentation as a form of reasonable resolution of disagreement » (Greco et al. 2016, 475). Furthermore, the philosophical content and format of argumentative discussions might potentially enrich and structure the pupils experience . Upon examination of research on the best criteria to define, analyze, and evaluate argumentation, several studies have adopted an educational perspective by investigating which times, contexts and tools are best to promote and, eventually, to teach argumentation[2].

Sharing almost unanimously the idea that the skills of argumentative discourse gradually develop as « the ability to navigate and direct argumentative discourse with others » (Felton & Kuhn, 2001), a number of studies in the P4C curriculum focus on the development of dialogical critical thinking (Daniel 2005; 2017), on how to facilitate a classroom dialogue (Gregory, 2007), and on how to analyze and evaluate argumentative products and processes (Santi 2006; Giolo 2010). Among the

---

[2] According to Rapanta et al. (2013), Science Education, Education mediated by computer and Psycho-pedagogical perspectives all contribute to investigation on argument and argumentation at school, in different school setting and grades.

most relevant studies on argumentation in primary school, Santi's research focuses on the methodological and theoretical aspects of qualitative evaluation by analyzing transcriptions of the philosophical discussions in the classroom (1993). Also, Morehouse & Williams (1998) and Schleifer et al (1997) conducted studies on argumentation by investigating on its cognitive aspects. In particular their research focuses on the ability to formulate written arguments among children between 9 and 12 years old. Despite the idea that a late manifestation of the ability to argue in its most complete form is by far the most popular, P4C and other PWC experiences plan and implement thought-enhancement paths that include the strengthening of reasoning and argumentation from the age of kindergarten. In the P4C theory and practice, argumentation should be taken as both a logical and a democratic tool, which employs both the rational and the social dimension of thought. This is highlighted in P4C theory since Lipman and Sharp's first studies (Lipman, Sharp, 1975).

The purpose of this paper is to highlight some critical issues in the current research on argumentation; not only as an expression of "thinking out loud", but also as a collaborative and collective process of reasoning, a process in which communication strategies are activated when facing a conflict or a difference in opinion. Philosophy for and with children in primary school, next to other teaching experiences within the framework of dialogic teaching, constitute an ideal occasion to exercise argumentation: they are not a mere alignment of ideas and opinions, nor are they just training in logic. Instead they provide support for the interpretation of ideas and opinions with logic and ethics, as far as the discussion goes. This work does not offer operational solutions, but rather supports evidence theoretical research has provided in this direction. Such research is certainly complex and highly interdisciplinary but aims above all, to contribute to the training of teachers and facilitators.

I will explore in particular:

Philosophy and argumentation for children in some P4C reflections and in Lipman's thought.

Two relevant perspectives on education: argumentation theory, to clarify the plural meaning of argumentation, and psycho-pedagogical approaches on learning and teaching implications.

The dialogic teaching framework as the potential support to the argumentation (especially) in primary school.

In an interdisciplinary perspective, different subjects provide important tools for studying the cognitive and the social dimensions of argumentation and they give us back its complexity. By asking which, among these various perspectives, captures best primary-school children's performance, we frame the question on how to best implement an educational intervention on argumentation in a 6- to 10-year-old children class.

1. philosophy and argumentation for children

> As birds learn to fly by flying, one learns to think by thinking »
>
> (Lipman, Sharp, 1975, p.1).

Daniel (2011), who lists argumentation among the critical thinking modes, states that «critical thinking is a co-construction process that begins as soon as pupils 'thinking is fed by doubts, which stem from significant problems presented by the teacher (Dewey, 1933) or by peers (Lipman, 2003; Lipman *et al.*, 1980)» (p. 426). P4C, a forerunner in promoting complex thought, provides texts, materials and other educational tools to nurture the ability to give and ask for reason from early childhood. Along with P4C, there are several other methods to conduct philosophical practice with children, which consider the development of argumentative skills through critical dialogical exchanges. According to Daniel (2012; 2005), dialogical exchanges are also philosophical when the following criteria are satisfied: «explicit interdependence among the pupils 'points of view, thinking is centered around the construction of meanings (*vs.* search for a predetermined truth), justification of points of view using good reasons or criteria, questioning the perspectives, seeking for constructive criticisms from peers, acceptance of uncertainty, ethical concern, explicit self-correction, etc.» (2012, p. 125).

Lipman (2003) defines (philosophical) dialogue as « a mutual exploration, an investigation, an inquiry » (p.88), that moves to a further step, that differs from conversation as a reciprocal activity that does not "move", but rather being a curriculum that models the normative ideal of analytic reason.

Philosophy for/with Children puts the emphasis on dialogue, where « cognitive and social skillfulness are acquired naturally and in context »[3]. « In Philosophy for Children, dialogue is similarly intended as a mechanism for children and adults to explore the complex content of philosophical issues, but just as importantly, and as a means to that exploration, dialogue is also employed as the primary method for teaching thinking and inquiry » (Gregory 2007, p. 60). As we read in the IAPC (Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children) website[4], « students begin philosophy sessions by reading aloud or acting out a philosophical story – typically, one that depicts fictional children discovering and exploring philosophical issues and applying their reasoning to life situations. Then, students identify the issues in the story that they are interested in discussing and collaborating in the construction of the agenda or lesson plan. For the remainder of the session, and for the next few or several sessions, they deliberate upon these issues as a community of philosophical inquiry. These inquiries may culminate in action projects or works of art, but in any case, they should culminate in the participants 'self-correction of their previous beliefs, feelings or values. »

Lipman and Sharp's novels function as *models* with ideas, themes and questions from the history of Western philosophy because the « philosophical concepts are taught as facts, but need to be critically and dialogically engaged through enquiry ». (Murris, 2016, p. 69). The aim of these novels – and of a wider range of stories and stimuli employed in other experiences of philosophy for and with children – is to suggest open-ended philosophical questions. To mark a philosophical discussion and identify the philosophical features of an inquiry, Splitter and Sharp (1995) classify skills, procedures and strategies that refer to "reasoning and inquiry", "concept formation" and "meaning construction". Argumentation might be

---

[3] https://www.montclair.edu/iapc/what-is-philosophy-for-children/what-is-a-typical-p4c-session-like/ last consultation January 20, 2020.
[4] https://www.montclair.edu/iapc/what-is-philosophy-for-children/what-is-a-typical-p4c-session-like/ last consultation January 20, 2020.

taken as a skill, a procedure and a strategy of "reasoning and inquiry"; the crucial rule of the teacher-facilitator is to raise questions as « prompts for reasons, predictions and viewpoints which can in turn be evaluated as good or bad, better or worse, reasonable or unreasonable » (1995, p. 129).

According to Lipman and Sharp (1975), what marks a discussion as genuinely philosophical – i.e. what differentiates it from a "bull session" – is its "cumulative" nature: a philosophical discussion could grow and develop driving children to « endlessly discover new horizons ». This means, from the perspective of the facilitator, encouraging children to reflect, to consider different ways of thinking or acting, and to deliberate in a creative way by using imagination. Therefore, argumentation ranks between reasoning and inquiry, in the way it resides on the philosophical structure and sense of the dialogue.

In the *Teaching Children Philosophical Thinking: an Introduction to the Teacher's Manual for "Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery"* (1975), Lipman and Sharp stress the importance of taking care and encouraging children's philosophical thought[5]: reflection on argumentation allows one to reflect on the products and on the process of dialogue. *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*'s novel, designed for children at the end of primary school and beginning of middle school, promotes the improvement of reasoning abilities (as well as the development of creativity and of one's own self-knowledge) by focusing on drawing inferences. These are among the most sophisticated forms of reasoning experienced by primary school children (1975).

In the teacher's manual *Looking for meaning, Instructional Manual to Accompany Pixie[6],* Lipman and Sharp emphasize how, in philosophical dialogue, there is room for divergences. Such divergences can be tackled together, as a community of inquiry, by activating the use of arguments and counter-arguments, by appealing to criteria and principles, by revealing the implicit assumptions and consequences of what is being said (p. 12). In a program whose aim is to make children exercise

---

[5] Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery: Target Grades 5-6. It is the first philosophical novel written by Mattew Lipman in 1969. The instructional manual to accompany the novel is *Philosophical Inquiry* (1979).
[6] Pixie: Target Grades 3-4. This novel focuses on analogical-reasoning skills and philosophy of language, working more on abstract reasoning, ambiguity, and interpersonal relationships.

"reasoning about language", the manual invites facilitators to work in different matters on rules and reasons, to give children chances to learn to use generalizations to give one's judgement, and to build comprehension. By suspending the study of formal logic to a later period, children are given the opportunity to observe, reflect and discover what is logical and what is illogical, what is appropriate and what is not for each particular case that may emerge from the dialogue (p. 12). Facilitators are invited to urge children to justify their opinion: to ask them to give reasons and examples to support their opinion. Showing interest for their reasons and discussions on experiential plans appears to be a good way to support childrens' argumentation encompassing how to distinguish a reason from an excuse, and a good reason from a bad reason. Reasons arise when we try to justify what we do. A good reason is such in virtue of the degree of strength in justifying the action (p. 12). It follows that dialoguing and putting 8-10 year-old children in the comfortable situation of playing the game of giving reasons and justifying their opinion allows them to train their dialogue skills while reasoning[7]. Reasoning (and argumentation) are exercised through the various dialogue dimensions and, above all, through listening to others and to their opinions in full respect of everyone's point of view with the guide of facilitators. Also, by means of the modeling done by facilitators thought given to the story, and in particular through the characters' dialogues, children improve their arguing abilities by foreseeing different interpretations of the characters' dialogical moves and by making connections with facts and situations of everyday life. The community of inquiry is the place where children can experience thinking (critically, creatively, carefully), and this experience with multidimensional thinking is what truly promotes argumentation. For instance, in the P.E.A.C.E. curriculum[8] the philosophical novels written for children aged 8 to 10 are *Ella* and *Tina and Amir*. Just like in the P4C curriculum, exercises are planned around the activity of

---

[7] In the manual book there guidelines on how to facilitate a discussion, how to self-evaluate it, and there are exercises and cooperative play on "giving reasons".

[8] European Project P.E.A.C.E. Philosophical Enquiry Advancing Cosmopolitan Engagement. Agúndez Rodríguez, A., Camhy, D.G., Crespo Díaz, A., García Moriyón, F., García Pedraza, I., Glaser, J., Gruber, K., Lago Bornstein, J.C., Miraglia, M., Oliverio, S., Petitti, M.R., Pitterà, M., Sainz Benito, L., Schiff, J., Striano, M. (eds.) (2015). *Reflective Cosmopolitanism. Education Towards Inclusive Communities through Philosophical Inquiry.* Madrid: Ediciones La Rectoral.

"giving reasons"; there are also exercises focused on distinguishing between "giving reasons" and "giving explanation". Two different discussion plans which focus on reason are suggested for *Ella*: one on inductive reasoning and one on hypothetical reasoning; both give children the possibility of experiencing the faculty of generalization in dialogue. The novel *Tina and Amir*, with the same age target, gives guiding ideas for dealing with discussions and with reasons activated in the decision-making processes, achieved by providing activities that focus on giving reasons and examples. The introduction to the Handbook lists the various kinds of skill improved by the program: cognitive skills, such as problematizing, conceptualizing, reasoning, emotional skills and finally self-referential and relational (no explicit reference is made to argumentation).

If wondering and questioning are the elements of philosophical behavior, traceable at any age, it is around these attitudes that the argumentation product and process should be built. In primary school, following Lipman and Sharp's perspective, this translates into employing the questioning attitude to exercise the ability of giving opinions by providing reasons and examples for them – That is, justifying one's own point of view with an explanation. Far from solely being an exercise of solipsistic reasoning, this is possible and makes sense in parallel with the exercise of listening whilst respecting and considering the points of view of others, thanks to the potentiality of philosophical dialogue. Considering the other's point of view to construct their own arguments and counter-arguments is evident as a next step, in fact it is identifiable in exercises designed for older children, such as those in *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery* and *Hanadi and Christian*[9].

Having said that, although the P4C and PWC implementation and evaluation raises questions about what effective teacher training is – e.g. whether or not teachers ought to have an academic background of philosophy – and about the value and the evaluation of argumentation not merely in itself, but also as a part of the value and the evaluation of the community of inquiry, i.e. for its *cognitive* and *social* value. Major implications in this regard are related to the age target of the addressees.

---

[9] *Hanadi and Christian (P.E.A.C.E.)* : Target Grades 10-12.

1.1 looking for argumentation in a community of inquiry

P4C is an example of educational curriculum that promotes the construction of a community through the tool of inquiry. In inquiry, students can share responsibility and roles with a facilitator, and, in collaborating, they are then part of the process of analysis and evaluation of answers and reasoning, as they emerge in the community (Gregory, 2007). Given that the central practice of P4C is the community of inquiry, participating in a community of inquiry « engages young people in important cognitive moves such as creating hypotheses, clarifying their terms, asking for and giving good reasons, offering examples and counterexamples, questioning each other's assumptions, drawing inferences, and following the inquiry where it leads. But inquiry is also a social enterprise, which requires students to share their own perspectives, listen to one another, read faces, to challenge and build on one another's thinking and look for missing perspectives and reconstruct their own ideas[10]. »

The community of inquiry, which experiences the philosophical dialogue through the "exploratory talk", supports argumentation with a pedagogical device that characterizes the context, with contents and attitudes, supported by a facilitator that drives the dialogue where argumentation leads. As stated by Santi (2007), democracy is possible with philosophy through inquiry. In fact, she lists basic macro-pragmatic rules of "inquiry discourse" to help teachers in setting teacher-led and group-based activities aiming at scaffolding exploratory talk[11]: encouraging participants to put forward their own views in a group; reflecting before speaking; sharing and discussing relevant information; motivating their own reasoning; giving importance to the thinking structure; accepting challenges; building on others ' ideas; discussing alternatives; proceeding in a self-correcting way; negotiating a mediation; responsibly participating in decision-making (2007, p. 112). According to Lipman (2003), Community of Inquiry is a dialogical process that "moves where the

---

[10] https://www.montclair.edu/iapc/what-is-philosophy-for-children/what-is-a-typical-p4c-session-like/ last consultation January 20, 2020.
[11] In agreement with ground rules advanced by Mercer and Wegerif (1999), Santi (2007) interprets the construct of "exploratory talk" for the Community of Inquiry.

argument takes it", it therefore has a logical structure with procedural rules, in which reasonableness, creativity and care are simultaneously applied.

Gregory M. (2007) presents a framework to facilitate philosophical practice in the classroom with secondary and college students. His work is inspired by Douglas Walton's perspective on argumentation schemes that analyze argument as a set of strategic procedures. A discussion in class requires, primarily, a problem or a topic to be discussed, secondly, a setting that invites participants to ask relevant questions about the topic and lastly a will to look for answers. In this context hypotheses are evaluated: they become clearer, they are explained, tested, confirmed, reviewed or abandoned. The chosen hypotheses are taken out of the discussion to be "experimented" – i.e. brought back to experience – implemented and transferred into action (Gregory, 2007). The role of the facilitator is twofold: to shape and recall good dialogue and at the same time to support student retainment of dialogue through the framework's steps.

Evaluating the effectiveness of an entire P4C session means detecting and describing the presence of philosophical content, the presence of reasoning words, the development of arguments, the kinds of dialogue and the level of participation of all children, the degree of assimilation of the procedures employed, and the self-assessment ability (Santi, 2006; Soter et al., 2008; Giolo, 2010; Reznitskaya et al, 2012; Gorard et. al, 2017; Daniel, 2011). Even though there are several tests for cognitive abilities that focus on critical thinking skills (the *New Jersey Reasoning Test*, but also *Californian Test of Mental Maturity, Metropolitan Achievement Test, Iowa Test of Basic Skills*), investigating the presence of argumentation is not straightforward: it requires a deep consideration of all contextual dimensions of dialogue, as both a rational and a social activity, of the ongoing process of the community of inquiry on philosophical dialogue through the exploratory talk. Gregory (2009), in *What Philosophy with Children is not: responses to some critics and constructive suggestions for dialogue about the role of P4C in Higher Education*[12], argues that P4C pays attention to the process and to the content of philosophy: in a community of inquiry, reasons and

---

[12] see Murris, K., Bramall, S., Egley, S., Gregory, M., Haynes, J. & Williams, S. (2009) What Philosophy with Children Is Not: Responses to Some Critics and Constructive Suggestions for Dialogue about the Role of P4C in Higher Education. Available at http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.

arguments are tested on their "strength and relevance" and are informed by different points of view, rather than being a mere seek for truth criteria. In the same response, Gregory says that «The rigor that accompanies a philosophical building on ideas through argument and democratic enquiry is a real challenge for teachers».

In P4C, supporting argumentation goes hand in hand with supporting the community of inquiry: to the concept of community, in social and relational terms, corresponds to both that of inquiry and in rational and philosophical terms.

2. *argumentation theory*

Technically, argumentation theory consists of studies on the production and of analysis and evaluation of argumentation « with the view of developing adequate criteria for determining the validity of the point of departure and presentational layout of argumentative discourse » (Santi 2006, p. 22). Lipman (2003) distinguishes between two main points of view on argumentative theory: the *informal logic* and the *rhetoric* perspective. If the former is more interested in investigating the logical force and the normative aim of argumentation, the latter draws attention to its persuasive strength with a descriptive interest. To define the goals of argumentation theories, van Eemeren (2017) stated that argumentation theory can conciliate the normative and the descriptive dimensions with a balance between rationality and reality. This conciliation may dissolve the confusion generated by the loose difference between "reason" and "logical inference from premises to conclusion" (ibid.). According to informal logic, argumentation can be defined as a product or as having an argument ("to argue that"); from the rhetoric perspective, argumentation is defined as a process of the discourse or as the process of building up an argument – i.e. "to argue about" – (O'Keefe, Benoit 1982). This double definition reflects the double meaning of argumentation as both an individual reasoning and as an interpersonal process: argumentation is "arguing that" – i.e. a form of monological communication based on a propositional structure aimed at supporting an idea or a point of view – while it is also "arguing with" – i.e. a dialogic construction built up in relation to others and based on the discussion of a common argument.

In the modern theory of argumentation, Schwarz (2017) individuates two relevant dichotomies: monological/ dialogical and discourse/product. To satisfy a

complex evaluation of philosophical argumentation in a community of inquiry, Santi (2012) suggests a triple-perspective framework based on Wenzel's multidimensional construct which recognizes three "senses" of argument or argumentation and their proximity to three disciplinary approaches (p. 447). In an integrative review of methods of analysis and assessment of education, Rapanta et al. (2013) advance a similar triple- perspective framework based on Tindale and Vega Reñon's reflection around Aristotelian triad. These frameworks analyze argumentation as suggested by the Aristotelian triad: argumentation as a *product* that refers to logic, argumentation as a *procedure* that refers to dialectics and argumentation as a *process* that refers to rhetoric. According to Santi, the triple perspective describes the argument as a method of research, as an attitude of thought, and as an authentic dialogue (2012). In the educational context, this perspective might be simplified in another triple view: argument as a *form*, argument as a *strategy*, argument as a *goal* (Rapanta et al. 2013)[13].

In the first case, argument is taken as a "form": as a unit of reasoning in which one or more propositions (premises) are combined to support another proposition (conclusion). In the field of science education, argument is usually analyzed as a form – the form of scientific argumentation: The standard modeling is the Toulmin model of argument (Nielsen 2013; Rapanta et al. 2013; Schwarz & Baker, 2016). This model is defined by Santi as the "philosophical model" and is used to investigate how children's argumentation emerges during a P4C session (Santi 1993; 1995; 2006).

In the second perspective, argument is viewed as a "strategy" – i.e. as a discursive social practice animated by the idea to impose one's own position, a "specialized way of arguing in which participants not only defend their own claims, but also engage constructively with the argumentation of their peers" (Nielsen, 2013, p.373). According to Douglas Walton's taxonomy of dialogue types, this approach requires a dialogical context in which an argument can be analyzed as a set of strategic procedures, with "moves", schemas and different and necessary statements

---

[13] Argument evaluation implies different dimensions of arguing that, according to Rapanta et al. (2013), correspond to three main levels of assessment of argumentation: metacognitive, meta-strategic and epistemological.

(Rapanta et al. 2013)[14]. Within the P4C studies, this perspective on procedure generated different adaptations for children argumentation[15].

In the third case argument is analyzed as a discursive and cooperative performance aimed at achieving a "goal". In the educational context, this perspective identifies the goal of argumentation as persuasion or negotiation. Rather than being a competitive activity, argument is seen as a cooperative activity with the goal of looking for shared contents and for the construction of new knowledge (Rapanta et al. 2013). This perspective is the most common in psycho-pedagogical studies due to its focus on the social processes involved in the act of arguing.

The three perspective framework « does not have the purpose of understanding the nature of the phenomena *per se*, but rather of highlighting the different ways we look at them, through the educational lenses » (Santi 2012, p. 448).

The triple perspectives – and their respective models – help us understand better the different dimensions of argumentation and, at a later stage, plan different strategies to implement and to evaluate a philosophical session in a primary school class and in teacher training.

According to Lipman and to the P4C curriculum, philosophy takes argumentation as co-constructed reasoning. So, it highlights the importance for children to take part in a dialogic exchange in which the communicative moves are adequate and productive. In order to effectively work on teaching strategies that would make this happen, one ought to recognize which of these perspectives are achievable and how. The guiding question must be twofold: on the one hand, which perspective is able to highlight the performance of children in primary school age and, on the other hand, how it would be possible to implement it in the classroom.

3. from prodromal forms to complex forms: the skill to argue at school

---

[14] Douglas Walton distinguishes six types of dialogue: persuasion, inquiry, negotiation, information-seeking, deliberation and eristic dialogue. To evaluate an argument in each dialogue type, one ought to consider the context of speaking and the purpose of speakers. For an application in the P4C analyses, see Gregory, M (2006). Normative dialogue types in philosophy for children. *Gifted educational international,* 22 (2-3), 160-171.

[15] Kuhn and Felton (2001) identify four basic procedures to analyze argumentation as a strategy: argument construction; justification; counterargument construction; refutation of another counterargument.

In an attempt to answer the questions on how and when argumentation develops, and on how and when learning processes develop into argumentation, psychosocial perspectives offer resources and reflections on how to design an effective argumentative activity. In the educational context, there are two approaches to the promotion of argumentation: the *learning to argue* approach, with didactic proposals for learning argumentation, and the *arguing to learn* approach, with the intent to promote argumentation as a vehicle for (content) learning. The two learning approaches are strictly dependent, above all, on the methods and contexts of experiment chosen by the researchers (Schwartz, 2017).

In the *arguing to learn* approach, argumentation is seen as an ability that naturally develops with age (Stein &Miller, 1990). Studies conducted have observed and analyzed argumentation and interaction between children in natural contexts, showing that children at an early age seem to be able to construct arguments and counterarguments.

In the *learning to argue* approach, argumentation is seen as a skill that does not emerge spontaneously, but rather is the result of combining other factors besides age (Kuhn, 1991; Felton & Kuhn, 2001). Studies conducted by Kuhn and collaborators have observed and analyzed the argumentative interaction between children in experimental contexts. They adopted investigative tools for probing the complexity of argument, and they showed that some fundamental argumentative skills (for example a true consideration of the position of others) are fully performed after the age of 12 or thereabouts.

Both approaches, aimed at questioning some aspects of learning in relation to the educational purposes, became a general theoretical umbrella under which we can find important perspectives on argumentation in education (Rapanta et al, 2013). Nowadays, research can proceed in such a way that both learning objectives can be achieved in the same set of activities (Kuhn, 2019).

In preschool age, between the age of 2 and 5, we have an argumentative performance when there is open opposition whereupon disagreement or challenge towards peers and adults interaction are manifested, and one's statement is clearly stated by words or with actions and requests: most of the studies detect a form of argumentation when justifications, reasons, apologies or conciliations are advanced

(O'Keefe and Benoit, 1982; Eisenberg and Garvey, 1981; Zadunaisky, 2011; Arcidiacono & Bova, 2015; Dovigo, 2016). Accordingly, performances of this kind require acquisition and development of some communicative skills, such as understanding the conflict situation, the role of the interlocutor and the topic of discussion (O'Keefe, Benoit, 1982).

Studies on childrens' reasoning highlight how children take part in discussion, how they give opinions, how they hypothesize solutions for a problem and how they attempt to argue (Volzing, 1981; Pontecorvo & Arcidiacono, 2010; Greco et al. 2018). Studies on children's collaborative reasoning highlight how they use oppositions, explanations and counter-factual reasoning (Pontecorvo and Arcidiacono, 2010). There seems to be agreement on the fact that a child's thought is developed through discourse, especially during learning processes involving peer interactions and adult guided discussions (Pontecorvo & Arcidiacono, 2010).

Felton and Kuhn (2001) define argumentation as a process of social construction of arguments that gradually develops. They affirm that the skill to argue requires the ability to support a claim and to draw correct inferences. They examine how people engage in an argument with the aim of describing how cognitive skills may develop and of finding out the strategies required to manage argumentative goals: «although there is substantial data on development in argumentative reasoning, we know very little about development in the ability to navigate and direct argumentative discourse with others» (ibid., p. 136). According to Walton's idea, argumentative discourse follows two goals: guaranteeing the partner's commitments to support the own position and damaging the partner's claim (ibid.). Authors have created experimental contexts (with the use of pre-tests, post-tests and interviews) with argumentative tasks in which young students were called to explain reasoning and judgments in the attempt to tackle a controversial issue. The results of the research show that the most complex skill that is required to argue is the ability to consider the partner's perspective and to use it as a starting point to build on other stronger arguments.

Authors highlight frequent struggles in primary school students, such as identifying casual theories, giving justification through evidence, generating opposite theories, and evaluating the evidence. According to this perspective, the ability

to argue is a general capacity that develops over a period of approximately 12 to 15 years of age. Education and educational level might affect the quality of the argumentative practice; in particular, the understanding of the objectives of the discourse and the knowledge of effective strategies to achieve these objectives are primary educational aims.

If the first manifestations of argumentation are elements of interaction and communication oriented towards a purpose, can primary school thus create spaces and conditions so that children can gain useful experience in giving reasons, justifying, explaining or negotiating? It seems so. This is confirmed in part by the actual educational offer: P4C and other PWC experiences plan thinking curricula since kindergarten. Also, Lipman and Sharp (1975) confirm this with respect to the purely logical aspect of reasoning: they underline and motivate the importance of creating the first informal experiences of logic before the age of 12. The philosophical format, in terms of both teaching methods and content, seems to be the most appropriate space to start training children's reasoning: from the circular setting to the request for opinions; from dealing with issues close to daily personal experience to treating complex theoretical concepts.

4. the teacher's scaffolding: dialogic interaction

Argumentation studies in education recall learning questions about the importance of talking, of thinking, of sharing talking and thinking, of building knowledge and of conceptual change. Overall, they focus on the engagement and participation of students in the learning processes and on inquiry.

The socio-constructivist approach suggests that interaction in the social space is the most fertile ground for the construction of knowledge and the structuring of cognitive abilities (Rogoff, 1995). Kuhn (2019) defines critical thinking as a dialogical practice which starts interactively and is later interiorized, and as an argument that "depends for its meaning on how the others respond" (ibid., p. 146). In accordance with Pontecorvo (2004), discussion is an activator of knowledge and learning because it starts with the comparison and exchange of ideas, and it fosters reasoning, language and improves the quality of social interaction. In the context of dis-

cussion with the teacher and peers, different points of view are intertwined, accepted, and compared. The presence of disagreement increases the complexity of discussion; for it requires one to consider the reasons of the other participants and to negotiate one's own positions (ibid.).

The *Dialogic teaching* perspective, tracing argument as part of the discussion in the classroom, is «a general pedagogical approach that capitalizes on the power of talking to foster students 'thinking, learning and problem solving. It requires teachers to have a broad repertoire of discourse practice and to be able to strategically use different types of discourse to address specific instructional goals for their students»[16] (Wilkinson et al. 2017, p. 66). Dialogic teaching (and learning) reveals a dialogic space which involves teachers and encourages learners. Teachers are required to ask open-ended questions and to debate, compare and negotiate different ideas. Learners are invited to express and justify their own points of view, as well as to take into consideration the other's perspective and to respond to it (Reznitskaya, 2012).

Dialogic teaching is based on the idea of teaching instructional strategies, context, content and processes acted in the classroom with the aim to foster and support *argumentative literacy* «as the ability to comprehend and formulate arguments through speaking, listening, reading and writing» (Reznitskaya 2015, p. 220). To support this literacy, teachers can work on *inquiry dialogue*, giving all students the chance to take part into a complex discussion. Starting from fuzzy and contestable questions, teachers need to use a specific pretext to achieve dialogic teaching. Reznitskaya and Wilkinson (2017) outline a project in which resources from dialogic teaching, based on Alexander's work, relate to research on inquiry dialogue, which in turn is inspired by argumentation theory and P4C researches. The aim is to help teachers and educators to « engage upper-elementary students in high quality discourse », to promote a rigorous and collaborative thinking, to « teach students to

---

[16] This notion is based on Alexander's notion of dialogic teaching as cited in Wilkinson et.al. (2017).

reach better, more reasonable conclusions by building and evaluating arguments *together* »(p. ix, preface)[17].

The interactive learning space establishes a precise relationship between teacher and students: thought, speech and comprehension are not teacher-centered activities. Students involved in a dialogic teaching experience will have more opportunities to take part in a collaborative and shared construction of knowledge: they are invited to listen to the others, to express their own position giving motivations and justifications, to take into account the others 'positions and to re-build their own. These experiences differentiate a dialogical teaching from a monological one: the possibility of arguing starts with the need to take into consideration the other's point of view and to integrate and support alternative positions. This goes hand in hand with argument skills required for teachers, even in primary school. According to Mercer et al. (1999), teachers can improve the use of language "as a social mode of thinking" in order to promote the use of language for reasoning. This can be done by using a structured program with both teacher-led and group-based activities. The analysis of quality features of the dialogic interaction shows a recurrent focus on reasoning and argumentation, which starts from the teacher's scaffolding[18]. Wilkinson et al. (2016)[19] suggests the need to help teachers acquiring the theoretical, epistemological and procedural knowledge to use classroom dialogue

---

[17] The product of the project is the ART tool – Argumentation Rating Tool – i.e. an observational rating scale with 11 paired items grouped in four criteria for evaluating the quality of argumentation (as argumentation goals) and a set of related facilitation practices (as dialogic teaching strategies). This tool is designed for students from the fifth grade onwards. The first presentation of the tool is Reznitiskaya, A., I.A.G. Wilkinson, J. Oyler, K. Bourdage, and A. Sykes (2016). Using the Argumentation Rating Tool to Support Teacher Facilitation of Inquiry Dialogue in Elementary Language Arts Classrooms. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC.

[18] The Cam-UNAM Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (SEDA: ©2015) was developed by a research team from the University of Cambridge, UK, and the National Autonomous University of Mexico, led by Sara Hennessy and Sylvia Rojas-Drummond and funded through grant no. RG66509 from the British Academy. The original scheme and list of co-creators are available at http://tinyurl.com/BAdialogue. It singles out 33 communicative acts in each communicative event.

[19] Wilkinson et al. (2016) conducted a study aimed at assessing the impact of the professional development program presented above (Reznitskaya, A., et al 2016), which was «designed to help elementary school teachers engage in dialogic teaching to support the development of students 'argument literacy» (p. 65). Study reports from the second year of a three-year research shows improvements in the teachers 'facilitation of inquiry dialogue, in the students 'argumentation during discussion, but no changes in the teachers 'epistemological beliefs.

effectively in order to promote "students 'high order thinking and argument literacy" (ibid, p. 78), as well as an increase in research on this topic.

conclusion

In this paper, I attempted to collect some researches on argumentation within and outside the scope of P4C through the investigation of relevant issues for educators in tandem with the aim to focus on relevant issues related to teacher training. If philosophy has the resources to build a better and freer school environment, where the right to think is also the right to be an active citizen in the world, we must reflect on the greatest challenge, namely, improving and fostering argumentative skills, strategies and procedure through inquiry as an (collaborative) exercise of reasoning and democracy.

Children can undertake philosophy at primary school age and this experience is often a great exercise of arguing through participation in the collaborative inquiry dialogue that introduces the complex ability "to navigate and direct argumentative discourse with others" (Felton & Kuhn, 2001). Philosophy in the classroom might be the best way – considering its settings, contents and procedures – to connect argumentation studies and primary school practices with the aim to promote democracy, and P4C pedagogy has the resources to strongly improve this matter. Without taking any strong position (as is usually expected in a dispute) in the context of a philosophy session, children are invited to give alternative solutions to a stated problem, to give explanations and opinions; without premeditated inflexibility they are stimulated through clarifying questions to give arguments and to justify them. From the setting to the content, philosophy could support prior experience of justifying, explaining, negotiating, giving example, arguing, preparing the field for the complex ability to give good argument and counter-arguments. If the nature of the discussion stimulates children to give reasons and to argue (Mercer, 2002), it is the philosophical content that activates participation if it recalls both recent and earlier experiences.

Facilitating argumentation (at primary school level) is a complex matter and it constitutes mainly of two separate tasks: training the reasoning process (and the

argumentative products) and feeding the discussion (and the argumentative process). To assist the facilitator with the first task, it is possible to provide exercises, examples and counterexamples of reasoning. With regards to the second task, the facilitator must choose philosophical contents that can instigate doubt; such contents must be close enough to children's experience to be used by them as a tool to hypothesize and ask questions, but at the same time must be distant and mysterious enough to captivate children's interest and wonder. Also, it is necessary to orchestrate the many voices of the community of enquiry, to give space to different opinions, to guide everyone's exercise of judgment and, if possible, to resolve differences, to push members of the community to continue exploring plausible options without necessarily persisting in the search for truth and finally to enrich opportunities to listen and reason together. In short, orchestrating, guiding, pushing, enriching the community of inquiry. In line with the requests of several national standards, this is one of the resources upon which to reflect when planning primary school teacher training programs.

references

Agúndez Rodríguez, A., Camhy, D.G., Crespo Díaz, A., García Moriyón, F., García Pedraza, I., Glaser, J., Gruber, K., Lago Bornstein, J.C., Miraglia, M., Oliverio, S., Petitti, M.R., Pitterà, M., Sainz Benito, L., Schiff, J., Striano, M. (eds.) (2015). *Reflective Cosmopolitanism. Education Towards Inclusive Communities through Philosophical Inquiry.* Madrid: Ediciones La Rectoral.

Alexander, R.J. (2005) 'Talking to learn: oracy revisited', in Conner, C. (ed) *Teaching Texts*, Nottingham: National College for School Leadership, pp 75-93.

Arcidiacono, F., & Bova, A. (2015). A study of the arguments used by undergraduate and graduate students during disciplinary discussions in the classroom. In R. V. Nata (Ed.), *Progress in Education*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.

Bova, A., & Arcidiacono, F. (2013). Investigating children's Why-questions. A study comparing argumentative and explanatory function. Discourse Studies, 15(6): 713- 734.

Daniel, M.-F., Belghiti, K., & Auriac-Slusarczyk, E. (2017). Philosophy for Children and the Incidence of Teachers' Questions on the Mobilization of Dialogical Critical Thinking in Pupils. *Creative Education*, 8, 870-892.

Daniel, M.F., Gagnon, M. (2011). Developmental Process of Dialogical Critical Thinking in Groups of Pupils Aged 4 to 12 Years. *Creative Education*, 2 (5), 418-428.

Daniel, M.F., Gagnon, M. (2012). Pupils'age and philosophical praxis: two factors that influence the development of critical thinking in children. *Childhood & philosophy*, *8*(15), 105-130.

Dovigo, F. (2016). Argumentation in preschool: a common ground for collaborative learning in early childhood. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, *24*(6), 818-840.

van Eemeren, F.H. (2017). Argumentation Theory and Argumentative Practices: A Vital but Complex Relationship. *Informal Logic*, 37 (4), 322-350.

Eisenberg, A. R., & Garvey, C. (1981). Children's use of verbal strategies in resolving conflicts. *Discourse Processes, 4*(2), 149-170.

Felton, M.; Kuhn, D. (2001). The development of argumentative discourse skill. *Discourse processes*, 32 (2&3), 135-153.

Giolo R., (2010). Argomentare a scuola. Aspetti didattici e valutativi. Padova: Cleup.

Gorard, S., Siddiqui, N., See, H.B. (2017). Can Philosophy for Children improve primary school attainment? *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 51 (1), 5-22.

Goucha, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Philosophy, A school of freedom: Teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: Status and prospects.* Unesco publishing.

Greco, S., Perret-Clermont, A.-N., Iannaccone, A., Rocci, A., Convertini, J. & Schar, R. (2018). The Analysis of Implicit Premises within Children's Argumentative Inferences. Informal Logic, 38 (4), 438–470.

Greco, S., Mehmeti, T., & A. -N. Perret-Clermont. (2016). Getting involved in an argumentation in class as a pragmatic move: Social conditions and affordances". In *Argumentation and reasoned action. Proceedings of the first European Conference on Argumentation (Vol II)*, Ed. D. Mohammed, & M. Lewiński, 463–478. London: College Publications.

Gregory, M., R. (2006). Normative dialogue types in philosophy for children. *Gifted educational international*, 22 (2-3), 160-171.

Gregory, M., R. (2007). A Framework for Facilitating Classroom Dialogue. *Teaching Philosophy*, 30 (1), 59- 84.

Kuhn, D. (1991). *The skills of argument*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kuhn, D. (2019). Critical Thinking as Discourse. *Human Development*, *62*(3), 146-164.

Lipman, M. (2003).*Thinking in Education* (second edition). New York: Cambridge University Press. (Trad. It., *Educare al pensiero*. Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2005).

Lipman, M., & Sharp, A. M. (1975). *Teaching Children Philosophical Thinking: An Introduction to the Teacher's Manual for" Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery"*. Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children.

Mercer, N. (2002). Developing dialogues. In: Wells, Gordon and Claxton, Guy eds. *Learning for life in the 21st century.* Oxford, UK: Blackwell, pp. 141–153.

Mercer, N., Wegerif, R., & Dawes, L. (1999). Children's talk and the development of reasoning in the classroom. *British educational research journal*, *25*(1), 95-111.

Muller-Mirza, N., Perret-Clermont, A-N. (2009*). Argumentation and education, Theoretical foundations and Practices*. New York: Springer.

Murris, K. (2016). The Philosophy for Children curriculum: Resisting 'teacher proof'texts and the formation of the ideal philosopher child. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *35*(1), 63-78.

Murris, K., Bramall, S., Egley, S., Gregory, M., Haynes, J. & Williams, S. (2009) What Philosophy with Children Is Not: Responses to Some Critics and Constructive Suggestions for Dialogue about the Role of P4C in Higher Education. Available at http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1

Nielsen, J. A. (2013). Dialectical features of students' argumentation: A critical review of argumentation studies in science education. *Research in Science Education,* 43(1), 371-393.

O'Keefe, B. J., & Benoit, P. J. (1982). Children's arguments. *Advances in argumentation theory and research*, 154-183. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Pr.

Pontecorvo, C., Ajello, A. M., Zucchermaglio, C., Formisano, M., Girardet, H., & Orsolini, M. (2004 [1993]). *Discutendo si impara: interazione sociale e conoscenza a scuola*. Roma: Carocci.

Pontecorvo, C., & Arcidiacono, F. (2010). Development of reasoning through arguing in young children. *Cultural-Historical Psychology*, (4), 19-29.

Rapanta, C. (2019). *Argumentation Strategies in the Classroom.* Wilmington:Vernon Press.

Rapanta, C., Garcia-Mila, M., & Gilabert, S. (2013). What is meant by argumentative competence? An integrative review of methods of analysis and assessment in education. *Review of Educational Research*, 83(4), 483-520.

Rapanta, C., & Macagno, F. (2016). Argumentation methods in educational contexts: Introduction to the special issue. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *79*, 142-149.

Reznitskaya, A. (2012). Dialogic teaching: Rethinking language use during literature discussions. *The reading teacher*, *65*(7), 446-456.

Reznitskaya, A; Wilkinson, I. A. G. (2015). Professional development in dialogic teaching: helping teacher promote argument literacy in their classroom. In D. Scott & E. Hargreaves (Eds.), *Learning, pedagogy and assessment* (pp. 219-232). UK: Sage.

Reznitskaya, A., & Wilkinson, I. A. (2017). *The Most Reasonable Answer: Helping Students Build Better Arguments Together*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Reznitskaya, A., I.A.G. Wilkinson, J. Oyler, K. Bourdage, and A. Sykes (2016). Using the Argumentation Rating Tool to Support Teacher Facilitation of Inquiry Dialogue in Elementary Language Arts Classrooms. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC.

Rogoff, B. (1995) Observing sociocultural activity on three planes: participatory appropriation, guided participation, and apprenticeship. In J.V. Wertsch (a cura di), *Sociocultural studies of mind*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 139- 164.

Santi, M. (1993). Philosophizing and Leaming to Think: Some Proposals for a Qualitative Evaluation. *Thinking: The Journal of Philosophy for Children*, 10(3), 16-22.

Santi, M. (2006 [1995]). *Ragionare con il discorso. Il pensiero argomentativo nelle discussioni in classe*. Napoli: Liguori.

Santi, M. (2007). Democracy and inquiry. The internalization of collaborative rules in a community of philosophical discourse. In: D. Camhy (ed.). *Philosophical foundations of innovative learning*. pp. 110-123. Saint Augustin: Academia Verlag.

Santi, M. (2012). Towards "Complex Evaluation". A Short Review and a Triple-Perspective Framework to Evaluate Philosophical Argumentation Activity in the Community of Inquiry. In M. Santi, S. Oliverio (a cura di), *Educating for Complex Thinking through Philosophical Inquiry. Models, Advances, and Proposals for the New Millennium*. Napoli: Liguori.

Schwarz, B. B., & Baker, M. J. (2016). *Dialogue, argumentation and education: History, theory and practice*. Cambridge University Press.

Sharp, A. M., & Splitter, L. (1995). *Teaching for better thinking*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Education Research.

Stein, N.L. , & Miller, C.A. (1990). I Win - You Lose: The Development of Argumentative Thinking, in J.F. Voss, D.N. Perkins, and J. Segal (eds.), *Informal Reasoning and Instruction (265-290)*, Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Volzing, (1981). Kinder Argumentieren. Die ontogenese argumentativer fahigkeiten. (Tr. It. *La capacità argomentativa nel bambino* (1985). Firenze: Giunti- Barbera (1981).

Wilkinson, I. A., Reznitskaya, A., Bourdage, K., Oyler, J., Glina, M., Drewry, R., & Nelson, K. (2017). Toward a more dialogic pedagogy: changing teachers 'beliefs and practices through professional development in language arts classrooms. *Language and education*, *31*(1), 65-82.

Zadunaisky-Erlich, S., (2011). Argumentative discourse of kindergarten children: features of peer talk and children-teacher talk. *Journal of research in Chilhood Education*, 25: 248-267.