
PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATION AND MEANING-MAKING: THE VALUE OF THE PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN MOVEMENT FOR CHINESE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

Since the development of the Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement by such scholars as Matthew Lipman, there has been a wide interest and application around the world. This is slowly being applied in China as well. In terms of theoretical research, P4C entered China in 1976. Practical application of P4C has also gradually increased. However, there has been little interaction between researchers and front-line teachers. This research will contend that the P4C theory and practice are now increasingly important, as they can aid Chinese education reform to meet the goals of the 2022 version of the Chinese Curriculum Standards. It will show both theoretical and practical ways in which P4C can help Chinese language teachers improve the quality of their classes and foster the development of creativity, critical thinking, and reading ability.

Keywords: Philosophy for Children; P4C; Chinese Education; Matthew Lipman

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Introduction

Philosophy for children (P4C) has been drawing increasing attention from the education authorities in China, and many places have made attempts to implement it to varying degrees. However, there are still difficulties in fully integrating it into the school curriculum. In terms of theoretical research, P4C entered China in 1976.² The practical application has also gradually increased. However, theoretical researchers and front-line teachers seldom have an opportunity to communicate, which makes its implementation more difficult. One of the earliest applications of P4C in terms of practical teaching was conducted by Kunming Nan Station Primary School, which achieved good results. Subsequently, P4C was successfully introduced to schools in Shenzhen, Beijing, and Shanghai.³ However, it has not yet been fully implemented. Although many universities in China have conducted research into the theory and practice of P4C, in actual classrooms in China, the proportion of P4C in the overall curriculum is very small.

In 2022, the Chinese government passed the New Compulsory Education Curriculum Standards.⁴ This was passed as a reform of Chinese language learning. Front-line teachers are often experiencing difficulties in understanding and implementing these educational reforms. P4C is not only of great help for enhancing children's thinking, but also in aiding the implementation of the new national standards. It can help Chinese language teachers improve the quality of their classes in the classroom, and guide children to read and reflect outside the classroom, promoting communication and practice in writing. There are some influential non-

² Yanxia,Zhang, Action Research on “Problem Orientation” Style Primary School” Moral Classes Penetrating Children’s Philosophical Thinking. *Shanxi Normal University*. 2022.

³ Jing, Gong, *Research on Chinese Teaching in Primary Schools based on P4C*. Hunan Normal University, 2021.

⁴ Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. Compulsory Education Chinese Curriculum Standards (2022 edition). Beijing Normal University Publishing Group, 2022. 义务教育语文课标 年版本, 中华人民共和国教育部定制, 北京师范大学出版集团出版集团 2022

governmental organizations and apps for children's philosophy training in society, but their scale is very limited.

P4C not only develops a child's thinking ability, but it also motivates children to explore Chinese reading, organize and express content with logic, connect school learning with life through reflection, and explore the meaning of their own lives. This ultimately achieves the solid implementation of Chinese key competencies.

Lipman and the Individual Development of Children

Mathew Lipman is credited with starting the Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement in the 1970s. To promote the development of critical thinking in schools, he founded the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC). In his 1988 book *Philosophy Goes to School*, he discusses how a child's exposure to philosophy can contribute to the development of their emotions, interests, attitudes, and other aspects of personal development. He writes that it can lead to a heightened eagerness to learn and share with others, together with the development of other aspects of the individual personality.⁵ It provides structure to help develop a critical thinking process while preserving creativity. This approach, through encouraging discussion along with the reinforcement of discussion rules, develops the ability of the child to develop reflection skills. Such discussion improves the children's awareness of the other's personalities, interests, values, beliefs, and biases. That means their interpersonal sensitivity is fostered. It is a prerequisite for a child's social development and sound social judgment. It enhances their very capacity for growth. It also generates in children a mutually reinforcing set of intellectual and emotional traits that can develop them well beyond where they would have been had these factors been developed in isolation from one another.⁶ This combination of discipline and creativity, rules and play,

⁵ Matthew Lipman, *Philosophy Goes to School* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988).

⁶ Matthew Lipman, *Thinking in Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

intellect and emotion, is very important. It becomes extremely valuable for promoting reform in the Chinese setting.

Philosophy for Children in China

The Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement is now being recognized by an increasing number of Chinese academic and professional bodies. Universities and research institutions have established dedicated programs and departments, while conferences, workshops, and publications have increased, facilitating scholarly exchange. One of these institutions includes a laboratory of thought analysis established by Tianqun Pan at Nanjing University in 2012. Furthermore, Pan established the Philosophy for Children Academic Society in Jiangsu province in 2021. This reflects his dedication to exploring philosophical practice in diverse contexts and for different age groups. Xiamen University's Nanqiang Philosophy for Children Research Center, founded by Jianbo Cao in 2019, epitomizes this trend by promoting P4C within the region. The center has distinguished itself through initiatives such as the annual P4C summer school, which equips educators with the tools to incorporate philosophical inquiry into their pedagogical practices. The Nanqiang P4C research center extends its influence through a series of lectures and demonstration classes, drawing millions of participants both at lecture hall and online. By 2023, it had established thirteen practice bases across cities, including Xiamen, Fuzhou, Quanzhou, Nanjing, and Ghangzhou. These centers facilitate the spread of P4C, allowing a diverse cohort of educators and students to delve into philosophical practice. Other centers with a more indirect connection to P4C include the Philosophy Cafe at Inner Mongolia University, inaugurated in 2017 by Huiling Wang. This offers a novel setting for philosophical engagement. The cafe's emphasis on philosophical performance and interaction provides an immersive experience that invites participants to explore philosophical dilemmas, interact with classic philosophical texts, and appreciate various perspectives, nurturing personal philosophical thoughts. The Hong Kong Philosophy Café was established in 1999 under the vision of Stephen R.

Palmquist from Hong Kong Baptist University. The Hong Kong Practical Philosophy Society (HKPPS) was founded in 2010. The HKPPS offers certification courses led by prominent figures such as Lou Marinoff. In Taiwan, a philosophical counseling curriculum was established at Fu Jen Catholic University's Department of Philosophy, created by Bernard Li in 2003. Li's contribution continued with the founding of the Taiwan Philosophical Counseling Association (TPCA) in 2011, a pivotal entity in the professional growth of philosophical counseling in Taiwan. The TPCA's certification courses offer comprehensive training to aspirants, covering both the theoretical and practical dimensions of philosophical practice while adhering to established professional and ethical standards.⁷

China has its own complex philosophical, cultural, and ideological foundation, which needs to be considered when considering the development of P4C in China. Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism have been the underpinnings of philosophical practice in China. Confucianism is central to China's philosophical tapestry, advocating a life of moral rectitude and harmonious social relationships. Five constant virtues (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness) underpin the practical ethos of Confucian thought. Confucianism's moral and ethical frameworks have always structured Chinese society. Daoism has offered a contrasting philosophical perspective that values harmony with the Dao, or the essential nature of the universe. This school promotes simplicity and adaptability, advocating for a deep, intuitive connection with the world and peaceful coexistence with its rhythms. Buddhism, although of foreign origin, has become intimately woven into the fabric of Chinese philosophical thought and promotes the cessation of suffering through the development of wisdom and ethical living.⁸ Currently, Chinese educational reform is faced with the promotion of creativity and critical thinking, with

⁷ Huiping Ding and Li Xie, "Philosophy for Children: Development, Challenges, and Prospects in China," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 41, no. 2 (2014): 210-220.

⁸ Huiping Ding and Li Xie, "Philosophy for Children: Development, Challenges, and Prospects in China," 215.

a preservation of the more traditional philosophical heritage of China. As globalization continues, P4C is in a perfect position to promote this balancing. It integrates the theoretical framework, methodologies, and applications of philosophical practice from Western tradition while also engaging with textbooks, story materials, and debate-themed novels, and applies this in a Chinese context.

Zhenyu Gao summarizes children's philosophy as an educational program based on the training of logical thinking ability, allowing children to experience the pleasure in the process of exploring philosophy, eliminating philosophical confusion in daily life, helping them find the meaning of life, and establishing their own meaningful world.⁹ He also writes about the difficulties of using Lipman's philosophy in a Chinese context. Gao also addresses the problem of how to localize the Western-based Philosophy for Children (P4C) for Chinese educators. This has been a problem in the past four decades, and one of the key solutions might be the reconsideration and redevelopment of the current models of P4C based on the traditional wisdom of ancient Chinese philosophers. Confucius emphasized active and independent thinking and community learning. His dialogical pedagogy can be seen as inherently connected to the P4C, whose Western source is widely considered the Socratic dialogue. Therefore, the reconstruction of the purpose, orientation, and strategies of the community of philosophical inquiry is necessary in order to establish a solid foundation for P4C in China.¹⁰ This is why the engagement of P4C with Chinese Language Learning is so important. It becomes the testing ground for the integration of P4C principles with traditional Confucian education.

⁹ Zhenyu Gao, "The Philosophical Foundation for the Birth of Children's Philosophy," *Studies in Preschool Education*, 2008.

¹⁰ Zhenyu Gao, and H. N. University, "The Reconstruction and Innovation of the Community of Inquiry in Philosophy for Children from the Perspective of Confucian Dialogical Pedagogy," *Research in Educational Development*, 2018.

Practical Application

Due to the relatively late start of children's philosophy in China, Chinese teachers have not received comprehensive philosophical training. The preparation of the teaching staff requires more effort in the creation of teachers' handbooks. The Western researchers Topper and Trickey wrote the book *A Teacher's Guide to Philosophy for Children*, which provides guidelines for teaching P4C, outlining the key abilities of teachers in philosophical exploration. These include: philosophical curiosity, an open mindset, good facilitation skills, the ability to create an emotional atmosphere, and the ability to integrate courses.¹¹ This provides a direction for teacher training.

Another important obstacle to the promotion of children's philosophy in China is the lack of systematic measurement. Topper and Trickey also provided a standardized test template for children's philosophy development. This template mainly covers children's cognitive abilities, including logical reasoning, concept discrimination, and problem-solving skills. Critical thinking, which includes evidence evaluation, identification of logical fallacies, and the ability to think from multiple perspectives. The social, emotional, and cooperative ability test includes communication and listening skills, empathy and conflict resolution, and metacognitive reflection.

There has been some work on the application of P4C in various schools in China. The work in Kunming was already mentioned. Jessica Wang, in her research, found that P4C is important in developing moral education.¹² Her work explores the moral meanings embedded in the interpersonal interactions in a classroom community of inquiry, and their implications for moral education. She follows Matthew Lipman's educational vision to reconstruct our understandings of children and education through the inspiration of philosophy, and particularly to make

¹¹ J. Keith Topping and Steven Trickey, *A Teacher's Guide to Philosophy for Children* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), 42-55.

¹² Jessica Wang, "Exploring Moral Education Through Philosophy for Children in China," *Journal of Moral Education* 47, no. 3 (2018): 275-295.

P4C useful for moral education. She claims that blending theory with practice can lead to a better understanding of the possibilities of moral education in philosophy for children.¹³

P4C and Chinese Core Literacy

The 2022 New Curriculum Standards formulated by the Ministry of Education of China clearly state that the Chinese education curriculum aims to promote the development of a student's core literacy. This idea of core literacy involves cultural confidence, language application, thinking ability, and aesthetic creativity. Philosophy for Children mainly focuses on training children's thinking abilities. It allows children to experience the pleasure in the process of exploring philosophy, eliminating philosophical confusion in daily life, helping them find meaning of life, and establishing their own meaningful world.¹⁴ In the process of building cultural confidence, it is necessary to have an understanding of the outstanding achievements of one's cultural background. And philosophy is undoubtedly an outstanding achievement in human civilization.

In terms of language application, an important emphasis of P4C is expression. Through the development of expression can promote the improvement of not only their thinking ability, but also their language application ability. Core literacy refers to the associative imagination, analysis and comparison, induction, and judgment, etc. that students perform in the process of Chinese language learning. It allows the child's thinking process to possess a certain degree of agility, flexibility, profundity, uniqueness, criticality, and a strong desire for the heart and knowledge.

Formal logic and informal logic play an important role in P4C. Formal logic takes deduction and induction as its object, while informal logic is about discovering and analyzing arguments, improving the

¹³ Jessica Wang, "Exploring Moral Education Through Philosophy for Children in China," 280.

¹⁴ Zhenyu Gao, "The Philosophical Foundation for the Birth of Children's Philosophy," *Studies in Preschool Education*, 2008.

standards, procedures, and patterns of these arguments. The development of skill in logic provides children with a more complete framework for analysis, judgment, induction, and comparison, and increases the possibility of achieving their goals. Logic also complements the child's creativity. The development of the habit of long-term reflection through dialogue undoubtedly can enhance children's creativity.

Classroom examples for Chinese Language Learning

Xiao-dong Liu suggests that P4C should be done in connection with a child's developmental stage. He writes that it "should be carried out in a leisurely manner according to the inner time of the development of children (that is, the time of children's natural time, not the time of the mechanical clock)."¹⁵

There has also been research in the use of stories in P4C. Stories have been the major way to educate children since the most ancient of times. Children also love to tell stories. American education scholar and author Vivian Gussin Paley suggests that we should listen carefully to a child's storytelling in order to enter the children's imaginative country and spy on their mysterious world of thought. Children use stories to express themselves and organize themselves. Teachers should pay more attention to children's storytelling, provide a space for children to tell stories, and understand the child through the story.¹⁶

For the sake of this research, we can make recommendations for classroom exercises that can promote storytelling. In primary school, the core concepts of philosophy and the definition of thinking were discussed. In "*The Discovery of Harry Stottlemeier*,"¹⁷ Lipman, through the exploration of the protagonist Harry, defined "thinking" as active

¹⁵ Xiaodong Liu, "On the Philosophical Basis of Philosophy for Children," *Research in Educational Development* 38, no. 1 (2018): 108-120.

¹⁶ Lili Sun, "Seeing Children in the Story: The Storytelling in Philosophy for Children," *Educational Studies Journal*, 2021.

¹⁷ Ann Margaret Sharp and Ronald F. Reed, *Studies in Philosophy for Children: Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

questioning and inquiry, which is different from passive acceptance of information. Thinking is the active inquiry into phenomena, concepts, or problems, such as ‘why a pencil falls to the ground’ or ‘whether mistakes are necessarily bad.’ The construction of logic and meaning promotes a type of thinking beyond the mere processing of information. It aids in powers of association and reasoning, which aim to form an understanding of the world. Rather than merely memorizing facts, thinking involves reflecting on one’s own thought process, such as ‘why I think this way’ and ‘whether my reasons are sufficient.’ To summarize the core characteristics of thinking: thinking is purposeful and directional, the thinking process is complex, accompanied by observable and explicit behaviors such as questioning, recording, and debating, as well as internal psychological activities such as hypothesis, verification, and refutation. Lipman also particularly emphasized that thinking allows for the existence of mistakes and regards mistakes as opportunities to deepen understanding. It allows one to learn through mistakes, which often lead to new reflections and discoveries. One can understand the characteristics of thinking itself and how it is distinguished from other cognitive activities, such as instinctive reactions, mechanical memory, and daydreaming. This type of thinking can be developed even through minor exercises like considering the preferences of friends when choosing birthday gifts. Such repeated verification can enable children to have a clearer understanding of thinking, thereby improving the quality of their thinking.

Discussing the difference between knowledge and belief can help students have a clearer direction for thinking and improve the quality of their thinking. In this process, teachers can clarify: What exactly do you mean by thinking? Or hypothetical type: If humans no longer think about what the world would be like, what are the similarities and differences between language and mathematical thinking to further promote children’s thinking? This is a good supplement to the current educational model in China’s primary education stage, which emphasizes knowledge over practice.

The book *Sophie's World* introduced natural philosophy and classical philosophy from the Western tradition.¹⁸ This would be very instructive for the development of young Chinese students. They would see the evolution of Western philosophers' thinking about the world. From Thales' assertion that water is the origin of all things, to Anaximander's view of the infinitesimal and Heraclitus' idea that everything flows, we are faced with the question 'where does the world come from?' This is the history of the development of various schools of rational thinking. This continues with Plato's ideas and Aristotle's method of observation and induction. Socrates' four-step method: clarifying concepts, seeking counterexamples, logical deduction, and concern with essence. In the Hellenistic period, in the book, for the Cynics, Stoics, and Epicureans, happiness is understood not as indulgence but as getting rid of fear. These readings can offer ideas for activities where students consider which school they would like to join and explain their reasons. In this way, students can follow the development of Western philosophy themselves and can learn the way of questioning and debating.

In the philosophical exploration of Plato's allegory of the cave, a student is led to consider the distorted cognition created by public opinion and prejudice. To teach the allegory of the cave to primary school students, one can recreate it with light projecting the shadows of various objects. The teacher can then lead the students to consider the phenomenon of advertising and social media. Another example would be the shift from a geocentric theory to a heliocentric theory, for which Copernicus and Galileo were punished by their contemporaries, just like the escaped prisoner in the allegory of the cave.

According to the New Curriculum Standards, the total amount of extracurricular reading required is as follows: for grades 1 and 2, it is no less than 50,000 words; for grades 3 and 4, no less than 400,000 words; and for grades 5 and 6, no less than 1,000,000 words. Such a large amount of reading provides the possibility for children to include books related to P4C. Through reading children's philosophy content centered on

¹⁸ Jostein Gaarder, *Sophie's World* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991).

children and corresponding thinking exercises, it helps children achieve language acquisition with particular attention to the perceptual awareness, sharing of perspectives through dialogue, classification and distinction, and reasoning about feelings.¹⁹

In the teaching of junior and senior high school students, the curriculum should be based on group enquiry, aiming to cultivate the critical, creative, and caring thinking of senior high school students, and at the same time, enhance their abilities of conceptual analysis, ethical judgment, and social participation through philosophical dialogue.

These ideas have been developed by Gao when he discusses community learning and Minxi Zheng when he discusses hermeneutics.

Although the questioning methods of Socrates had a great influence on philosophy for children, there are still further improvements and innovations in Lipman and other scholars' researches which put forward a more appropriate way of questioning and inquiry, and more conformed to characteristics of children's experiences. From these researches of questioning in philosophy for children, we can see that there is a closely relationship between children's questioning and thinking, while Gadamer's hermeneutics also pays attention to the essential relationship between questioning and understanding. Therefore, we can deeply interpret about the questioning activities in philosophy for children by some theories of hermeneutics.²⁰

Its specific goals include: Guiding students to explore the relationship between the self and the world through philosophical dialogue and challenging existing assumptions. Cultivating students' ability to solve real-world problems through logical reasoning and dialectical

¹⁹ Matthew Lipman, *Thinking in Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

²⁰ Minxi Zheng, "Hermeneutics and Questioning in Philosophy for Children," unpublished manuscript, 2023.

thinking, and promoting the integration and application of knowledge by integrating interdisciplinary knowledge. Building a democratic and inclusive classroom culture and strengthening students' social and emotional skills, as well as their civic awareness. Guiding students to distinguish facts from viewpoints, premises from conclusions, through questions such as "Can computers think?" Enabling students to master the basic methods of philosophical inquiry.

Students can then be encouraged to explore the issue of self-identity, to discuss whether personality is innate, and even the identity of minority and immigrant groups in a society. They can also be led to carry out Socratic questioning exercises, such as questions of justice and fairness as topics, to stimulate deep thinking through continuous questioning. They can be introduced to the ethics of science and technology, such as genetic modification, and the moral issues around human responsibility in relation to artificial intelligence. Students can also consider social phenomena, such as the uneven distribution of resources, and apply Rawls' "theory of justice" to construct solutions. Through role-playing activities such as roundtable discussions, court trials, and UN conferences, critical thinking abilities can be strengthened. By combining practice with critical thinking in this way, and in light of the cognitive characteristics of junior and senior high school students, abstract philosophical concepts are integrated with life to cultivate children's thinking ability and sense of social responsibility.²¹ This has well addressed the current problem that Chinese students, under the huge pressure of the college entrance examination, merely focus on memorization and lack the training for solving practical problems.

²¹ Babs Anderson, *Philosophy for Children: Theories and Praxis in Teacher Education* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 85-100.

P4C and Chinese Language Learning

According to the teaching objectives, the instructional goals of the Chinese language learning can be divided into four categories: literacy and writing, reading and appreciation, expression and communication, and organization and inquiry. Among these, children's philosophy primarily serves as a bridge and facilitator for the latter three. In the "Reading and Appreciation" objectives for first and second graders, children are required to read fairy tales, fables, and stories; aspire to beautiful scenarios; care about nature and life; form their own feelings and opinions about interesting characters and events; and introduce books they have read to others in their preferred ways. In other words, the goal is to help children develop certain values and judgments about scenarios and things through reading. However, due to children's underdeveloped thinking abilities—such as insufficient skills in statement inference or data inference—they may draw incorrect inferences and fail to reach appropriate conclusions.

Lipman believed that human reflection is achieved through discussion. This discussion may take the form of dialogue between peers or even forms of self-dialogue. The dialogical thinking skills promoted by P4C help children become more reflective, considerate, and reasonable individuals. Children who receive such guidance tend to become more judicious, which effectively aids them in forming value judgments about scenarios and things. The ability to draw inferences correctly is of utmost importance in giving meaning to the activities children engage in, both at school and outside of school. The more abundant the array of inferences children can logically or linguistically derive from what they read, perceive, or otherwise experience, the more satisfying and wholesome those experiences will seem to them. This undoubtedly makes it easier for children to develop values that aspire to beautiful scenarios and will inevitably enhance their interest in nature and life.

In summary, children's philosophy not only helps children improve their ability to understand literary materials, enhance their judgment, and form their own unique value judgments, but also increases their interest in school life and extracurricular life. Moreover, the refinement of thinking

will help improve children's expressive ability and willingness to express themselves. In the "Organization and Inquiry" section, children are required to ask questions about topics they are interested in, discuss these topics by integrating learning from other subjects and life experiences, and attempt to put forward their own views. This places demands on children's reflective ability, interdisciplinary integration ability, and communication ability—all of which are key training objectives of children's philosophy. For the improvement of reflective ability, children's philosophy can act as a bridge connecting different subjects.

Although the New Curriculum Standards define different learning requirements based on age groups, they do not alter their inherent basic framework. The only difference between them lies in the fact that there are variations in the hierarchical levels of requirements for learning objectives, content, and competencies across different stages, rather than adjustments to the framework itself. Therefore, in each competency level defined by the New Curriculum Standards, the cultivation of thinking skills from children's philosophy can be leveraged to provide core support for the achievement of the learning objectives at that level.

Conclusion

Lipman's Philosophy for Children can be practically integrated into the new Chinese language learning standards to aid in their effective implementation. Its effectiveness is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

Provides logical and epistemological standards: Philosophy provides logical and epistemological standards for the curriculum, which are crucial for enhancing the rigor and rationality of students' thinking. In the process of students' judgment, the logical rules of philosophy and the exploration methods of knowledge assist students in correct reasoning and argumentation, and avoid thinking errors. When analyzing problems, students can use logical methods to sort out and judge viewpoints and evidence, and come to more reasonable conclusions.

Enhances Critical Thinking: Encourages students to question and reflect on existing concepts, and not blindly accept authority. When studying philosophy, students make judgments based on standards, self-correct, and remain sensitive to situations. This enables students to analyze information and problems rationally, enhancing their critical thinking skills.

Inspires Creative Thinking: Philosophical thinking can stimulate students' creative thinking, prompting them to break through conventions and think from multiple perspectives. Philosophical ideas and theories have openness and inspiration, providing students with new perspectives and methods. Inspire students' imagination on the essence of the world and the meaning of life.

Cultivates a Sense of Caring: Philosophy can help cultivate students' caring thinking, allowing them to focus on others and social interests when thinking about problems.

Promotes Comprehensive Thinking: Philosophical thinking covers multiple dimensions, helping students integrate different ways of thinking and develop comprehensive higher-order thinking abilities.²²

Lipman's philosophy for children can be well integrated with most of the current early childhood education curricula in China. For young students, it helps them in their ability to distinguish emotions, the difference between imagination and reality, and helps them understand abstract concepts such as courage through situational teaching. In the primary school stage, it helps students understand concepts, and in the practice logic, and improve the quality of thinking. In secondary school, it aims to cultivate students' critical, creative, and caring thinking, while enhancing their abilities of conceptual analysis, ethical judgment, and social participation through philosophical dialogue. It solves the problems of education in the past, which were primarily concerned with

22 Matthew Lipman, *Thinking in Education*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 123-125.

memorization, book knowledge, and a lack of emphasis on practical social issues.

In conclusion, Lipman has provided detailed, practical, and mature solutions for the cultivation of thinking abilities and P4C capabilities from primary school to secondary school. The development of children's philosophy not only reconstructs the cognitive relationship between teachers and students, but also promotes the implementation of the "child-centered" educational concept at the practical level. Children's philosophy conforms to the requirements of China's current educational reform for education, as well as the laws of children's growth and the demands of The Times for children's cultivation. Children's philosophy is a beneficial supplement to current Chinese education and can serve as a driving force for the transformation of China's basic education from a knowledge-based approach to a thinking-based one. If applied to supporting Chinese language teaching in primary and secondary schools in China, it can help implement the New Curriculum Standards and improve children's Chinese key competencies.

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