Chapter 3
Applying Didactics and Inquiry Method in International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Language A Chinese Curriculum: From Theory to Practice

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Abstract In response to changes in learning fields in modern times, various educational systems worldwide have been advocating the gradual replacement of the traditional "didactic" method with the "inquiry" method. This trend corresponds to International Baccalaureate Diploma Programmes (IBDP) expectations for the cultivation of core competencies, such as "active inquiry" and "in-depth thinking," in its learner profile. It encourages students to practice autonomous learning and develop a spirit of research through its curriculum. Through the core "concepts" of its sundry disciplines, students may construct their own systems of thought from various types of knowledge that appear to be fragmented and irrelevant, while deepening and utilizing the core concepts of these disciplines to facilitate knowledge transfer and integration across several disciplines. However, the implementation of the inquiry method in Chinese A courses should be based on solid knowledge. Teachers have to assess the prior knowledge students should equip themselves with before class and effectively apply the characteristics of the didactic method, namely, unidirectional teaching and real-time impartation of knowledge to course design and implementation. In addition, teachers should combine the inquiry method to cultivate the skill of bidirectional interaction, as well as the skill of connecting, exploring, and integrating diverse types of knowledge among students, while training them to become lifelong learners who possess the abilities to "closely observe details," "compare abstract concepts," and "think in both forward and reverse lines of logic."

Keywords Concept learning · Critical thinking · The inquiry method · Interdisciplinary learning · Knowledge transfer

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3.1   Concept-Based Learning

One of the first subjects developed by the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), the Language A curriculum has since expanded and is now available in as many as 55 languages. The IBDP Chinese curriculum was introduced in 1988. Initially intended to help non-native speakers in learning Chinese, the curriculum was designed along a similar line to the current Chinese language teaching system. The IBDP Language A Chinese curriculum was further installed in 1997. The curriculum comprises two types of courses, that is, Language A1 and Language A2, a classification comparable to the division between advanced and general courses commonly adopted today. In 2013, the Language A curriculum officially comprised three courses: literature; language and literature; and literature and performance. Among these three, the first two types offer advanced and general Chinese classes.

Compared with the previous version released in 2013, the new curriculum syllabus published in 2019 attaches greater significance to the understanding, interconnection, transfer, and application of the various "concepts" in six subject groups. The Language A curriculum has shifted from a teaching model that focused on critical thinking and text engagement to one that takes three Areas of Exploration (AoE) as its core, incorporates five global issues, and strengthens interactions with three International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma core courses that is, the Creativity, Action, Service (CAS), Extended Essay, and Theory of Knowledge (TOK) courses. The new syllabus aims to develop a next-generation curriculum that guides students to create their own ideological thinking systems and deepens their ability to discover and solve interdisciplinary problems.

In terms of curriculum planning, the Language A Chinese curriculum emphasizes students' cultural background, language proficiency, and learning attributes. Graded learning programs are developed, with different courses designed for each class according to the levels of students, in hopes of constructing and implementing curriculum modules that are best tailored to the learning of students. Regarding curriculum evaluation, "External Assessment" involves unified examinations composed of "Paper 1," which focuses on analysis and comprehension abilities, "Paper 2," which assesses students' meta-analysis and critiquing skills, and "Individual Oral," which tests students' capability of delivering general critiques and responses based on literary and nonliterary texts along with global issues. For advanced courses, students are required to submit a formal "essay" that develops a particular line of inquiry and analysis in relation to the work. To effectively implement courses and design tests that fulfill the stipulated evaluation criteria, teachers should identify what type of conceptual framework should be adopted for curriculum development, and, most importantly, weigh the selection of "textbooks." Choosing textbooks relatively better connected to the core concepts of the curriculum (i.e., three AoE, seven key concepts,[1] and five global issues) helps in cultivating students'

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[1] The seven key concepts for the IBDP Language A curriculum are identity, culture, creativity, communication, representation, transformation, and perspective.

competence of reading comprehension and analysis, aesthetic perception, inquiry and reflection, interdisciplinary learning, and global exploration under the curriculum values of diversification and openness. In addition, provided with the depth and breadth of pluralistic courses and textbooks, students of different levels are liberated from rigid thinking patterns and encouraged to eventually develop the same ability, whereby the educational goal of adaptive teaching is realized.

According to the contentions of H. Lynn Erickson (2007), concepts range from the macro-level to the micro-level, and all concepts conform to the definition as ideas that are timeless, universal, abstract, and represented by one or two words or a short phrase. Since 2019, the IB has been adopting a "concept"-based philosophy for teaching and learning in reforming its curricula. The development of all subject areas in the six subject groups has been integrated through "concepts," while the same "concepts" exist across all subject areas as well. Consequently, IBDP curricula are constructed based on the interrelationship among concepts, teaching content, and learning skills. This kind of curriculum, one that focuses on conceptual understanding, requires the integration of concepts and content. Furthermore, Erickson (2013) characterized a curriculum model as a solid foundation that emphasizes transcending disciplinary boundaries and involves facts and key knowledge. If a curriculum can be designed to facilitate conceptual understanding, the barriers between curriculum design and teaching implementation shall be eliminated (Fig. 3.1).

In a revision of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive objectives, Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) stated that conceptual knowledge plays a crucial role in the process of guiding students to develop an understanding of knowledge. They argued that students attain the level of understanding when a connection is established between new and prior knowledge. At this point, the cognitive patterns and frameworks of new and prior knowledge will be integrated. Since concepts are the modular blocks of such patterns and frameworks, conceptual knowledge can form the basis of understanding for students. *Language A: Literature Guide* and *Language A: Language and Literature Guide* (hereinafter referred to as the *Guides*) also note that the courses are

Fig. 3.1 Interrelationship among skills, concepts, and content (IBO, 2015)
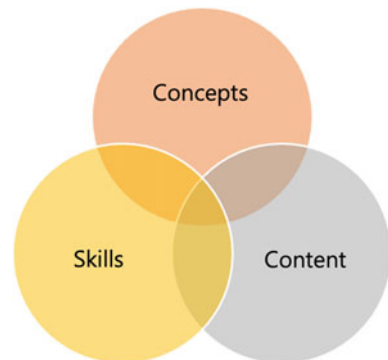
designed on the basis of conceptual learning (IBO, 2019). In addition, Yu (2021) indicated that the most prominent feature of concepts is that they are present across disciplines and shared by different disciplines. In designing a curriculum, teachers should apply "concepts" throughout the entirety of the curriculum design and teaching process while ensuring their interaction and connection with the AoE. Moreover, they may take students on an in-depth exploration into the course concepts through discussions on various global issues, including the following fields of inquiry: culture, identity, and community; beliefs, values, and education; politics, power, and justice; art, creativity, and the imagination; science, technology, and the environment.

The new IBDP curriculum syllabus released in 2019 employs the "concept-based" philosophy as a core of the integrated curriculum. The syllabus emphasizes the demonstration of international mindedness while strengthening the association between various learning areas and simultaneously providing greater freedom for curriculum development. To effectively apply concepts to enhance the relationship between learning various subjects and reinforcing the combination and transfer of knowledge, IBDP further employs the viewpoints proposed by Drake (2007) on curriculum integration by performing the interdisciplinary approach among the three models for the relationship between the various subjects and curriculum organizations. This is illustrated in the diagram of the studies in language and literature model provided by the *Guides*:

According to Drake's exposition, the interdisciplinary model should promote interdisciplinary transfer through the process of inquiry to blur the boundaries of disciplines by incorporating interdisciplinary concepts, skills, attitudes, and actions, using big ideas characterized by sustainability, mobility, and continuity, comprehensively applying critical thinking skills, problem research ability, civic awareness and other capabilities, and comprising skills shared by different disciplines. The studies in the language and literature model of the IBDP present the best practice that combines Drake's contention with conceptual learning. In Fig. 3.2, from the inside to the outside, the first circle represents the AoE, the second circle indicates the seven key concepts, and the third circle comprises four essential practical methods: the TOK, the approaches to teaching and learning, CAS; international mindedness. Teachers should select one to three concepts for each AoE in collaboration with students following the core values and recommendations of the IBDP and using the three AoE as curriculum module blocks. Subsequently, inquiry-based learning is launched to explore an AoE as per the *Guides* as well as related issues described by the TOK. The courses are designed with international mindedness as the background (with one global issue selected). After a comprehensive discussion with the students, textbooks and learning materials are selected based on the aforementioned elements. These materials (both literary and nonliterary texts) should fulfill the requirements of curriculum design. Moreover, during curriculum implementation, teachers should guide students to contemplate how concepts are positioned in and applied to the curriculum, whether the concepts contribute to textual analysis and understanding, and what connection or commonality exists between the curriculum and other subjects (e.g., history, psychology, earth and environmental sciences, and mathematics) sharing the same concepts that engender exchange and integration
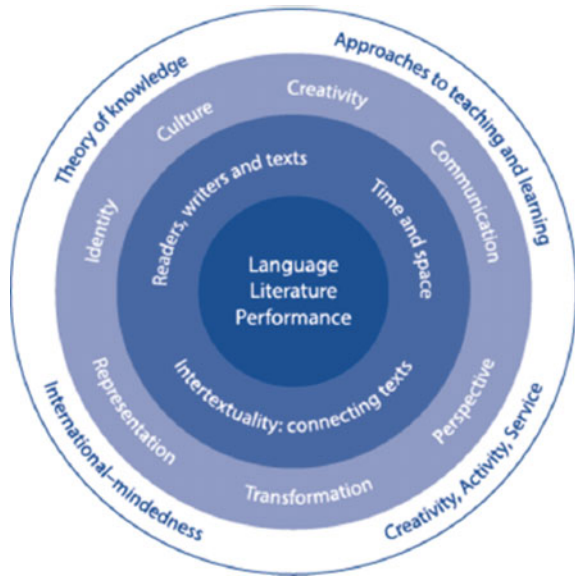
across different subjects. Further, students are led to ponder how to apply these interdisciplinary insights and innovations to the practice of CAS, one of the three DP cores, and thesis research and writing.

3.2 An Inquiry Approach: Constructivism and Inquiry-Based Learning

With a history of over half a century, the IBDP has drawn on the viewpoints of myriad distinguished education scholars and incorporated the strong points of different schools. In terms of curriculum implementation, the concept-based approach is employed to achieve interdisciplinary learning. In addition, the theory most commonly applied in developing the overall structure of the DP curricula is "constructivism." *The Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the Diploma Programme* (2016) states that the DP adopts a constructivism-based and student-centered approach to education. According to the constructivist model of curriculum development proposed by Driver and Oldham (1986), five steps of teaching are summarized as follows: (1) establishing a direction of discussion; (2) eliciting ideas from students; (3) reconstructing new concepts through discussion, conceptual conflict contexts, and experimentation; (4) applying newly developed concepts to various contexts to reinforce the meaning of new concepts; (5) reflecting on the course of conceptual changes to learn the technique of learning. Schunk (2012) suggested that learning should be a process that involves an individual's active participation and

construction, focusing solely on "people" or "individuals." Therefore, the learning process should be learner-centric, wherein students regain control of their learning.

The theory of constructivist learning suggests that teachers should provide and create abundant experiences to encourage students to learn. Unlike traditional curricula that emphasize learning basic skills and knowledge, constructivist learning focuses on learning key concepts in a curriculum and encourages students to engage in teamwork. In constructivist learning, teachers' most important aim is to build an appropriate learning environment for students to effectively create new knowledge systems and skills (Schuh, 2003). In the DP Approaches To Teaching, three methods are found to align with the spirit of constructivism: teaching based on inquiry (inquiry-based teaching), teaching focused on conceptual understanding (concept-based teaching), and teaching focused on effective teamwork and collaboration. Through inquiry-based teaching, students may develop active participation in learning and shoulder responsibilities. In addition, there is a special focus on interdisciplinary learning. Teachers from different subject areas shall collaborate to design courses, while students work as a team to learn in all subjects and implement CAS planning and practice.

DP teachers should formulate comprehensive and effective curriculum plans, create a suitable and liberal learning environment, and stimulate students' intriguing and inquiring behavior. More importantly, they should focus on the process of textbook (learning material) selection. The changes in the DP Language A curriculum syllabus allow for greater flexibility in textbook selection. Both "literature" and "language and literature" courses provide basic and advanced programs. Each of these four types of courses is designated with a different number of textbooks. Students themselves should select some of their textbooks (learning materials) according to the number of prescribed reading books. Specifically, under the curriculum framework designed by their instructors, students select textbooks (learning materials) that accord with the spirit of the curriculum and are positively correlated with other texts in terms of concepts by following the elements of the curriculum framework and the recommendations of their teachers, and referring to the official *Prescribed Reading List*. A "complete" selection of learning materials referred to in a curriculum should comprise the textbooks (learning materials) selected by teachers in the curriculum plan and the works selected by students themselves, with "literary" and "nonliterary" texts in approximately equal numbers. These materials combined are used for the study of a two-year curriculum.

Such curriculum planning presents a tremendous challenge for both teachers and students. From the teachers' perspective, they should not only have a profound understanding and familiarity with the courses but also require the ability to integrate the knowledge of various subjects. In addition, they should be able to discuss with experts of different subjects and implement interdisciplinary learning projects. Only with such abilities can they formulate maximally thorough curriculum plans, thereby guiding students to develop activeness for independent learning and inquiry. As for students, they should utilize their prior knowledge and experience to deeply understand the spirit of curriculum planning, ruminating about and weighing up the connection between curriculum elements and self-selected works. This is because the

self-selected texts will not only influence the closeness of mutual support between different knowledge system structures during the learning process but also directly affect the results of future evaluations on learning effectiveness. The concept behind delegating some of the power of textbook selection to students is derived from IBDP's belief in learners' innate and previously acquired abilities. Such a practice sets an exemplary model of constructivism.

Using constructivism as the core philosophy for curriculum design, how should the DP curriculum apply the pedagogical approach of inquiry-based learning to achieve the objective of holistic education? The article *What is an IB Education* (2012) argued that IB teaching and learning encourages people to cooperate in multiple ways to construct meaning and make sense of the world. Through the interaction between questioning, action, and thinking, the constructivist approach creates open and democratic classrooms. An IB education cultivates a community of learners who respond to global challenges through inquiry, action, and reflection (Fig. 3.3).

Before curriculum design and implementation, test evaluation, and reflection analysis, the following questions should be considered:

(1) Should inquiry-based learning be built upon a solid knowledge foundation?
(2) How should students' literary competence be effectively evaluated before curriculum implementation?
(3) What literary competence (level) fulfills the learning requirements of IBDP?
(4) How can students' prior knowledge be awakened?
(5) How can different formats (media) of texts be more systematically applied to teaching to train students on how to apply "concepts" in their reflection and even integrate knowledge across different subjects?
(6) If students lack adequate background knowledge, how can they be motivated to learn?
(7) How and what teaching techniques and media applications (such as guided reading and discussion, virtual classes, and online teaching) should be used in the teaching process (before, during, and after class) to construct students' background knowledge of texts and execute learning assessment?

According to the relevant curriculum reference materials of the IBDP and the pedagogic theories mentioned in the *Guides* of Language A, all the following aspects

are closely associated with the cognitive objectives listed in *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* by Bloom and Krathwohl (1956): designing the teaching strategies for students' knowledge system structures, planning the formative and summative assessment for the internal assessment during curriculum implementation, developing competence indicators that students are required to achieve in the external assessment. After Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) revised the knowledge dimension and cognitive process dimension in Bloom's knowledge objectives, the IBDP integrated worthy arguments from various educational scholars and became a major carrier for holistic education implementation.

The revised version of Bloom's cognitive objectives retains the six main categories of the cognitive process dimension in the original version: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. In the new version, the six main categories are further subdivided into 17 subcategories, transforming knowledge learning into an increasingly complex hierarchy. As far as the cognitive process dimension is concerned, the IBDP is built upon the viewpoints of constructivist learning, with the aim of guiding students to conduct meaningful learning in various fields of knowledge. Under the guidance of the categories and subcategories specified in the new version of Bloom's cognitive classification, the learning indicators in the IBDP curriculum design have been established and used to perform various learning activities and evaluations through the reliable cognitive process. A summary of the new version of Bloom's cognitive process dimension combined with some critical tasks in the actual learning of the Language A Chinese curriculum is provided as follows (Table 3.1).

Teachers of the IBDP may follow the recommendations for the cognitive process dimension provided by the new version of Bloom's cognitive objectives. They may develop a table similar to this sample before curriculum planning and teaching implementation. By examining the content of teaching materials and the design of learning activities and evaluations for the overall curriculum, teachers are able to accomplish the teaching objectives in the cognitive domain. Moreover, this table can help teachers in effectively applying curriculum elements, such as the concept-based philosophy, AoE, and global issues, to their teaching actions while implementing the new syllabus.

3.3 Complementarity: A Teaching Approach Combining Primarily Inquiry-Based Instructions and Secondarily Didactic Instructions

With advances in science and technology today, all subject areas have experienced rapid development. Subject knowledge defined over the past few centuries has lagged behind the advancement of civilization. Traditional disciplines have undergone paradigm shifts, which have engendered the rise of more subjects and studies in new domains. Within their established scope, the existing subject areas have been

Table 3.1 Summary of the new version of Bloom's cognitive process dimension integrated with critical learning tasks to be implemented in the Language A Chinese curriculum [2]

Category	Subcategory	Related words	Critical tasks students may implement during a curriculum
1. Remember	1.1 Recognizing	Identifying	Identifying new words in the reading text
	1.2 Recalling	Retrieving	Providing the names and biographical notes of at least three contemporary writers who were introduced previously
2. Understand	2.1 Interpreting	Clarifying Paraphrasing Representing Translating	Explaining the main idea of the paragraphs in the text and interpreting their meanings
	2.2 Exemplifying	Illustrating Instantiating	Giving an example of writing on the topic of nostalgic memories
	2.3 Classifying	Categorizing Subsuming	Properly classifying the texts selected for the three Areas of Exploration in the curriculum
	2.4 Summarizing	Abstracting Generalizing	Draft an appropriate abstract for a nonliterary text
	2.5 Inferring	Extrapolating Interpolating Predicting	Infer the implicit connotations of the paragraphs from context
	2.6 Comparing	Contrasting Mapping Matching	Compare the commonalities and disparities of women's situations described in two novels composed in different eras by different authors
	2.7 Explaining	Constructing Models	Explaining whether an author's social context, family life, emotional education, employment status, and other background factors will affect the creation of a text
3. Apply	3.1 Executing	Carrying out	Being able to understand the reasons for the creation of a contemporary poem and emotions expressed therein and read it aloud
	3.2 Implementing	Using	Judging the accuracy of the materials used in a text based on the previous learning experience

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[2] Summarized from Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) and Hsiao (2019).

Table 3.1 (continued)

Category	Subcategory	Related words	Critical tasks students may implement during a curriculum
4. Analyze	4.1 Differentiating	Discriminating Distinguishing Focusing Selecting	Producing a character map to show and explain the relationship of the characters in the text
	4.2 Organizing	Finding Coherence Outline Passing Structuring	Charting the rhetoric techniques used in the text and explaining their effects in the text and impacts on readers
	4.3 Attributing	Deconstructing	Analyzing the motivation for creating the characters in the text and their influences on the plot
5. Evaluate	5.1 Checking	Coordinating Detecting Monitoring Testing	Participating in class project presentations, critiquing the organization and argumentation logic of peers' presentations and articles, and offering appropriate feedback
	5.2 Critiquing	Judging	Developing common evaluation indicators for learning projects to assess whether a project fulfills the criteria
6. Create	6.1 Generating	Hypothesizing	Proposing some suggestions for improvements on the presentation and writing based on the project evaluation criteria
	6.2 Planning	Designing	Conducting a SWOT analysis on the qualities of the female protagonists in Eileen Chang's novels; guiding students to complete this activity
	6.3 Producing	Constructing	Observing the phenomenon and pattern of Chinese proper noun abbreviations used in Taiwan, and writing a paper on this topic

subdivided into more professional research fields. Alternatively, interdisciplinary research has emerged to fulfill the requirements of learning and development of human society today. These developments show that the knowledge that was previously considered atypical has now evolved into a category of emerging knowledge that new generations of learners should focus on. As such, the Language A curriculum hopes that students could develop a better understanding of the spirit of a subject and the objectives of learning, and further choose a variety of "texts" that present knowledge in different forms as their learning materials to explore this incredibly diverse world. On the basis of this, students may embody the learning values that are equally important as knowledge within and without the classroom. Moreover, the curriculum exhibits a macroscopic vision and forward thinking in its overall development.

In view of such a dramatic reform in the educational field, the traditional teacher-centered, didactic-teaching approach that transfers knowledge in a single direction can no longer satiate the learning needs of students today. Accordingly, inquiry-based learning should be adopted as the primary instructional approach in response to emerging educational trends, thereby training students to interact with teachers, establish connections among multiple areas of knowledge, and develop abilities to explore and integrate knowledge. Admittedly, the mode of interactive inquiry-based learning is the learning ability and objective that IB trains and requires students to achieve. However, the majority of students taking the Language A Chinese curriculum at the actual education sites have a multicultural background. Although Chinese is their native language, it is simply one of the multiple languages they use. In a bilingual or multilingual learning environment, students have a relatively weaker knowledge of the cultural implications behind the Chinese curriculum and the overall literary development owing to the multitude of learning materials. In this light, teachers should employ the didactic-teaching approach to moderately and efficiently extract background knowledge regarding culture, times, and other elements that are missing from the learning materials. By strengthening students' fundamental theoretical background knowledge, a balance in learning may be achieved between developing students' advanced Chinese literacy application skills and cultivating their theoretical foundations. In addition, teachers may guide students to conduct contextualized learning according to the curriculum plan. Such integration of teaching approaches poses a great challenge for both teachers and students.

The problem that teachers encounter most frequently at education sites is students' inadequate knowledge of literature and history referred to in curriculum texts. This is not a problem of the students per se. As discussed in the preceding paragraph, most of the IBDP students belong to multicultural families. Regardless of the reason, students migrate across the globe with their families. Under the influence of the histories and civilizations of various regions, they may feel detached from the culture, civilization, writing, and literature of their native countries. The IB was established with a view to provide a comprehensive range of courses for students moving worldwide. The courses for all subjects are designed according to the global field and in line with the current development and trends of human civilizations and technologies. The IB aims to cultivate students' ability to proactively inquire about the knowledge of various fields, constantly think, and actively reflect on problems while further achieving the educational goal of holistic development. The images constructed by the Language A curriculum are beyond word senses, rhetorical grammar, and literary history imparted by teachers in a unidirectional manner or literary knowledge accumulated through the interpretation of a large number of single, incoherent text composed by different authors. Instead, students are guided to conduct professional, comprehensive, and in-depth text analysis and interpretation with the interaction, collaboration, and facilitation of teachers. Students are expected to understand the context language constructs in various texts and the core philosophies implied therein by reading different types of literary and nonliterary texts and leveraging analysis, interpretation, and other related skills. As such, Qian (2018) indicated that the IB curriculum has moved away from encouraging students to derive a single conclusion toward motivating students to

always find a new angle of interpretation, thereby inspiring them to discover and solve problems in the process of continuous inquiry. Moreover, this learning process conveys an important message to students: your solution is not necessarily perfect or unique, so you must always stay enthusiastic about acquiring new knowledge. In addition, students would come to realize that the pursuit of knowledge is far more meaningful and interesting than the answers they obtain.

However, a closer observation on the latest syllabus released in 2019 reveals a significant increase in the number of prescribed and self-selected textbooks in the overall curriculum. This measure bears two critical meanings. First, it aims to enhance students' independent learning ability. The Language A curriculum endows students the right to select some literary or nonliterary texts, seeking to balance the power between students and teachers in learning, transform the two parties into collaborative partners in learning, and thereby motivate students to assume a greater proportion of learning responsibilities. Particularly with the sheer number of texts, teachers can squeeze complete textual interpretation into only a limited proportion of time considering the total number of learning hours allotted for each course. Consequently, students themselves should allocate time to read and explore the meanings of various texts. Second, the multiple-text inquiry is conducive to curriculum practice. The new syllabus integrates myriad repeatedly verified, effective, and rigorous educational theories, in combination of emerging modern learning trends, to construct a sophisticated and intricate curriculum system. Through this course series, the IB hopes to help learners in achieving the learning objectives of the IBDP. Learning based on diversified text types reflects the true state of development of language and literature in the world today.

The total amount of texts prescribed by the *Guides* (for Language A: Literature and Language A: Language and Literature) imposes an overwhelming learning load on students. However, because students have the right to choose literary texts and a corresponding number of nonliterary texts as their learning materials, teachers should meticulously and properly handle and evaluate students' "prior knowledge" for a course before teaching them to adopt "reading strategies" for extensive textual reading during a short-term and intensive learning process. Students should have an adequate amount of fundamental language knowledge to comprehend and analyze a great number of highly specific texts and to rediscover and reinterpret the values and concepts contained in the texts. Only then can language teaching reach the stage of combining new and existing knowledge through "concepts," while further enabling the propagation and integration of knowledge and skills across all subjects (Fig. 3.4).

Governed by the core philosophy of concept-based learning in the curriculum, teachers guide learners to narrate and analyze the texts and explore the authors' social background and life experience through a deep understanding of the texts. From the two-dimensional textual plane, students reconstruct a three-dimensional space for the original context, wherein the authors created the texts. Using the concepts of "time and space" in the AoE, students compare and observe the commonalities and disparities between themselves and the authors in the perceptions and solutions toward life issues developed owing to spatiotemporal differences. Based on the understanding
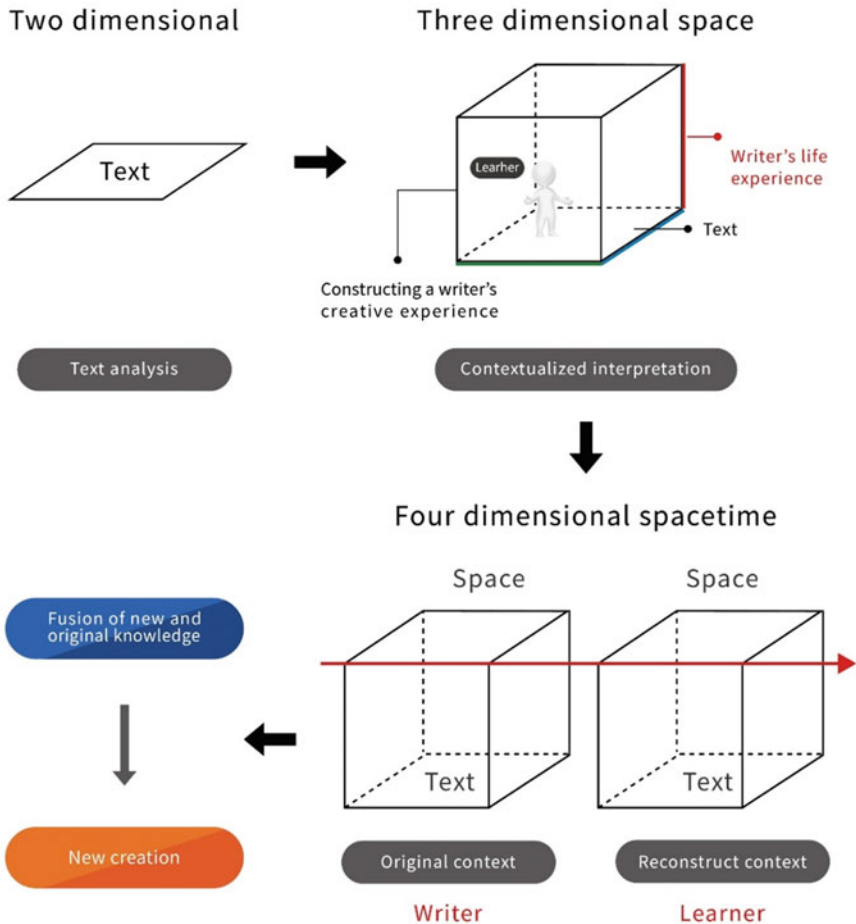
Two dimensional

Text

Three dimensional space

Learner

Writer's life experience

Text

Constructing a writer's creative experience

Text analysis

Contextualized interpretation

Four dimensional spacetime

Space   Space

Fusion of new and original knowledge

Text   Text

New creation

Original context   Reconstruct context

Writer   Learner

Fig. 3.4 Flow chart of contextual reconstruction by learners (*Source* own elaboration)

of these similarities and contrasts, they may further reflect on and integrate new and prior knowledge and experience to produce innovative ideas.

3.4   Conclusion

The greatest difference between the learning process of the Language A Chinese curriculum and the requirement for extensive reading of literary works and a massive accumulation of literary knowledge lies in its ultimate educational objective of applying acquired knowledge to real life. This does not mean neglecting the role of language and literary texts on human mind development and spiritual dependence.

Instead, equal attention should be paid to the current state of diversified development of language and literature today. The existence of each literary text reflects its historical context and epochal iconicity while presenting a sublime and paramount manifestation of human civilization and philosophy. Since the beginning of the Internet age, the tools for recording language and text have been reformed. As such, literary works are no longer confined to merely paper-based records. In fact, they have undergone diversified development through the application of different media and materials. In the meantime, various nonliterary texts have come into being accordingly. The *Guides* of the Language A curriculum recommends the following thirty text types for the selection of nonliterary texts by teachers and students: advertisements, encyclopedia entries, parodies, appeals, cinema/TV, imitative works, biographies, guides, photos, blogs, online information graphic design tools, radio broadcasts, brochures/flyers, interviews, reports, animations, formal letters, film and TV scripts, illustrations, informal letters, specialized instructions, journals, magazine articles, speeches, electronic materials/texts, declarations, textbooks, essays, memoirs, and travel notes (IBO, 2019). Based on the aforementioned text types, students choose nonliterary texts that correspond to the AoE, key concepts, and global issues specified for literary texts in the curriculum as learning materials. Under heterogeneous conditions (e.g., different text types, spatiotemporal frames, cultures, and ethnicities), textual analysis and conceptual understanding are implemented using homogeneous clues (e.g., the same topic or global issue). The curriculum aims to cultivate in learners erudite and interrogative research skills and critical and discerning academic attitudes. Moreover, learners are encouraged to delve into the core values of various texts, apply the values to observations on the development of life courses and reflections on everyday routines, and generate the effect of knowledge application and interdisciplinary skill transfer. Further, the learners are guided to develop a new understanding of knowledge and to deliver novel and innovative ideas.

The Language A curriculum does not aim to cultivate specialized language and literary talent. Rather, the curriculum seeks to nurture learners equipped with pluralistic perspectives; discernment ability; and independent, neutral, and up-to-date values through reading of various types of language and literature texts. In the Internet age, all sorts of ideas and concepts are created and presented through a broad range of materials and disseminated in massive quantities at a breakneck speed with the help of the Internet. Compared with the traditionally defined literary texts left behind by human society developed over the past millennia, the commonly defined "publications" (in paper or non-paper forms) have experienced unprecedentedly dramatic growth in text types and quantities. This is an inevitable phenomenon resulting from technological development, and a pleasant sight, wherein relatively equal and convenient channels are provided for the expression of personal opinions today in comparison with the past. However, the huge amount of information has substantially increased the difficulty for the audience to extract knowledge. Confronted with the mounting difficulty in acquiring valid information and knowledge, it is required that learners nowadays not only possess the competence to interpret traditional Chinese texts but also the ability of "media literacy" and "information processing" to accurately capture, interpret, and use relevant knowledge in different subject areas in the

infinitely expanding digital space. To adapt to the latest development and learning style of language and literature while transitioning into an era of nonlinear revolution, the IBDP Language A curriculum has also proposed corresponding approaches to curriculum planning. In addition to the reforms in the curriculum structure discussed earlier, students are empowered to select some textbooks. That is, students are required to develop an adequate understanding and recognition of the core concepts of a course before enrolling in the course; subsequently, they may choose learning materials that fulfill the requirements of the course with their teachers' assistance and guidance. Learners proactively and unambiguously position themselves at the center of learning. During the two-year learning process, starting from participation in curriculum planning, students establish their learning objectives and plans in a punctilious and explicit manner. With a sufficiently prepared and stable mental state, they launch collaborative learning with their teachers, seeking to achieve the ultimate goal of integrating knowledge across various subject areas and constructing their own ideological thinking systems.

Appendix

Inquiry Question

1. Can knowledge in different disciplines be integrated and innovated through the application of "concepts"?
2. Does the new version of Bloom's cognitive process dimension effectively support our plan to structure curriculum learning and clear educational goals? Is there a better theory to apply? Is there a better solution?
3. In the process of reconstructing the original context of the author, will there be misunderstandings caused by different factors such as time, space, culture, religion, gender, economy, etc., so that the understanding of the text is decontextualized?

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