Feature Article

INVITING DIVERSE PARTICIPATION: THE ROLE OF STUDENT-GENERATED QUESTIONS IN CLASSROOM COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY

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Using questioning and discussion techniques to drive instruction and meet the needs of diverse learners has been at the forefront of the current standards-based reform in the United States, where learning standards are used to determine academic expectations. The general goal of standards-based education is to ensure that students are acquiring the knowledge and skills that are deemed to be essential for their success in higher education and careers (Great Schools Partnership, 2017). From kindergarten to higher education, questioning has been viewed as a multifaceted strategy that animates learning, improves the quality of classroom instruction, and cultivates students' higher order thinking (Conley, 2011; Danielson, 2011; McLaughlin & Overturf, 2012; Porter, McMaken, Hwang, & Yang, 2011). Given the importance attributed to the role of questioning in students' academic and career success, how questions are incorporated into classroom teaching/learning practices to provide a well-structured, effective instruction for all learners, including English language learners (ELLs), deserves to be extensively studied. As a preliminary comparative study, this paper compares and contrasts Common Core Standards (CCSS) (CCSS, 2011) and Philosophy for Children (P4C) (Lipman, 1991) classroom practices as two approaches to questioning, with a special focus on classroom roles created for students in each approach. The goal is to demonstrate that opportunities afforded by different classroom roles have profound implications of equity and inclusion for ELLs in classroom inquiry communities.

Keywords: Common Core, diversity, language ownership, Philosophy for Children, student-driven learning, student-generated questions

Questioning has been associated with fostering active mental habits and developing critical thinking skills (Chin, 2004; Pearson & Webb, 2008; Peterson & Taylor, 2012). In the K–12 Common Core Standards (CCSS) classroom, where the main educational emphasis is on college and career readiness, teachers use questioning as a learning strategy in which they model and show students how thinking, understanding, and inquiry work together (Rush, Scherff, & Martorana, 2013; Zwiers, O'Hara, & Pritchard, 2014). Because the ability to ask thoughtful questions is a powerful indicator of authentic learning, not surprisingly, teachers' use of questions to drive classroom instruction has been the focus of the current standards-based reform in public school systems. Through the propagation of teacher training videos and professional development workshops, webinars, and seminars, different questioning techniques have been introduced into the classroom and have a profound influence on classroom inquiry processes (Boyles, 2016; Giouroukakis & Cohan, 2014; Kim, 2010; Zwiers et al., 2014).

Questioning in the K–12 CCSS classrooms, however, involves a complex skill set encompassing a pyramid of language and literacy abilities that are also required to comprehend and construct knowledge in content-area studies. Questioning is challenging—especially for English language learners (ELLs) in all stages of English language development—because under the CCSS, ELLs are held to the same high and

rigorous standards as their monolingual peers. While the challenges facing ELLs in CCSS classrooms have been extensively discussed in the existing research literature, most of the current studies regarding the use of classroom questioning are predominantly couched in cognitive and developmental frameworks, with a special focus on addressing the language and cognitive demands of the CCSS (Bunch, Kibler, & Pimentel, 2012; Gibbons, 2003; Quinn, Lee, & Valdés, 2012). While it is paramount that teachers address the aspects of language demands in relation to questioning, studies show that the challenges facing ELLs in the academic setting encompass multiple realms that do not reside just in individuals but also include cultural and social contexts as a function of social interaction taking place in the classroom. Noting the complex contextual characteristics of questioning as a classroom practice, Gibbons (2003) and Quinn et al. (2012) argue that while questioning can be a powerful instructional tool to promote the understanding of concepts and contents in content-area studies, failing to address the social domains and culture specificity of questioning can work to create roadblocks to learning for ELLs.

Adopting a socio-cultural perspective to clarify the intertwinement of classroom context, interpersonal interactions, and emotions such as self-respect and self-confidence, Nieto (2000) noted specifically that classroom environments informed by teachers' choice of instructional strategies could have profound effects on the quality of education ELLs receive. Indeed, there is increasing recognition that teachers' educational beliefs and the ways they view linguistic and cultural diversity may have a deep influence on their own choice and application of strategies and ultimately affect students' growth and learning (Reeves, 2006; Walker, Shafer & Liams, 2004).

Thus, the multiple challenges facing ELLs in the question-driven classroom provide a rationale for us to incorporate broader sociocultural considerations into language and literacy instruction. Framing classroom questioning as a social practice reflecting "ways of participating in the distinctive social and cultural practices of different social and cultural groups" (Gee, 2010, p. 4), this paper compares and contrasts CCSS (CCSS, 2011) and Philosophy for Children (P4C) (Lipman, 1991) classroom practices as two classroom approaches to questioning with respect to the roles and learning opportunities teachers create for ELLs in classroom communities.

Incorporating a Vision of Diversity and Inclusion into the Question-Driven Classroom

Many scholars within the sociocultural tradition remind us that ELLs are more likely to thrive in a learning environment in which teachers, peers, and community members affirm their cognitive, linguistic, and cultural competencies and provide support (August & Hakuta, 1997). In this paper, I use "sociocultural" to denote a broad tradition of research that refers to classroom learning as social practices rather than cognitive processes that are individually based. The implications of conceiving classroom learning as sets of practices are quite far-reaching. Guided by a sociocultural perspective, Street (2006) suggests that classroom learning can be helpfully conceived as participation in a range of valued meaning-making practices, and that these practices are themselves nested within particular activity structures that index desired purposes, roles, and learning outcomes. The CCSS, as the most powerful classroom practice today, in effect represents a particular social practice that privileges questioning as a useful resource for teaching and learning and argues for the importance and prevalence of its use in classrooms (Kim, 2010). From a sociocultural perspective, it is important to keep in mind that other classroom practices do exist and different classroom practices inform teachers' perceptions of whether and how well students can learn and, as a result, shape students' success in learning. In today's classroom environments, where the emphasis on upholding academic standards often runs counter to the needs of diverse learners, ELL students need a support structure that provides them with ample opportunities to use their emerging English skills in meaningful, pro-social learning contexts (August & Hakuta, 1997; Kim, 2010). Hence, the goal of this paper is to ensure that powerful classroom practices are accessible to the full range of our student populations, including ELLs.

In what follows, I discuss some of sociocultural considerations that an effective approach to questioning must include, and on that basis identify ways of incorporating those considerations into classroom questioning.

Teacher-Generated vs. Student-Generated Questions

There is great variation in the role of student participation in the process of questioning in different educational approaches. Educators have expressed both skepticism and reservations about how large a role student-generated questions should play in classroom inquiry. Miyake and Norman (1979) found that the act of asking a good question was cognitively demanding and required considerable domain-specific knowledge. Students therefore might be in a poor position to formulate educationally worthy questions. This distrust of students' capacity to ask educationally productive questions was manifested in the dominant view of teachers as above in the inquiry process and who "facilitate" students' intellectual development by means of "asking questions, by leading discussions, by helping students to raise their minds up from a state of understanding and yet distance himself from the whole process" (Brickhouse & Smith, 1997, p. 313). Embedded in this idea of teacher-as-facilitator and as the ultimate source of knowledge is the notion of questioning as a standard, decontextualized skill devoid of social and cultural contexts. According to Kumaravadivelu (1993), Oplatka (2006), and Palincsar (1986), this way of seeing questioning as a context-neutral, individual skill might have negative consequences for ELLs, because teachers adopting this model tend to miss opportunities to engage students in community resources and incorporate diversity to transform education.

Recognition that student-generated questions can be a useful instructional tool in motivating students to learn has been increasing. Chin (2004) defined student-generated questions as questions raised or created by students, and included examples such as questions students generated about the material covered or class discussions and as questions in which students relate to or challenge their prior knowledge or experience. Scardamalia & Bereiter (1992) view student-generated questions as an important element in the pedagogical cycle of teaching and learning and an effective instructional strategy to enhance learning and increase student interest, enthusiasm, and engagement. Creating a student-driven environment, however, does not mean that teachers should take a back seat in students' learning process. On the contrary, in fact: teachers should continue to play an active role in encouraging students to ask questions by positioning themselves as a co-participant in the classroom community inquiry.

Interpreting Socrates' social dialogue method as a pretext to reflect on contemporary schooling, Magrini (2012) states that the real objective of questioning is a quest for a deeper self-understanding through dialogue with others, and asserts that authentic learning can occur only in dialogue, in the live interaction that takes place in the classroom. Because dialogues are usually constructive and participatory, both teachers and students should be participants in generating questions, engaging in the same pursuit of inquiry, and serving as actual co-learners and co-educators to each other. From this perspective, the key to distinguishing questioning as a mode of authentic learning from questioning as a mere instructional technique is to incorporate student-generated questions in classroom learning.

Text-Based Instruction vs. Knowledge-Based Instruction

Commenting on the nature of classrooms as communities of practice, Boylan (2001) asserts that the ways teachers and students interact through questioning is a pervasive practice in school classrooms and can offer insights into the nature of these social practices. From this socially situated perspective (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), questioning is not only confined to the classroom, but can also originate in social settings and hence is intrinsically "hermeneutical" in the sense that language, understanding, and interpretation are inseparable (Gadamer, 1989).

In light of hermeneutics, we can speak of two kinds of classroom authority. On the one hand, there is "the authority of the text," which is adjudicated through textuality at its limits (Curkpatrick, 2001, p. 150). On the other hand, there is another classroom authority, one that can be adjudicated only through human experience and understanding. This authority, according to Gadamer (1989), constitutes the conditions of a "hermeneutical circle"—i.e., the sociocultural conditions surrounding the text, which can only be revealed, yet never fully disclosed, to us through active questioning and interaction with others.

In light of the distinction made between two kinds of classroom authority, one text based and the other broad based, we can speak of two types of instruction in relation to the use of questioning in classrooms: one is text based and the other knowledge based (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1992). Though the two are not completely exclusive, they do represent two distinct classroom practices.

In text-based instruction, lessons are centered on the authority of the text and questions are generally about the text. The goal of questioning in this approach is the analytic articulation of the text. While the range might go from high-level critical or analytical questions, down through questions about the meanings of unfamiliar words, to questions that are merely grammatical variations of text statements (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1992), the common objective of this instruction remains focusing its attention on the critical analysis of the text.

In contrast, a different orientation—the knowledge-based approach—to the educational role of questioning may be seen in the tradition of Socrates and its contemporary manifestation in progressive education (Magrini, 2012). According to Gadamer (1989), the broad aim of questioning is not to make an analytical consideration of the text, but to express awareness and wonder and pursue the understanding and knowledge of the self. In that goal, questioning is seen as an integral part of the literacy practice that seeks to assist students in their effort to make sense of the relation between words and the world.

The two kinds of instruction—text based and knowledge based—are not exclusive to each other and hence have a respective role in classroom inquiry. In their investigation of students' ability to ask and recognize educationally productive questions, Scardamalia & Bereiter (1992) demonstrated that students tended to self-adjust the kind of questions they asked according to their level of knowledge about a particular topic. If they lack the basic knowledge about a topic, as, for example, fossil fuels, they will ask questions for which they expect to find answers in the text, such as "Is food a fossil fuel?" or "What is the difference between fossil fuels and other types of fuels?" If they already have the basic understanding of the topic, they ask questions that have the potential to challenge their conceptual comprehension and can be further developed into questions of wonder—that is, questions expressing their sense of awe or curiosity, such as "Is everything either a fuel or needs a fuel?" or "Are something alive and fuels?" (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1992, p. 188). In other words, asking text-based questions does not preclude students also asking stimulant questions that challenge their preconceived notion of a topic and help them develop an understanding of knowledge as a complex and ongoing process.

The notion of questioning as a tool to pursue self-knowledge is particularly important for ELLs. It is not enough that teachers provide students with ample opportunities to ask questions; they also need to employ effective strategies to encourage them to take a more active role in classroom learning. Chin (2004) suggested that teachers can ask students to write down their questions before performing a task to help them direct their inquiry and to jump-start the process of investigation and discussions. For example, before undertaking a group activity on photosynthesis, students might ask: "What is the purpose of this activity?" Then, while working on their tasks, the students could also think about text-based questions such as "Where is the energy used in photosynthesis obtained?" Finally, as a summarizing activity, the students can ask questions reflecting what they had wondered, what had puzzled them, or what they needed to know or clarify to understand more deeply about the topic in question.

If we want students to take a more active role in classroom inquiry, control over decision making and interaction must be equitably shared. An effective way to share classroom authority is to encourage students to ask meaningful questions. Studies show that a common problem ESL teachers are facing is to

deal with a passive class, especially when they seek participation in a class dialogue, such as asking questions (Chin, 2004; Faruji, 2011; Ma, 2008; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1992). While it is necessary that teachers understand how the dynamics of classroom interaction influence students' self-perceptions and participation in classroom activities, one of the most enabling teaching methods is to use authentic questions generated from students to promote classroom interaction.

In light of the above discussion, we may conclude that the classroom structure created by teachers' choice of instructional strategies and the student role in classroom inquiry can ultimately determine the pattern of classroom interaction and students' participation in classroom activities, and the opportunities for and efficiency of target language acquisition.

Juxtaposing Two Classroom Approaches to Questioning

Using the above sociocultural considerations, which focus heavily on the nature of the classroom structure, activities, or the environment in which learning occurs as a theoretical lens, I will examine CCSS-aligned (CCSS, 2011) and Philosophy for Children (P4C) (Lipman, 1991) classroom practices to determine their respective approaches to questioning, paying particular attention to the classroom role they assign to students. As a stage of inquiry preliminary to a more systematic comparative analysis of student-generated questions, this study seeks to explore the promises and pitfalls of each approach in inviting more diverse classroom participation. Before delving into the discussion of each approach, however, I wish to caution the reader that I do not intend to present *the* CCSS approach or *the* Philosophy for Children approach, as there is no one way that is representative of each. Rather, I base this paper on my own experiences, my research, and what I have observed in each respective classroom.

A Common Core-Aligned Approach

In seeking to develop a critical perspective of the current classroom questioning practices, the collection for this study burgeoned into a wide array of material of all sorts: teachers' webs such as articles, teacher blogs, professional development videos and webinars, school curricula, and many other documents, in addition to what I gathered from my own teaching experience as well as my experience as a practicum supervisor observing classroom teachers. As a preliminary inquiry, I have confined my research to the first 100 items I found, and identified trends and patterns emerging within these initial data. Taking shape within this preliminary research is a questioning model I see to be widely circulating in the CCSS classrooms (for examples, see Boyles, 2016; Giouroukakis & Cohan, 2014; Zwiers et al., 2014). While there were wide inconsistencies in the way this model was implemented in each individual classroom, it has successfully established the prevailing norm and expectation for which both teachers and students are held accountable.

By far the largest number of items I amassed concerned the types or cognitive levels of questions (such as convergent vs. divergent), and hence the questioning techniques teachers used in classrooms (n = 96/100) (for examples, see Giouroukakis & Cohan, 2014; Zwiers et al., 2014), but there were very few studies (n = 4/100) about students' role in generating questions in the classrooms (for examples, see Kim, 2010; Ratzel, 2013).

As the overarching goal of the CCSS is to move students toward deeper, student-driven learning and performance, we might wonder why the use of student-generated questions is conspicuously absent in the data. During an initial probing into this phenomenon, I focused on the sociocultural considerations within my data, indicating factors that might have limited teachers' ability to negotiate more student-driven learning and thus could have explained their reluctance to allow student-generated questions in their classrooms.

I note that the use of questioning in the CCSS classroom is mostly framed in the context that focuses on college and career readiness and shifts toward more reading complexity. In this mindset, teachers are expected to utilize questioning in the classroom to help students think more deeply about the texts

around them, and in so doing, to transform their learning (Bunch et al., 2012). Also emerging within the data, however, is the overwhelming concern to support the culturally and linguistically diverse population within current school systems in meeting more demanding academic expectations (Bunch et al., 2012; Calderón, Slavin, & Sánchez, 2011). In order to guide diverse learners through thinking and using strategies independently, CCSS placed teacher questions and questioning techniques at the center of student learning (Bunch et al., 2012; Shanahan, 2013).

Gradual Release of Responsibility model. My findings show that a key strategy used to support diverse learners in the CCSS classroom is the Gradual Release of Responsibility model (Giouroukakis & Cohan, 2014; Kim, 2010; Peterson & Taylor, 2012). As a guided instruction, the goal of this model is to guide students through using strategies independently, shifting from the teacher's assuming "all the responsibility for performing a task . . . to a situation in which the students assume all of the responsibility" (Duke & Pearson, 2002, p. 211). Referred to as "I do it, we do it, and you do it," Gradual Release of Responsibility emphasizes the role of teachers in setting instructional goals, designing instructional activities, and engaging ELLs meaningfully in the learning process (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Pearson & Webb, 2008).

As part of the Gradual Release Responsibility model, teachers must make sure their language objectives are being aligned with content objectives. Most CCSS classrooms start with a question, typically one that is open-ended, with multiple entry points for individualization by students based on their interests or prior knowledge (Kim, 2010; Ratzel, 2013). The model allows students to build questions, utilizing their prior skills and knowledge and adding depth and complexity as they progress. Teachers guide this process by gradually giving authority to students to "own" their questioning until they move to center stage and act as their own experts (Boyles, 2016; Giouroukakis & Cohan, 2014; Zwiers et al., 2014).

The questions that are used in the Gradual Release Responsibility model can be defined in three types—coaching, facilitating, and collaborating—with each corresponding to a different stage in the model, as teachers gradually release responsibility to promote the development of student ownership in both content and language learning (Kim, 2010):

- *Coaching questions.* Teachers use coaching questions to help students monitor their own thinking and language learning as well as to communicate learning expectations and goals with students, such as a teacher's asking students to add more information or modeling a class activity.
- *Facilitating questions.* Facilitating questions are questions used to deepen student understanding about language and text while maintaining a supportive classroom learning environment, such as inviting student input or helping them articulate or expand on what they said.
- *Collaborative questions.* Collaborative questions serve the ultimate goal of the Gradual Release of Responsibility model by helping teachers to engage students in dialogue about personal experiences, to encourage pro-social interaction/collaboration, and to gauge students' views of learning in the class.

Findings show that the Gradual Release of Responsibility model has been gaining increased visibility and popularity in CCSS-aligned classrooms as an instructional strategy to help struggling students, including ELLs, use emerging language skills to participate in inquiry-based learning and other classroom activities. As an instructional framework, it purposefully shifts responsibility within the learning process from the teacher to the eventual independence of students (Boyles, 2016; Giouroukakis & Cohan, 2014; Zwiers et al., 2014).

While the Gradual Release of Responsibility model has been characterized by its supporters as promoting a student-centered, communication-oriented classroom culture, the existing related empirical studies remain primarily focused on the role of teachers in scaffolding (that is, coaching and facilitating)

students' learning through questions to communicate learning expectations or deepen text comprehension (Faruji, 2011; Hill & Grossman, 2013; Kim, 2010). A significant body of research literature has studied the lost opportunities in classroom discourse when teachers missed the opportunity to ask students, especially ELLs, questions that require them to draw on their personal experiences as a way to invite them to engage in active classroom dialogue. A number of studies also have shown that teachers generally are reluctant to share classroom authority with students and often choose to initiate the context and the questions for students to use (see for example, Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2014; Hill & Grossman, 2013). In other words, there were very few references to students' role in asking questions, let alone about teachers allowing students' questioning skills and curiosities to drive the classroom inquiry.

Competing goals. If we take into consideration social, political, and cultural factors that might affect teachers' choice of instructional strategies, we would see that there is an inevitable tension between the goal of student-driven learning and today's school and instructional climate, which emphasizes standards-based instruction and assessment. From the findings in my study and my own experience working with practicum teachers, I have noted that, driven by the pressure to meet the requirements of high-stakes accountability, teachers in the CCSS classroom often regressed to the classroom role of teachers as modeling, coaching, and facilitating and hence to an instructional practice that focuses on the narrowly defined, so-called "academic" skills.

Teachers' choice of instructional strategy to engage students can have profound implications for ELLs' participation in classroom discussions. In the CCSS classroom, questioning in general was framed as a text-based instructional strategy and taught as an autonomous learning skill reinforced through external feedback and drilling, rather than as an integrated part of a literacy practice embedded in students' quest for self-knowledge and in their deep-seated desire to communicate their dreams and aspirations. From the perspective of promoting and implementing active and authentic learning, the CCSS approach to questioning and classroom instruction being examined in this study falls short of being a holistic approach to education that takes into account ELLs' cognitive, social, and cultural strengths and hence fails to utilize the complex linguistic repertoire that characterizes their lives and rich community resources.

Given that a test-driven school culture and its attendant accountability systems may not be congenial to the marriage of the CCSS and authentic learning, it may not be enough merely to use questions to direct student inquiry or as a springboard for classroom discussion. In order to promote a classroom culture that stimulates higher level cognitive and metacognitive learning as well as helps students direct their own inquiry so that they can take increasing ownership of their learning process, teachers need to take a proactive stance and employ effective strategies to encourage students to ask questions.

The Philosophy for Children Approach

Like many Philosophy for Children (P4C) practitioners, I was attracted to it because, as an instructional approach committed to higher order learning, it provides an alternative paradigm of teaching within the structures of public school systems. P4C is a Socratic-inquiry approach developed by Matthew Lipman (Lipman, 1991). Prompted by what he saw as a lack of critical thinking in campuses, he founded P4C in the belief that philosophy education, as a tool to promote critical thinking, should start at an early age.

P4C is a teaching method that features the Socratic method as a pedagogic framework in which students dialogue with each other about questions of philosophical significance. Influenced by John Dewey's idea of democracy in education, Lipman believed that teaching children to think critically is a key influential move toward a more democratic form of democracy. P4C has been recognized by UNESCO as a major educational innovation and is supported by positive results from a number of controlled studies around the world in diverse demographic settings (UNESCO, 2007).

Though the methods employed in P4C vary, crucial to its program is the development of a classroom environment conducive to peer interaction. In such a classroom community, the emphasis is on promoting live conversation, which creates its discussion agenda from questions posed by students as a

response to some stimulus—whether text or some other media—with the goal of encouraging students to join together in developing their own ideas about the concepts under discussion (Kennedy, 2004).

Hence, a characteristic of P4C's dialogic approach and setting it apart from other inquiry-based approaches is that, instead of teacher-created questions, students will generate their own questions from the text and then choose their questions to discuss. The process usually begins with the reading of a text, followed by the formulation of questions, an analysis of similarities and differences between the questions, choosing a question for the ensuing dialogue, the dialogue, and an evaluation (Gardner, 1996; Hagaman, 1990; Kennedy, 2004). The P4C classroom procedure can be recapitulated in these steps:

- The teacher introduces and establishes the discussion context
- Students brainstorm and craft questions
- Students prioritize their questions
- Students decide the discussion agenda
- Students reflect on what they have learned

There is openness in P4C about how student-generated questions are implemented. Typically, a question was chosen according to a vote; the question that received the highest number of votes became the question for the dialogue. As an alternate, participants could also discuss the similarities and differences between the proposed questions and then dialogue to propose a new question (Schiff, 2016). Either way, students were provided with opportunities to have a deeper discussion in small groups about the potential possibilities for the inquiry session before actually undertaking it, and as a result they were more likely to develop ownership in their learning. In the preliminary dialogue, students were provided with opportunities to learn how to make a group decision by communicating with each other to consider the interests of everyone involved (Brubaker, 2012; Gardner, 1996; Kennedy, 2004).

One of the rationales for P4C's inclusion of student-generated questions is that there is space for students to have input in what discussion will be pursued. For the same reason, P4C operates on the basis of reading culturally responsive literature that is close to students' interests and believes that the literature is a privileged experience for all students—and especially for those who are struggling and more vulnerable (Chirouter, 2013). By incorporating elements that appeal to students' experience, interests, and cultures, P4C's methods aim to affirm students' experience and voice, making them feel valued and having something to contribute to the learning that takes place in classrooms. Unlike the CCSS classroom approach, which places a premium on "text complexity" and "academic rigor" (CCSS, 2012, p. 3) and includes a larger focus on nonfiction, informational, and argument-based texts, P4C advocates using learners' friendly and culturally responsive stories as a pedagogical method, especially when working with diverse students in small groups. Stories encourage students to communicate literary and cultural heritages while helping them explore the relationships among the self, the text, and the world (Chirouter, 2013; Hagaman, 1990; Lipman, 1991). In explaining the benefits of P4C, Ann Sharp, a key P4C theorist, wrote:

> [T]he commitment to engage in a community of inquiry is a political commitment even on the elementary school level. In a real sense, it is a commitment to freedom, open debate, pluralism, self-government and democracy . . . It is only to the extent that individuals have had the experience of dialoguing with others as equals, participating in shared public inquiry that they will be able to eventually take an active role in the shaping of a democratic society. (Sharp, 1993, p. 343)

Thus, P4C is based on the premise that learning to ask effective questions is interconnected with learning how to live a productive and meaningful civic life in which the vision of diversity and inclusion is embraced. Given the learning potential inherent in student-generated questions, P4C makes question-asking an integral part of a rich learning experience. The dialogue between students in the process of

producing their own questions constitutes a genuine moment of active learning and hence is more likely to promote critical reflection on knowledge and text.

Like all teaching strategies, P4C comes with some doubts and concerns about how it affects and helps the students, especially with ELLs. While previous studies have documented the instructional benefits of P4C in various fields, very little empirical research has identified rigorous evidence that its classroom practices support differentiated approaches for ELLs. Nevertheless, P4C recognizes that each student brings unique experiences, strengths, and ideas to our classrooms and provides a way to explore and incorporate these differences to enrich learning in those settings.

Conclusion

CCSS (2011) and Philosophy for Children P4C (Lipman, 1991) classroom practices are different philosophically and pedagogically. While the CCSS approach to questioning provides educators an opportunity to address equity and inclusion in the school system, due to the centrality of text complexity and close reading in the CCSS curriculum—in combination with the accountability system and the test-driven school climate—teachers tend to be reluctant to relinquish their control in classrooms, and may even regress to the narrower mindset of teaching to the test. Consequently, teachers often miss opportunities to foster an authentic learning context in which cultural and linguistic diversities could be incorporated as a source for learning, in which student voice and diverse participation can be nurtured and allowed to thrive. P4C offers an alternative pedagogical approach and classroom procedure by inviting students to set the discussion agenda and make classroom decisions. In P4C, student participation is placed at the center of a pedagogical approach that allows the learning experience to take shape through students' engaging each other in questioning, dialogue, and learning how to "talk coherently, and expressively and at the same time listen to each other" (Ndofirepi, Wadesango, Machingambi, Maphosa, & Mutekwe, 2013, p. 171). The practice of P4C thus implies live interaction that takes note of diverse viewpoints, values, interests, and literacy practices existing within today's school communities (Lipman, 1991).

The differences, however, between the CCSS and the Philosophy for Children in their respective approaches to questioning are not always readily apparent. While there are gaps remaining to be addressed in each classroom questioning approach in terms of meeting the multiple needs of ELLs in classroom communities, the juxtaposition of both approaches provides a hope of integrating the benefits of each for the sake of ELLS. It is hoped that there will be room in the CCSS vision and principles for student-driven learning to thrive. If teachers can free themselves from cumbersome and bureaucratic CCSS demands, they will be able to identify places where there are opportunities to place student participation at the heart of their classroom instruction. Encouraging students to generate their questions has the potential to promote students' interest in the topics being discussed and help them connect the material to something for which they have a passion and to broader life experiences. As a result, as students continue to build up their ability to ask questions and find solutions to increasingly more complex kinds of tasks, they will be able to follow their learning passions and take more ownership of their learning process.

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