Developing a model for the holistic learning and teaching of Chinese language in Singapore

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Abstract:

Background: The mission of our education service as stated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Singapore: *is to mould the future of the nation, by moulding the people who will decide the future of the nation. The aim is to provide our children with a balanced and well-rounded education, develop them to their full potential, and nurture them into good citizens, aware of their responsibilities to family, society and country* (MOE, 2004).

We want to develop the child **morally, intellectually, physically, socially and aesthetically** (MOE, 2004). In short, our Desired Outcomes of Education aim to foster a holistic child through a holistic education system.

Comments: Although there are lots of concern and emphasis on holistic education in the teaching of all the various curricular subjects, there are little or no substantial elements of holistic learning in second language learning and teaching, in specific, Chinese language. The absence of holism in Chinese language learning hints that our Chinese pedagogy has yet to develop a holistic child in Chinese language learning.

Aim: To address this issue, this paper attempts to construct a model framework promoting holism in Chinese language learning. The constructed framework will incorporate the Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach as a means through which to practice holistic education in Chinese language learning.

Conclusion: The fundamental concern of someone who uses a language is making sense. For students learning a language, holistic learning is crucial to forming an understanding of the world. A holistic learning of the language would treat the learner as a legitimate conversation partner and someone who seeks meaning.

Keywords: Holism, Chinese Language learning, Philosophy for Children

發展新加坡整體性華文教學與學習框架

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摘要

背景：按照新加坡教育部的規定，我們教育服務的使命為：塑造國家的未來，這由塑造那些決定國家未來的人們來達到。教育服務應該給我們的兒童提供平衡及發展成熟的教育，它應該使兒童的潛能獲得最大的發展，使他們成為良好的公民，使他們認識到自己對家庭，社會和國家的責任（MOE，2004）。

我們要幫助兒童發展他們的品德，他們的智力，他們的體魄，他們的社會性，以及他們的審美觀（MOE，2004）。簡短地說，新加坡教育的既定目標就是要通過整體的教育系統來培育出獲得全面發展的兒童。

注解：雖然，許多對整體教育的關注和強調表現在各種不同科目的教學中，但是對於第二語言的教學過程，像對中文的教學，整體學習卻幾乎沒有什麼實質性的展現。中文教學中整體性的缺乏提示我們在當前的中文教學中尚沒有進行培養兒童在中文學習中的整體發展的嘗試。

目標：為此，本文嘗試構建如何促進學習中文的整體性的結構模式。在這一結構中，兒童哲學（P4C）被作為一種有效的工具來實現學習中文的整體教育實踐。

結論：總結的說，語言的基本是要讓人能夠整體性的理解他們周遭的事情。對於學習語言的學生而言，一個完整性的語言教育能與他們達成共鳴，同時也能夠讓他們通過語言更深層的理解這個世界。

關鍵詞：整體性教育、華語學習、兒童哲學

Introduction

In Singapore, the learning of Chinese language occurs in the context of a holistic independent and interdependent learning education system. The emphasis of a holistic education is very much the core of its ability driven education with focus on the Desired Outcomes of Education (Ministry of Education, 2004). However, this emphasis of holism of learning in its education system does not seem to exist in the area of Chinese language learning. The Chinese Language learning framework places its attention mainly on the acquisition of language skills and cultural understanding of the language. Although these two areas are important in the learning of language, they do not constitute the whole concept of holistic education.

To cultivate holistic language learning we must know the objectives and aims of language learning. The learning of a language today does not restrict itself to just the communication usage of the language. Learning of a language is not a prescribed course of study or a particular set of instructional materials (Newman, 1985); it is an engaging experience between the learner and the language that is being learnt.

Therefore, in addressing the issue of holistic teaching of Chinese language, this paper seeks to construct a conceptual framework that incorporates the concept of holism in Chinese language learning. Philosophy for Children (P4C) is the underpinning approach of the conceptual framework. P4C builds on the students' wonder and curiosity about ideas that are important to them. Through P4C, students would be exposed to the common, central, and contestable concepts that underpin both their experience of human life and all their academic disciplines. Examples of such concepts are: truth, reality, knowledge, evidence, freedom, justice, goodness, rights, mind, identity, love, and friendship (Federation of Australasian Philosophy in School Association Conference, 2005).

The examination and discussion of the different concepts stated above, and with the integration of real-life experiences and academic learning, P4C provides a platform for students to explore the connections within Self, others, the family, the society, and the world. In addition, P4C aims to develop and preserve the students' metacognitive aptitudes and positive behavioural traits and to develop philosophical understandings, intellectual skills and, social and intellectual dispositions that will aid students to become active participants in the social, cultural, and economic life of the society.

In short, the using of P4C approach in the construction of the conceptual framework provides a platform to cultivate not just the teaching Chinese language skills and cultural understanding of the language, but also to develop holism in Chinese language learning.

The aims and objectives of language learning

Before the construction of the model framework, it is essential that this paper looks into the aims and objectives of language learning so as to gear the framework towards achieving these aims and objectives. The fundamental concern of someone who uses a language is making sense. For students learning a language, holistic learning is crucial to forming an understanding of the world. A holistic learning of the language would treat the learner as a legitimate conversation partner and someone who seeks meaning. Indeed, many great scholars and thinkers had linked language to making sense of the world and its important relations to the learner.

The American linguist Edward Sapir (quoted in Mandelbaum, 1949) in an article wrote: *Language is a guide to 'social reality'. Though language is not ordinarily thought of as of essential interest to the students of social science, it powerfully conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes. Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language, which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.*

Benjamin Lee Whorf, one of Sapir's students at Yale, further elaborated upon Sapir's statements regarding the relationship of language to sense making. In an article published in 1940, he wrote:

...the background linguistic system ... of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade. Formulation of ideas is not an independent process, strictly rational in the old sense, but is part of a particular grammar, and differs, from slightly to greatly, between different grammars.

The writings of these scholars reflect that language has always been a vehicle and a bridge linking the learner with himself/herself and the world around him/her. To restrict the learning of a language to just the usage of language skills and the learning of language values such as literature and culture, we are restricting students in making full use of the language and depriving them of the opportunities to use the language as a tool to cultivate a meaningful relationship between themselves and the world they live in.

Language and literacy education, in the form of instilling "proper" reading and writing practices and canonical interpretation, is found to be historically related to the disciplining of the work force and the political and moral regulation of diverse citizenry for nation-building purposes (Cook-Gumperz, 1986; Graff, 1991; Lankshear, 1987). Recent critique of second language education has raised questions about the dominant ideology behind the linguistic norm and academic genres into which students are schooled (e.g., Benesch, 1993, 2001; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; McKay 1993). It has noted that learning a second language, especially in a context where the second language is the language of power in society, involves a process of assimilation into the linguistic conventions and cultural practices of the second language discourse communities. In short, language learning, be it for native or second language speakers, is an important social practice through which a society constructs and reproduces its dominant beliefs, values, and social relations.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper will present a conceptual model framework that will instill holism in Chinese language learning in the primary level.

Singapore's Chinese language landscape

Having looked through the aims and objectives of language learning, this section of the paper will present the Chinese language landscape in Singapore. The purpose is to evaluate the language learning framework in Singapore, and to identify the missing elements of holism in the current framework.

There have always been concerns for the development of the Chinese language in Singapore, from the promotion of bilingualism to the execution of new Chinese pedagogical methods such as "Recognize First, Write Later". In 1999, our then Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced that in the teaching of Chinese language, we have two main goals and they were (Lee, 1999):

1. to develop the student's linguistic skills, in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing; and

2. to transmit Chinese culture and traditional values through the study of Chinese language.

The 2002 Chinese language syllabus (primary) (MOE, 2002) encompassed the two above goals and the objectives of students learning the Chinese language were:

1. to develop the students' language instructional abilities.

- to foster students' language abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, so as to enhance their understanding and using of Chinese language, and to foster basic self-learning.
- to foster students' "hanyu pinyin" abilities, so as to aid them in recognising words, reading and speaking, and making using of Chinese language related Information Technology.
- to foster students' understanding of daily issues and news.
- to foster students' competency of using Chinese language in their daily speech.

- to develop their vocabulary and understanding of Chinese language words as according to their academic level.
- to develop students' ability in integrated language learning, so as to enhance their cognitive abilities and information technological abilities.
- to develop students' ability in using Chinese language thesaurus to help them in enhancing their own Chinese language learning.

2. to develop students' cognitive and cultural abilities.

- to foster awareness of Chinese culture.
- to foster patriotism and good citizenship values.

There were heavy emphases on cultivating students' literacy skills. Although the development of students' cognitive abilities was listed down as one of the objectives, it was not clear in its ways of execution. In addition, there was no focus on students' holistic development and students' connections with the learning of the Chinese language.

In 2004, the Chinese Language Curriculum and Pedagogy Review Committee reviewed the above objectives and teaching approach, and set down a set of new teaching and learning objectives for Chinese language. The objectives are as follows (Ministry of Education 2004):

1. to cultivate a strong interest in all students who are learning Chinese language, so that the students will have a continuous interest to learn Chinese language even after they leave school;

2. to emphasize the speaking and reading skills in Chinese language for the majority of students that are taking the subject, however writing skills should also be given a substantial amount of attention as the language skills reinforce each other;

3. to provide students who have the ability and interest, especially Higher Chinese language students, an environment to develop all the four language skills and good understanding of the Chinese culture and history; and

4. for the core group of students, the aim is to achieve high proficiency in the four language skills and a confident and intuitive understanding of history, culture, and development of China.

The Committee had placed greater emphasis on developing fluency and confidence in oral communication, and early proficiency in character recognition and reading. The emphasis on these practical skills will enable students to use Chinese language more frequently, and thereby sustain their interest in the language (MOE, 2004). The Committee had also proposed using materials that are more engaging and using Information Technology resources to facilitate students' interest in learning Chinese language. The key aim of all these different activities is to motivate students in developing an interest in the Chinese language and to transmit traditional culture and values to the students.

Furthermore, according to the latest Chinese Language Syllabus (Primary School) released by Ministry of Education to be implemented in 2007,

there are six missions in the teaching and learning of Chinese language (MOE, 2006):

1. Emphasize on the language abilities and language skills of the learners and their humanities accomplishment.
2. Emphasize on the practicability usage of Chinese language.
3. Follow the systematic rules of language learning, and enhance learning efficiency.
4. Acknowledge individual differences, and discover each student's potential.
5. Foster enthusiastic and independent learning.
6. Develop students' cognitive and metacognitive abilities.

Therefore, the new objectives of teaching Chinese language are now on fostering language skills, humanities values and, cognitive and metacognitive skills. And with the rise of Chinese influence in the region in recent years, intensified emphasis has been put on the teaching and learning of the Chinese language. Pedagogies concentrating on getting students to understand the language have extended to understanding the cultural aspects of China's history and heritage. It is therefore evident that these changes in the objectives of teaching and learning of Chinese language would benefit the students.

However, despite the many reviews been carried out to cultivate students' grasp of the language, our current Chinese language pedagogy objective is still far from emphasizing of holism in Chinese language learning. In education today, it is not just enough to have an objective of teaching students the content and application of the subjects. Students studying Chinese language may learn about the usage of the language and the values and culture it entails, but for the students to make it a meaningful life experience, the holistic approach and outcomes need to be infused in the teaching of the Chinese Language, which seems to be lacking in our education system of teaching Chinese Language.
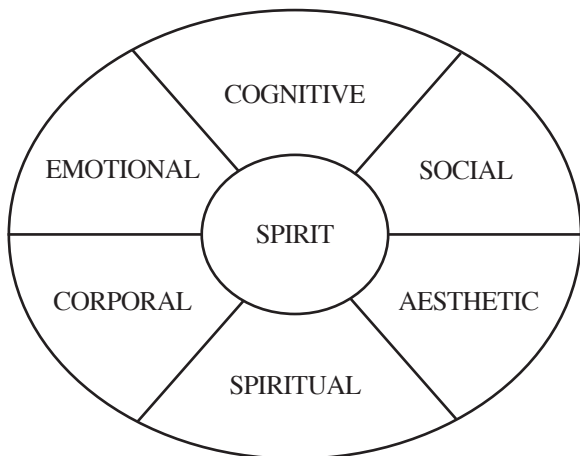
Holistic education

Holistic education as according to Miller (1991), is about 1) educating the whole person and integrating the multidimensional aspects of being human, 2) educating the person as a whole opposed to an assemblage of parts, and 3) education the person within a whole (i.e. in the whole context of family, school, neighbourhood, society, culture and the wholeness of the universe.

In short, holistic education is more than just one technique or simply tampering with a current curriculum (Miller 1991). Rather, it is an effort with an aim of finding identity, meaning, and purpose in life by making connections between people, the community, nature and the spirit. It centers on the nurturing of the whole individual, and suggests that relationships in community are fundamental.

Ramon Gallegos Nava constructed a holistic education model that illustrated the essential thinking dimensions outcome of holistic education.

Ramon presented model known as the **Multidimensional Perspective Integration in Holistic Education Model** (Ramon, 2000) *(See Figure 1).*

Figure 1: Multidimensional perspective integration in holistic education model

The model presented by Ramon clearly mapped the different thinking skills that holistic education aims to promote. Ramon further proposed that these different dimensions could be mapped against literacies and intelligences of the whole person from other models. The main concern of this model is that it attempts to take into consideration the full range of thinking, learning, and expression of the whole person (Ramon, 2000).

Table 1 shows Ramon's idea of mapping the various dimensions against the literacies and intelligences of the whole person.

From the brief overview of the Ramon's holistic education model, it is clear that holistic education places great emphasis on the interactions between the students and the subjects. It views the student as an active learner keen to engage him/herself with the subject and the whole environment that he/she lives in. It is thus a goal that holistic education would be able to bring forth its influences into Chinese language learning and teaching, to engage effectively with the students and let them discover meaningful meanings in learning the language and how it would help them relate to the world they live in.

Table 1: Mapping thinking skills against the literacies and intelligence of the whole person

Dimension	Literacy	Intelligence
Cognitive: Thought processes, the capacity to reason logically.	Linguistic,Quantitative	Verbal/Linguistic Logical/Mathematical
Social: All learning happens in a social context of shared meaning.	Social	Interpersonal
Emotional: All learning is accompanied by an emotional state, which can greatly affect the learning outcome.	Emotional	Emotional
Corporal or Physical: All learning occurs in a physical body. Mind-body harmony is an important element in the quality of learning.		Body/Kinesthetic Naturalistic
Aesthetic: Beauty is a key aspect of human existence. Artistic expression of inner life is key to a happy life.	Arts	Visual/Spatial Musical/Rhythmic
Spiritual: The total and direct experience of universal love that establishes a sense of compassion, fraternity, and peace towards all beings.	Spiritual	Spiritual

Philosophy for children (P4C)

Overview of P4C

The approach to philosophy in Philosophy for Children (P4C) is different from other types of philosophy, such as Western Academic Philosophy. P4C does not require the children to learn about what famous philosophers have said or about answers that have been given to important philosophical questions and issues (Golding, 2006). Nevertheless, students are learning to do philosophy for themselves, it is an opportunity for them to learn to think for themselves and to makes sense of issues and questions that are important to them (Golding, 2006). One important factor of introducing philosophy to children is that children make good philosophers because they have a strong sense of awe and wonder. They are aware of how much knowledge lies beyond them and out of their grasp and are insatiably curious to find out about everything (Teachernet 2007).

Dr. Matthew Lipman, a philosophy professor at Montclair State College in New Jersey, developed P4C more than twenty years ago. It was built upon the recommendations of John Dewey and the Russian educator, Lev Vygotsky. According to Matthew Lipman, the overarching goal of P4C is to attain a better life as knowledge is not an end. P4C aims to build and develop human life and human experience so that it will be richer, more pleasant and more appreciated (Bosch, 1999). This programme aims to build on the students' own wonder and curiosity about ideas that are vital to them. P4C provides reasoning and logical thinking training through skilful questioning. Furthermore, this programme is suitable for children, from kindergarten through secondary school.

The community of inquiry

The central guiding tool of P4C is the Community of Inquiry (COI). Participating in a COI engages children in developing important cognitive abilities such as creating hypotheses, clarifying their terms, asking for and giving good reasons, offering examples and counter examples, questioning each other's assumptions, drawing inferences, and following the inquiry where it leads (IAPC, 2003). Inquiry is also a social enterprise, which requires the children to share their own views and opinions, to listen to others, to challenge and build on others' ideas, to look for fallacy reasoning and to reconstruct their own ideas (IAPC, 2003). Through inquiry, P4C explores the connections between different disciplines much like the transdisciplinary inquiry found in holistic education. In asking and answering philosophical questions, it would enable the students to bring together issues from various different learning disciplines (Cam, 2006).

Table 2 shows some examples of philosophical questions and its relation to the respective learning areas.

Table 2: Philosophical questions and its relation to different learning areas

Philosophical Questions	Learning Areas
What is it to be a person?	Human Society and Its Environment
	Personal Development
	English
	Mathematics
What is a rule?	English
	Human Society and Its Environment
	Personal Development
	Human Society and Its Environment
Where do rights come from?	Personal Development
	Science Education
Does everything have a cause?	Human Society and Its Environment
What is knowledge and how can we come by it?	All curriculum areas

Source: Cam, 2006

To engage in the asking and answering of one of the questions in the table, students will be engaging themselves to familiarise with the conceptual meanings in the different areas of their studies (Cam, 2006). In addition, from the questions, students will be able to look for meaning both inside and out of the school. As such, students would be able to build a connection and form new meaning and knowledge in the subjects they are learning and with the environment they are living in.

Aims and objectives of P4C

To translate aims into practices, Cam had proposed three main most important objectives of P4C. They are:

1. to develop the student's knowledge and understanding of a wide array of philosophically significant issues and ideas that inform life and society through an increasingly deep inquiry into them;

2. to develop students critical and creative thinking abilities, so that they can be better

prepared to face problems arising from social and economical change; and

3. to foster students ability to handle social and intellectual matters collaboratively in such a way that they can help to sustain an inclusive, thoughtful and caring community (Cam 2006).

- The guiding tool of P4C is the Community of Inquiry (COI). COI consists of a group of individuals who use dialogue to search out the problematic borders of a puzzling concept. Implicit in the ideal workings of this group are two key concepts (Department of Education Tasmanian, 2006):

a. Thinking that is caring (each member is supported and allowed to be an integral member of the community), creative (new ideas are sought out and encouraged) and critical (good reasons are expected for one's ideas and positions) and

b. Fallibilism (a willingness to be corrected and an acknowledgement of possible error).

COI promotes critical thinking and encourages an obligation to respect one's fellow inquirer. It attempts to address contemporary challenges of education, to produce better thinkers and more caring members of society, who accept differences and at the same time, submit conflicts to reasonable scrutiny. All participants are expected to respect one another as thoughtful people who communally seek to better understand the issue at hand.

In short, COI promotes:

1. a sense of community through communication, friendship, care, compassion, cooperation, acceptance, belonging and sharing
2. understanding of values and purposes
3. inquiry based learning focused on thinking
4. reflective thinking
5. higher order and complex thinking in the search for meaning
6. dialogue about key common contestable concepts
7. teacher and students learning together
8. ethical reasoning
9. understanding of different perspectives and different points of view

Therefore, through the COI, it allows us to achieve the third objectives of P4C.

Mapping of P4C against holistic education, 2002 CL (primary) syllabus and 2007 CL (primary) syllabus

In Table 3, this paper examined the relations and linkages between P4C, holistic education, the 2002 Chinese language (Primary) syllabus and the 2007 Chinese language Primary Syllabus. From the table, there is a clear illustration that P4C has many elements that Holistic Education has. Although P4C has its roots in the discipline of philosophy, the goals, aims, and objectives of P4C are of a similar nature with holistic education. As such, it may prove to be viable to use P4C as an educational approach to foster a holistic education in Chinese language learning outcomes. In addition, a cross comparison of P4C and holistic education against the 2002 and 2007 Chinese language (Primary) syllabus would allow us to see the changes (if any) done in the two different Chinese language syllabus, and if the new syllabus is moving towards the nature of developing a holistic learner or is moving away from the objectives of Desired Outcomes of Education. Both the 2002 and 2007 Chinese language syllabus placed importance on the cultivating of literacy skills and less on the pedagogical meanings of learning language. However, a difference between 2002 and 2007 Chinese language syllabus, is that the latter has equal focus on developing literacy skills and metacognitive

Table 3: Mapping P4C, holistic education, 2002 and 2007 CL syllabus

	P4C	Holistic Education	2002 CL Syllabus	2007 CL Syllabus
Goal	1. Seeks to build and develop human life and human experience so that it will be richer, more pleasant, and more appreciated.	1. Seeks to develop a whole person so that each individual finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life.	1. Seeks to develop students' language abilities through the teaching of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. 2. Seeks to inculcate Chinese culture and traditional moral values.	1. Seeks to cultivate a strong interest in all students who are learning Chinese language, so that the students will have a continuous interest to learn Chinese language even after they leave school 2. Seeks to emphasize the speaking and reading skills in Chinese language for the majority of students who are taking the subject, however writing skills should also be given a substantial amount of attention as the language skills reinforce each other 3. Seeks to provide students who have the ability and interest, especially Higher Chinese language students, an environment to develop all the four language skills and good understanding of the Chinese culture and history 4. Seeks for the core group of students, the aim is to achieve high proficiency in the four language skills and a confident and intuitive understanding of history, culture, and development of China.
Aims	1. Aims to develop and preserve children's metacognitive aptitudes and positive behavioural traits 2. Aims to develop philosophical understandings, intellectual skills, and social and intellectual dispositions that will aid students to become active participants in the social, cultural and economic life of the society	1. Aims to develop aesthetics, moral, physical, cognitive and spiritual Self abilities of the child	1. In the basic foundation stage of CL and higher CL, both aims to develop the basic language abilities of the students in the area of listening, speaking, reading and writing; with emphasis on listing and speaking. 2. In the directional stage of CL, it aims to develop students' language abilities of with emphasis on listening, speaking, and reading. 3. In the directional stage of higher CL, it aims to develop students 'language abilities with emphasis on speaking, reading, and writing.	1. Emphasis on the language abilities and language skills of the learners and their humanities accomplishment 2. Emphasis on the practicability usage of Chinese language 3. Follows the systematic rules of language learning, and enhance learning efficiency 4. Acknowledge individual differences, and discover each student's potential 5. Foster enthusiastic and independent learning 6. Develops students' cognitive and metacognitive abilities

Objectives

1. To develop the student's knowledge and understanding of a wide array of philosophically significant issues such as social, ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, logic, aesthetics and theology and ideas that inform life and society through an increasingly deep inquiry into them
2. To develop students' multidimensional thinking abilities e.g. thinking about thinking, so that they can be better prepared to face problems arising from social and economical change
3. To foster students ability to handle social and intellectual matters collaboratively in such a way that they can help to sustain an inclusive, thoughtful and caring community

1. To develop cooperative learning, whole language and creative problem solving of the student and engaging them actively with the curriculum
2. To develop cognitive, social, emotional, physical, aesthetics and spiritual thinking abilities of the child
3. To develop the child transdisciplinary inquiry ability.

1. To develop the students' language instructional abilities
   - To foster students' language abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, so as to enhance their understanding and using of Chinese language, and to foster basic self-learning.
   - To foster students' "Hanyu Pinyin" abilities, so as to aid them in recognising words, reading and speaking, and making using of CL related IT.
   - To foster understanding of daily issues and news.
   - To foster students' competency in using CL in their daily speech.
   - To develop their vocabulary and understanding of CL words as according to their academic level
   - To develop students' ability in integrated language learning, so as to enhance their cognitive abilities and IT abilities.
   - To develop students' ability in using CL thesaurus to help them in enhancing their own CL learning
2. To develop students' cognitive and cultural abilities
   - To foster awareness of CL culture.
   - To foster patriotism and good citizenship values.

1. To Foster Language Abilities
   - Ability to comprehend and understand daily conversation, children program, simple news report, and so for.
   - Ability to use Chinese language in a conversation and give opinions on daily events.
   - Ability to read and understand children's resources such as storybooks, and able to find other different form of resources to read.
   - Ability to write comprehensively according to pictorial or passage requirement, and able to use Chinese language in daily activities to express own views and opinions.
   - Ability to use effectively the language skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening in learning and communicating with others.
2. To Enhance Humanities Accomplishment
   - To foster positive life attitude and good moral values.
   - To recognize and acknowledge the richness of Chinese heritage and culture.
   - To love and care for the family, the society and the country.
   - To appreciate life and arts.
3. To Foster Language Competencies
   - To develop cognitive and metacognitive abilities, to develop imaginative and creative intellectual, to have analytical and problem-solving skills.
   - To have basic independent learning skills, and to be able to use the learnt knowledge.

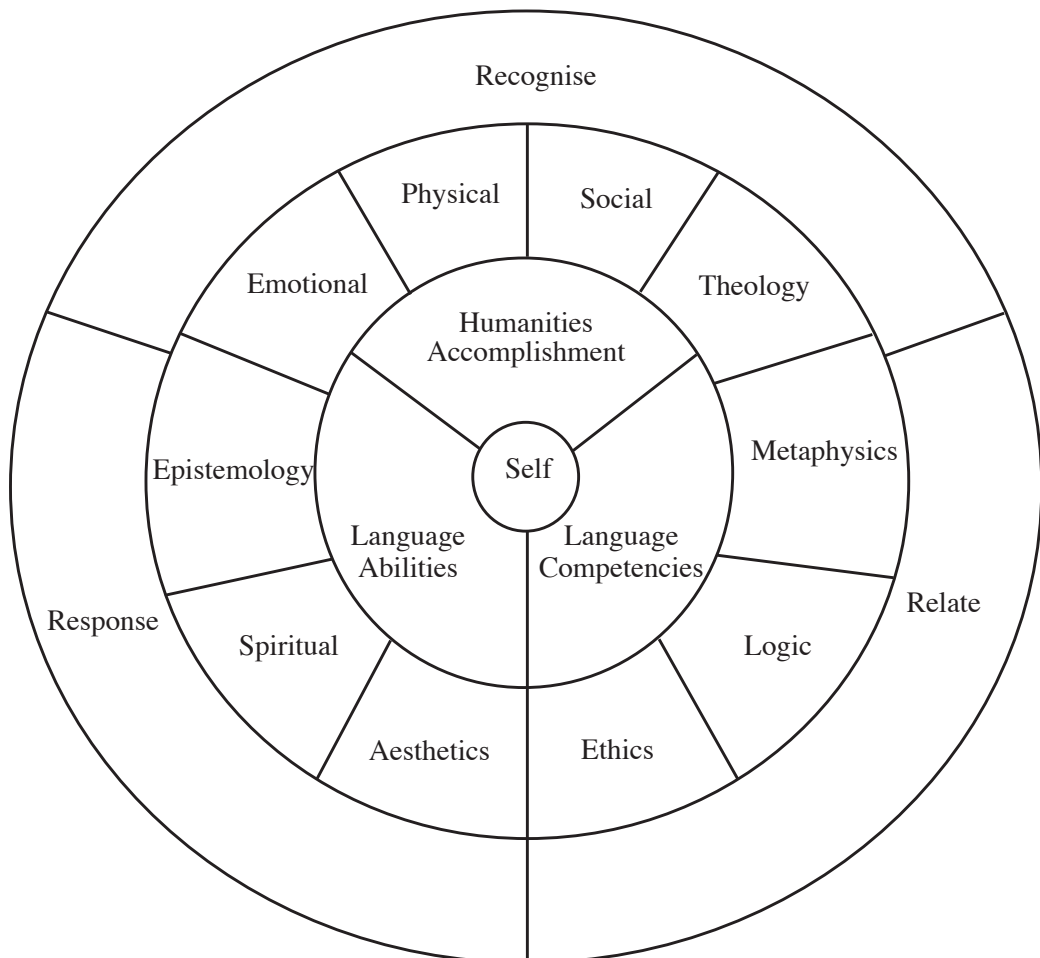## Conceptual framework of the paper

The process of creating a holistic learning outcome in Chinese language is no easy task. Presently in Singapore, there is no available conceptual framework that links P4C to holistic Chinese language learning. Therefore, this paper has constructed a framework in which this paper hopes to promote the ideology of holistic learning outcome in Chinese language.

This paper have combined the objectives and dimensions of P4C proposed by Cam, the objectives and dimensions of holistic education constructed by Ramon, and the goals of Chinese language learning stated by the MOE in its latest Chinese syllabus into one; thereby aiming to represent the Self and its interactions and connections with the holistic Chinese language learning.

The following is the diagram representation of how this paper envisions P4C, Holistic Education and Chinese language learning as one, which promotes holism in Chinese language learning.

Figure 2: Holistic Chinese language learning (HCLL)

The constructed conceptual framework attempts to illustrate the integration and connection the various dimensions that are required in terms of thinking and expression of holistic education, P4C, and Chinese language.

In the HCLL framework, though each circle represents different elements in connections of holistic learning goals for the students, it is to view the four circles as concentric circles rather then independent of one another.

The first inner circle consists of the Self. The Self in this circle is the learner's consciousness. As according to Jung (cited in Miller 1988), the Self is the "inventor, organizer, and source of dream images". Holistic transformation is based on the Self (Miller, 1988). It is important for this Self to exist in order for learners to relate to other elements in holistic learning and made connections with them. Without this connection with the Self, education is primarily a one-way movement.

The second circle consists of three different Chinese language goals (primary level) set by Ministry of Education (2007):
1. To Foster Language Abilities
2. To Enhance Humanities Accomplishment
3. To Foster Language Competencies

The second circle consists of language skills as well as metacognitive and cognitive skills and positive moral attitudes.

The third circle consists of the P4C dimensions proposed by Cam and holistic dimensions proposed by Ramon. They are:
1. Metaphysics - The learning to explain the nature of the world. It is the study of reality. (Geisler, 1999).
2. Ethics - The learning of value or quality. It covers the analysis and employment of concepts such as right, wrong, good, evil, and responsibility.

3. Aesthetics - The learning of sensory or sensori-emotional values, sometimes called judgments of sentiment or taste.
4. Logic - The learning of criteria for the evaluation of arguments. It allows one to distinguish logical arguments from flawed arguments.
5. Physical - The learning of mind-body harmony as all learning occurs in a physical body, and a harmonious mind-body is an important element in the quality of learning (Ramon, 2000).
6. Social - The learning occurs in a social context where there are predefined meanings (Ramon, 2000) and learner may need to construct his/her own meanings to make sense of his/her surroundings.
7. Emotion - The learning of emotions as the learner emotional state may affect the learning outcome (Ramon, 2000).
8. Theology - The studying of one or more religions and rational inquiry into religious questions.
9. Spiritual - : The learning and experience of universal love that establishes a sense of compassion, fraternity, peace and empathy towards all beings (Ramon, 2000).
10. Epistemology - The learning to analyze the nature of knowledge and how it relates to similar notions such as truth, belief, and justification (Heylighen, 2000). It also deals with the means of production of knowledge, as well as scepticism about different knowledge claims.

The fourth external circle consists of three elements, which concentrate on personal and social change. They are: Recognise, Relate and Response.

Recognise: Rousseau pointed out that every child should be allowed to explore the world and make his or her own discovery (Miller, 1988). Therefore, through this learning, students should recognise from

their discovery, the usage, the applicability of their skills and abilities, and at the same time learn to question assumptions and doubtful matters. This is the basis of the holistic education – "Know Thyself". Self-awareness would enable the students to recognize their own skills and functionality towards their family, community, society, and country.

Relate: Through their learning, students need to be able to establish relationships between themselves and the people and things around them. Students need to know that every single person has his/her own functionality and it is crucial that they build on each other's skills and knowledge so that they could learn beyond their own abilities and knowledge from others around them.

Response: It is no use learning a skill without the actual application of it. As Francisco Ferrer pointed out, students need to be immersed in social issues so that they can develop a sense of critical awareness (Miller, 1988). Therefore, students need to use their learned skills, competencies, and abilities to respond to the issues around them. It is then through the actions that will help raise the students' self-consciousness of themselves and their learning.

Therefore, the aim was that through the Holistic Chinese Language Learning framework model, students would be able to gain various holistic connections and experiences in Chinese Language and this holistic learning experience would enable them to maximize their use of Chinese language potential in their academic and non-academic lives.

Linking the conceptual framework to teaching of Chinese language

The following excerpt is a passage from the Primary 5 Chinese language text. The original

question of the text "課本問題" is asking the students why the need to be adaptive to changes. However, it did not explore the concept of time with the need for self to learn in details.

Using the HCLL with the focus on metaphysics and self, the aim of the lesson is to allow students to see the importance of time and their own role in learning. Discussion questions "討論問題" were posted in different parts of the text to allow students to explore the meaning of learning and time. These different questions set the stage for the students to answer the philosophical question posted at the end of the text "哲學深思題".

The incorporating of HCLL in this specific passage is just a way to link the concept of holism and P4C to the teaching of Chinese language. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the purpose of HCLL is to allow students to see themselves not just learning a language, but learning the meaning of education and be able to relate themselves to this learning process.

Conclusion

The main aim of this paper is to construct a framework that would promote a holistic outcome in Chinese language learning. This process was done through the exploring of two disciplines, 1) Philosophy, and 2) Holism. This paper attempted to infuse these two disciplines into a single framework, and infusing into the constructed framework of MOE's Chinese language learning. Through the combination and infusion of these three different pedagogical approaches, a new constructed model framework is formed in aiming to foster a holistic education in Chinese language learning for Singapore students.

與時並進

志偉和爸爸在客廳裏觀看一個電視時事節目——《與時並進》。

記者："楊先生，你為什麼會對電腦產生興趣呢？"

楊先生："我一向喜歡學習新事物。記得第一次使用電腦時，我已經60歲，快要退休了。開始學電腦時，我遇到不少困難。不過，我告訴自己，如果不會用電腦，就跟不上時代了。"

討論問題

1. 同學們，最近，你們學會了什麼新技能嗎？
2. 為什麼你們會學這項新技能？

楊先生："……學了電腦，我從互聯網上學到不少知識。世界的變化那麼多，我們必須不斷的學習，才能與時並進。"

討論問題

1. 同學們，你覺得，有哪些事情是必須在指定的年齡裏才學得到的呢？

志偉：楊先生年紀這麼大了，還那麼積極的學用電腦，真令人敬佩。

爸爸：是啊！學習是不分年齡的。志偉，你也應該積極地學習新事物。

志偉：為什麼？

爸爸：世界一直在進步，新加坡人必須努力學習，不然，我國就沒法同其他國家競爭。

地偉：爸爸，您為什麼這麼說呢？

爸爸：新加坡的發展主要靠人力資源。所以，人民必須不斷地吸取新知識。這樣，不但能加強個人的適應能力，也能使國家進步。

地偉：對，我應該不斷的學習。

討論問題

1. 同學們，你們覺得，在學習的路程上，你所面對的困難有哪些？其中，最大的困難又是什麼？
2. 如果一天裏只有12個小時，你們認為足夠用來應付學習嗎？

課本問題

1. 為什麼我們必須適應時代的改變？

哲學深思題

1. 同學們，你們覺得時間重要嗎？為什麼？

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