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**CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN TEACHING CRITICAL THINKING
TO CHINESE STUDENT**

Abstract: This paper explores the challenges faced in teaching critical thinking to Chinese students, including aspects such as cultural traditions, the education system, teacher competence, and student psychology. It proposes solutions such as constructing a critical thinking education system, optimizing curriculum design, enhancing teacher capabilities, creating an open learning environment, and

strengthening practical application. The paper emphasizes that continuous effort and innovation are essential for successfully cultivating critical thinking. In the future, critical thinking education is expected to play an increasingly important role in China's educational reforms, becoming a key element in developing students' comprehensive abilities.

Keywords: Critical Thinking, Chinese Students, Education System, Teacher Competence, Continuous Innovation

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ПРОБЛЕМЫ И РЕШЕНИЯ В ОБУЧЕНИИ КРИТИЧЕСКОМУ МЫШЛЕНИЮ КИТАЙСКИХ СТУДЕНТОВ

Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются при обучении критическому мышлению китайских студентов, включая такие аспекты, как культурные традиции, образовательная система, компетенции преподавателей и психология студентов. Предлагаются решения, такие как создание системы образования критического мышления, оптимизация учебных планов, повышение квалификации преподавателей, создание открытой учебной среды и усиление практического применения. В статье подчеркивается, что непрерывные усилия и инновации необходимы для успешного формирования критического мышления. В будущем обучение критическому мышлению ожидается, что займет все более важное место в образовательных реформах

Китая, став ключевым элементом в развитии комплексных способностей студентов.

Ключевые слова: Критическое мышление, китайские студенты, образовательная система, компетенции преподавателей, непрерывные инновации.

Introduction

Critical thinking, as a core ability for individual cognition and decision-making, not only enhances personal problem-solving and innovation skills but also serves as an important force for social progress and the development of civilization. In the Chinese education system, with the intensification of global competition and the demand for an innovative society, strengthening the cultivation of critical thinking has become increasingly important. The long-standing exam-oriented education system, while ensuring the effective transmission of knowledge to some extent, may also suppress the development of students' independent thinking and questioning spirit [1]. Therefore, in the face of a rapidly changing world, Chinese education

reform urgently needs to focus on and strengthen critical thinking education in order to cultivate future talents who not only have a solid knowledge foundation but also possess independent thinking and innovation abilities. This study aims to explore the challenges in teaching critical thinking to Chinese students, such as cultural traditions, the education system, and teacher competence, and propose targeted solutions to provide references for optimizing and innovating China's education system, and to promote the comprehensive development of students' critical thinking abilities.

Overview of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking refers to the ability of individuals to analyze, evaluate, and judge information rationally, drawing conclusions based on evidence rather than assumptions or emotional responses. At its core, critical thinking involves independent thought, the ability to question assumptions, and logical reasoning. It requires individuals, when faced with problems, to look beyond surface phenomena, question the validity of information, and delve deeper into the underlying causes and

implications of a situation. Rather than simply accepting information at face value, critical thinkers seek to understand the "why" and "how," identifying patterns, inconsistencies, and underlying assumptions that might otherwise go unnoticed. This ability to evaluate and synthesize information critically allows individuals to form independent, well-reasoned opinions, free from external influence.

Critical thinking is not only a tool for intellectual analysis but also plays a crucial role in problem-solving. When facing complex or ambiguous situations, critical thinkers use a combination of logic, evidence, and creativity to develop solutions. In this context, critical thinking complements creative thinking. While critical thinking provides the logical foundation and structure necessary for rigorous analysis, creative thinking broadens the scope of inquiry, proposing new perspectives and unconventional solutions.[2] Together, these two forms of thinking encourage individuals to both question established norms and explore innovative ideas, ultimately leading to more robust and effective problem-solving.

Moreover, critical thinking is an advanced form of logical thinking that involves a deeper level of analysis and judgment within a logical framework. It moves beyond basic reasoning skills to include evaluating the credibility of sources, recognizing biases, and understanding the context in which information is presented. Critical thinkers are skilled at identifying logical fallacies, making sound judgments, and drawing conclusions based on well-supported evidence. This higher-order thinking is especially important in academic, professional, and everyday decision-making processes, where individuals must sift through large amounts of information and make informed choices.

For students, critical thinking not only promotes the enhancement of personal cognition and decision-making abilities but also contributes significantly to the development of their broader intellectual and social capacities. By learning to think critically, students develop the ability to assess the quality of arguments, challenge assumptions, and articulate reasoned positions on various topics. These skills are essential for academic success and personal growth, as they empower students to

engage deeply with content, ask insightful questions, and contribute meaningfully to discussions.

Furthermore, the cultivation of critical thinking fosters innovative thinking and social responsibility. Critical thinkers are more likely to challenge the status quo, explore alternative solutions, and engage in creative problem-solving. This type of thinking is essential in a rapidly changing world where innovation and adaptability are highly valued. Moreover, critical thinking encourages individuals to consider the ethical implications of their decisions, promoting a sense of social responsibility. As such, it plays a key role in fostering informed, responsible citizens who are equipped to address the complex social, political, and environmental challenges facing society today.

The profound significance of critical thinking lies not only in enhancing individual intellectual capacities but also in driving social progress and innovation. By nurturing critical thinkers who can analyze, evaluate, and create with clarity and logic, societies can cultivate citizens capable of making sound, well-informed decisions that

contribute to the common good. This, in turn, propels social progress by ensuring that decisions are not made based on outdated assumptions or unexamined beliefs, but are instead grounded in reason, evidence, and a forward-thinking mindset. In this way, critical thinking becomes an essential catalyst for progress in all areas of life—academic, professional, and societal.

Challenges and solutions in Teaching Critical Thinking to Chinese Students

In China, teaching critical thinking faces multiple challenges, with the primary one being the influence of cultural traditions. The cultural background that emphasizes respect for authority and adherence to tradition often leads students to accept knowledge and viewpoints rather than question them. This, to some extent, hinders the development of critical thinking. Furthermore, the collectivist value of emphasizing team harmony and consensus may cause individuals to feel pressure when expressing differing opinions, further limiting the expression and practice of critical thinking.

The education system is another critical factor. The exam-oriented education model, focused on knowledge delivery, ensures that students absorb large amounts of information in a short time, but it neglects the development of students' independent thinking and problem-solving skills [3]. In terms of curriculum design, there is a lack of content specifically targeting critical thinking training, which leaves students without effective tools and strategies for analyzing complex problems. Additionally, the limitations in teachers' own critical thinking skills and the use of single-method teaching approaches are key factors restricting the enhancement of students' critical thinking abilities. Some teachers focus too much on knowledge delivery and fail to cultivate students' questioning spirit and independent thinking. At the same time, the lack of teaching strategies that encourage students to think actively makes classrooms places for passive knowledge absorption rather than nurturing critical thinking skills.

Student psychology and habits also pose challenges to the development of critical thinking. The fear of making mistakes and the pursuit of correct answers often lead students to avoid uncertainty and challenges rather than exploring them. The habit of

passively accepting knowledge rather than actively seeking it further weakens the students' potential for growth in critical thinking.

To effectively address the challenges of teaching critical thinking to Chinese students, it is necessary to approach the issue from multiple aspects, such as educational philosophy, curriculum design, teacher competence, learning environment, and practical application, in order to construct a comprehensive critical thinking education system.

Reforming the educational philosophy and promoting quality education is essential. It is important to balance exam-oriented education with the cultivation of abilities and emphasize the significance of independent thinking and problem-solving skills. This requires the education system to not only focus on students' knowledge mastery but also prioritize the development and enhancement of their thinking skills. Optimizing the curriculum design by introducing specialized critical thinking training courses and integrating them into various subjects is also crucial [4]. Through case studies, debates, and other forms of interactive learning, the teaching content can be

enriched to stimulate students' thinking and questioning spirit, and develop their ability to analyze problems and offer their insights. Additionally, enhancing teacher competence is vital. Teachers should undergo training to improve their own critical thinking literacy and be encouraged to adopt heuristic, discussion-based, and other teaching methods that guide students to think critically and foster critical thinking habits.

Creating an open learning environment is another key factor. A classroom atmosphere that encourages questioning and respects diverse viewpoints should be cultivated, offering students a platform for autonomous learning and inquiry. This helps students feel comfortable expressing differing opinions, challenging authority, and forming independent thinking habits. Strengthening practical application through social practice, research projects, and other activities can enhance students' practical skills, encourage them to engage in problem-solving and social service, and apply critical thinking in real-life contexts. This fosters critical application thinking and lays a solid foundation for future learning and life.

Policy Support and Evaluation Mechanisms

To ensure the effective implementation and continuous improvement of critical thinking education, policy support and evaluation mechanisms are indispensable. The government should take a leading role in formulating relevant policies that clearly define the status and goals of critical thinking education within the national education framework. These policies should not only prioritize critical thinking as an essential skill but also specify its integration across all levels of education, from primary to tertiary institutions. The policies should also outline the expected outcomes of critical thinking education, ensuring that it aligns with broader educational objectives, such as fostering independent thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities among students.

Furthermore, the government must provide adequate resources and support to schools to help them implement these policies effectively. This could include funding for the development of curriculum materials that emphasize critical thinking, as well as for the training of educators who are equipped to teach these skills. Schools should

also be encouraged to innovate in areas such as curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, and the use of technology in promoting critical thinking. For example, incorporating interdisciplinary projects, debates, and problem-based learning (PBL) could be promoted as innovative ways to engage students in critical thinking exercises. Creating a campus environment that supports open dialogue, intellectual curiosity, and the free exchange of ideas is also crucial in fostering a culture of critical thinking.

At the same time, a scientific and comprehensive evaluation system should be established to regularly monitor and assess the effectiveness of critical thinking education across schools.[5] This system should involve both formative and summative assessments to capture the ongoing development of students' critical thinking skills and to provide feedback for future improvements. The evaluation process should assess multiple dimensions, including students' abilities to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information; teachers' pedagogical approaches and their effectiveness in fostering critical thinking; and the relevance and practicality of the

curriculum design. Additionally, the assessment should consider the extent to which students are encouraged to question assumptions, challenge established viewpoints, and engage in problem-solving activities. Ensuring that these evaluations are both comprehensive and accurate will allow policymakers to make data-driven decisions about how best to refine critical thinking education strategies.

In addition to government support, it is equally important to encourage the active involvement of parents and the broader community in the implementation and evaluation of critical thinking education. Parents play a critical role in reinforcing the value of critical thinking at home, and their support can significantly enhance the learning experience for students. Initiatives such as parent schools, community lectures, and workshops can help raise awareness of the importance of critical thinking and provide parents with the tools to support their children's development of these skills outside the classroom. Encouraging parents to engage in the educational process can also create a stronger alignment between what students learn in school and how they apply it in their daily lives.

Moreover, the involvement of industry experts and other stakeholders from society is essential for the continued growth of critical thinking education. Professionals from various sectors, including business, science, technology, and the arts, can provide valuable insights into the skills and abilities that are most relevant to the real world, helping to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application. By inviting these experts to participate in the evaluation process, schools can ensure that critical thinking curricula are aligned with current industry trends and future workforce needs. Experts can also contribute to the development of more effective teaching methodologies by offering guidance on how to incorporate critical thinking into real-world problem-solving scenarios.

In this collaborative framework, the involvement of all key stakeholders—government, educators, parents, and industry professionals—ensures that critical thinking education is not only well-integrated into the curriculum but also constantly evolving to meet the needs of both students and society. The continuous feedback from these diverse sources will promote the optimization and innovation of the

education system, ensuring that critical thinking remains a core competency for future generations. Through these comprehensive and collaborative efforts, critical thinking education can be effectively institutionalized, supported, and evaluated, laying the foundation for a more reflective, innovative, and responsible society.

Conclusion

Teaching critical thinking to Chinese students faces multiple challenges, including cultural traditions, the education system, teacher competence, and student psychology. To address these challenges, this paper proposes solutions such as constructing a critical thinking education system, optimizing curriculum design, enhancing teacher competence, creating an open learning environment, and strengthening practical application, aiming to comprehensively promote the development of students' critical thinking. However, successfully cultivating critical thinking is not an overnight task and requires continuous effort and innovation. The education system should continually adapt to changes in the times, update its educational philosophies and methods, and ensure that critical thinking education

evolves with the times. In the future, with the deepening of education reform, critical thinking education is expected to occupy a more important place in Chinese education, becoming a key element in cultivating students' innovative spirit and social responsibility, and contributing to the progress and development of both China and the world.

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