What Challenges and Opportunities pertain to introducing Philosophy with Children (PwC) in Schools to foster migrant Children and Youth's wellbeing?

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MiCREATE
The Philosophy in Schools project: https://www.sdu.dk/da/filosofiiskolen

What is Philosophy with Children?
- One field – many traditions: PwC, P4C, PwC/P4C, P4T (read e.g. Välitalo, Juuso, and Sutinen (2016) and Vansieleghem and Kennedy (2011) as brief introductions to the field, its history and prevailing trends)
- Shared features and ideals:
  - Not about teaching *about* philosophy to children, but about *doing* philosophy with children
  - "Teaching" PwC involves a fundamental role-shift from teacher to facilitator (D. Kennedy, 2004)
  - The class is constructed as a 'Community of Philosophical Inquiry' (N. Kennedy & Kennedy, 2011)
  - The facilitator provides a stimulus (i.e. read a book, tell a story, use probs in form of dolls or teddy bears, or paper and pen) to initiate a dialogue amongst the students on abstract, yet engaging topics, e.g. 'freedom', 'justice', 'home', 'friendship'
  - Students usually sit in a circle or semicircle (on chairs or on a rug) and contributes with thoughts and ideas to the dialogue
  - The dialogue – its direction and content – is, ideally, driven by the students.

What is the Philosophy in Schools project?
- Project period: 2017-
- Launches and investigates PwC activities in Danish schools
- Runs a professional development program for teachers and philosophy students and graduates
- The PwC practice is inspired by the Philosophy Foundation approach (see e.g.Worley, 2011)

Why Philosophy with Children?
- Research indicates that PwC can have a positive impact on minority children' emotion knowledge and langue proficiency (Gimnéz-Dasí, Quintanilla, Ojeda, & Lucas-Molina, 2017) and a positive impact on children's empathy in general (Schertz, 2007)
- PwC might cause awareness in teachers about values and pedagogical beliefs as a prerequisite for reevaluation and change of practices (K. S. Murris, 2008)
- PwC can lead to raised understanding in teachers about unseen potentials and abilities of children, not least minority children (Jensen, unpublished1)
- PwC might function as a participatory mechanism (Barrow, 2010)
- PwC can be a promotor for change, underpinning a democratic and inclusive development of schools and classrooms (Green, 2009; Lin & Sequeira, 2017)

- PwC offers tools to
  - counterbalance the power hierarchy between teacher and student
  - asking questions that engage students to provide their viewpoints and ideas, i.e. by differentiating between open/closed questions/mindsets (Worley, 2015)
  - enable teachers to provide a space where children's epistemological and ontological status as 'beings' is prioritized (K. Murris, 2013)
  - improve the langue skills of children, who are identified as poor readers (Jenkins & Lyle, 2010)
- PwC might be a useful supplementary tool to art-based approaches to data collection and integration school practices:
  - Full PwC sessions introduced in diverse classrooms
  - Questioning techniques and reflection on mindset, drawn from PwC, used as an add-on to art-based approaches, for instance urban-drawing and photography exercises (e.g. Barker & Weller, 2003; Quiroz, Milam-Brooks, & Adams-Romena, 2013)

Attention points
- On the teachers' level
  - The role-shift from teacher to facilitator raises concerns in teachers (Jensen, unpublished2)
    - How to remain neutral as a facilitator
    - How to manage the lacking of control of content and course of dialogue
    - How to manage student behavior as a facilitator
  - PwC can cause 'Moments of disequilibrium' for teachers (Haynes & Murris, 2011):
    - Preparing for the Unexpected
    - Non-linear Progression (in dialogue)
    - The Difficulty of asking Philosophical Questions
    - Students Ownership of Questions
    - Epistemological and Moral Relativism
  - The trap of instrumentalization (Barrow, 2010; Jackson, 2008; K. S. Murris, 2008)
  - It requires immense training to master facilitator skills (posing the right questions, sending the right signals etc., distributing turns)
- On the structural lever
  - Prevailing trends in education are in opposition to dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2018; Lyle, 2008; Wilkinson et al., 2017)

Questions for further consideration
- What are the most suitable stories, pictures, questions used in PwC sessions targeting diverse classrooms?
- How can PwC and art-based approaches be combined to foster the well-being of migrant children?
- To what extend must PwC practices be introduced in schools to have a positive impact on integration of migrant children?
- What are the main obstacles for introducing PwC (inspired) activities in our local context?
- How can cross-European cooperation be used in the handling of local obstacles pertaining to introducing PwC (inspired) activities in schools?

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