



ISTANBUL
INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

Language Policy

LANGUAGE POLICY

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Introduction

Mission Statement

Through its challenging curriculum and strong staff-student relationships, IICS provides a caring environment that inspires each student to excel and to be inquisitive, creative, compassionate, balanced and internationally-minded.

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1. Philosophy and Beliefs

- Language is at the heart of learning.
- Language is fundamental to the curriculum as a basic tool of communication and understanding.
- Language is the major connecting element across the curriculum, with students learning not only language for its own sake but also the language of sciences, social sciences, mathematics, literature, the arts, physical education and technology.
- Students need to learn language in order to learn about language
- Students need to learn language in order to know how to use language to learn.
- Language is a key means of maintaining one's cultural identity and learning about the culture of others.
- Students should continue to develop their mother tongue(s) as this not only provides the underlying basis for success in acquiring additional languages, but also because language skills are transferable between languages.
- As mother tongue languages are crucial for maintaining cultural identity, IICS believes in providing a curriculum which recognises the importance of multilingualism and biliteracy.
- Language is a tool for lifelong learning
- All teachers are teachers of language
- Reading, writing, speaking and listening are all equally valued
- IICS also believes in promoting the language and culture of the host country.
- The success of the Language Policy depends on the informed and the enthusiastic involvement of the whole community.

2. Admissions

We aim to ensure that a student's language needs and abilities are properly identified as part of the school's admission procedure.

The Admissions procedure requires that families complete a comprehensive admissions packet which includes information regarding the student's language abilities, mother tongue, home language and prior experience of English.

Admission into the PYP: all students are accepted into the PYP without testing. The Admissions Office and Principal decide which students are designated for English Language Support.

Admission into the MYP: students are accepted into the school up to and including 8th grade with little or no English background. In order to assess how much prior knowledge of English a student may have, they are given a verbal interview, ideally with a member of the ESOL team. If appropriate, the student is also asked to complete a writing sample. If a student is identified as needing extra language support, he or she may be taken out of mainstream English and Humanities and given that support in mixed ability ESOL classes.

Students can be admitted into 9th and 10th grade with limited English ability. They are given a listening and reading comprehension requiring a written response, in order to determine their language level and support required. If a student is identified as needing extra language support, he or she may be taken out of mainstream English and Humanities and given that support in mixed ability ESOL classes. Students whose language proficiency is not adequate to

attend their age-appropriate grade level may be given the opportunity to commence their education at IICS at a lower grade level.

Admission into the DP: students are not admitted in the DP if, during the admissions process, they are identified as not having sufficient language proficiency to cope with the demands of the programme. If appropriate, either the Admissions office and/or Administration can offer the student the opportunity to enter the school in 9th or 10th grade.

3. Language of Instruction

The language of instruction at IICS is English. In modern foreign language classes the target language is predominantly used as appropriate.

4. The ESOL Programme

The ESOL programme aims to reinforce Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) whilst teaching as much as possible Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills (CALPS), until the student is able to comfortably access the curriculum in all mainstream classes. The PYP and MYP use in-class support and pull-out support as a model of instruction.

PYP practices: Lower primary and upper primary students are grouped according to their language level. Beginner students will be provided with intensive English language support. Whereas intermediate and advanced students will receive support as needed. The ESOL teacher will also work with students either in their homeroom, offering support to students in class, or in the ESOL room.

MYP practices: All incoming MYP students identified as in need of ESOL support are given an on-site listening and writing assessment, reading level assessment and an interview with an ESOL teacher and/or an administrator. If students are identified as requiring extra language support, they can be placed in an ESOL group. Beginner ESOL students are withdrawn from Humanities and Language A classes initially. An ESOL teacher may also give language support in the mainstream classroom, working along side the subject teacher. English language learners are placed in a language B course (German, French or Spanish), if appropriate.

DP practices: It is the school's practice not to admit students whose language proficiency in English is not sufficient to meet the demands of the DP.

(Updated June 2010)

5. Exit criteria for ESOL programmes

Graduation from primary ESOL is determined from assessing each student's reading and writing levels and speaking and listening skills. Students' progress in their language development is jointly monitored by homeroom teachers and the ESOL teacher. As students progress in their English language development, the amount of support offered, is gradually reduced.

Graduation from secondary ESOL is dependent a student's capability of achieving a '3' across all subject areas. If a student is consistently able to achieve a '3' across all subject areas it would indicate that they can reasonably understand classroom content and write sufficiently well to express their understanding in English. Achieving less than a '3' may suggest that their language skills are not yet sufficient to ensure inclusion in all mainstream classes.

During the transition from ESOL classes to mainstream classes, the classroom teachers and the ESOL teachers will monitor how well the students are coping, and make further arrangements as deemed necessary.
(Updated June 2010)

6. Language A

PYP: Aims and Objectives

Aims:

Teachers provide the environment and the necessary language support to enable students to participate fully in the academic programme and in the social life of the school, as well as to develop as individuals. Teachers recognize that language learning plays a major role for students for whom the language of instruction is not the student's first language.

Because language is the major connecting element across the curriculum, students are given many opportunities to focus not only on language for its own sake, but also to apply language within the transdisciplinary Programme of Inquiry and across all subjects in the programme. Students have many opportunities to listen and speak in order to develop effective communication skills. Because talking and listening are fundamental to promoting language learning both inside and outside of the classroom, students who develop such skills are better able to establish and maintain relationships.

Students use language to inquire into central ideas that are relevant, significant, engaging and challenging in units of inquiry that cross subject areas. The Programme of Inquiry provides an authentic context for students to develop and use language. Wherever possible, language is taught through the relevant, realistic context of the units of inquiry. The teacher plans language instruction that supports students' inquiries and the sharing of their learning. Units of inquiry focus on key language learning as students read and comprehend a variety of text types and write in various formats for a variety of purposes. They use writing to inquire and to reflect on their learning. Links to the transdisciplinary themes or central idea are explicitly made when language is being taught outside the programme of inquiry. Developing understanding of these links contributes to the students' understanding of the use of language in the world.

PYP Language Objectives

Metalanguage: Using language to learn about language. Using language both as an instrument for thought and social interaction, and for understanding about the nature of language itself.

Transdisciplinary language: Learning through language. The language of other disciplines.

Literature: Language as an art. The body of written works of a language, period or culture considered worthy of aesthetic merit.

Assessment of Language PYP: The prime objective of assessment in the PYP is to provide feedback on the learning process. Assessment involves the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice. It identifies what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in the learning process.

Students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills.

Teachers should bear in mind that a well-designed learning experience will provide data on students' knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, and is consequently a vehicle for summative or formative assessment.

The following points should be considered to inform planning, teaching and assessing:

The school's scope and sequence language document attempts to describe the language learning processes through which learners progress.

Learners within the same age group will have different proficiency levels and needs; therefore, teachers should consider a range of abilities when planning language learning experiences for a class of learners.

Each learner is a unique individual with different experiences and perceptions, so no two learners progress at the same rate, or along the same developmental pathways.

Learners seldom progress in a neat and predictable manner; instead, they may remain at one developmental level for some length of time and move rapidly through others.

MYP Language A Aims and Objectives

Aims:

The aims of the teaching and study of MYP language A are to encourage and enable students to:

- use language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression and social interaction
- develop the skills involved in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting in a variety of contexts
- develop critical, creative and personal approaches to studying and analysing literary and non-literary works
- engage in literature from a variety of cultures and representing different historical periods
- explore and analyse aspects of personal, host and other cultures through literary and non-literary works
- engage with information and communication technology in order to explore language
- develop a lifelong interest in reading widely
- apply language A skills and knowledge in a variety of real-life contexts.

Objectives

The objectives of MYP language A deal with language and literature. The various language skills—listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting—are all covered by these objectives.

A. Content (receptive and productive)

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- understand and analyse the language, content, structure, meaning and significance of both familiar and previously unseen oral, written and visual texts
- understand and apply language A terminology in context
- analyse the effects of the author's choices on an audience
- compose pieces that apply appropriate literary and/or non-literary features to serve the context and intention
- compare and contrast works, and connect themes across and within genres
- express an informed and independent response to literary and non-literary texts.

B. Organization

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- create work that employs organizational structures and language-specific conventions throughout a variety of text types
- organize ideas and arguments in a sustained, coherent and logical manner
- employ appropriate critical apparatus.

C. Style and language mechanics

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- use language to narrate, describe, analyse, explain, argue, persuade, inform, entertain and express feelings
- use language accurately
- use appropriate and varied register, vocabulary and idiom
- use correct grammar and syntax
- use appropriate and varied sentence structure
- use correct spelling (alphabetic languages) or writing (character languages).

Assessment in MYP

The IB believes that assessment is integral to all teaching and learning and should support the principles of the MYP through the encouragement of best practice.

Assessment in the MYP aims to:

- support and encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process
- inform, enhance and improve the teaching process
- promote positive student attitudes towards learning
- promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in realworld contexts using the areas of interaction
- promote the development of higher-order cognitive skills by providing rigorous final objectives that value these skills

- reflect the international-mindedness of the programme by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts
- support the holistic nature of the programme by including in its model principles that take account of the development of the whole student.

Aims and Objectives of Language A in the Diploma Programme

Aims

The aims of the Language A1 programme at both Higher and Standard Levels are to:

- encourage a personal appreciation of literature and develop an understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism
- develop the students. powers of expression, both in oral and written communication, and provide the opportunity of practising and developing the skills involved in writing and speaking in a variety of styles and situations
- introduce students to a range of literary works of different periods, genres, styles and contexts
- broaden the students. perspective through the study of works from other cultures and languages
- introduce students to ways of approaching and studying literature, leading to the development of an understanding and appreciation of the relationships between different works
- develop the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of written text
- promote in students an enjoyment of, and lifelong interest in, literature.

Objectives

- an ability to engage in independent literary criticism in a manner which reveals a personal response to literature
- an ability to express ideas with clarity, coherence, conciseness, precision and fluency in both written and oral communication
- a command of the language appropriate for the study of literature and a discriminating appreciation of the need for an effective choice of register and style in both written and oral communication
- a sound approach to literature through consideration of the works studied
- a thorough knowledge both of the individual works studied and of the relationships between groups of works studied
- an appreciation of the similarities and differences between literary works from different ages and/or cultures
- an ability to engage in independent textual commentary on both familiar and unfamiliar pieces of writing
- a wide-ranging appreciation of structure, technique and style as employed by authors, and of their effects on the reader
- an ability to structure ideas and arguments, both orally and in writing, in a logical, sustained and persuasive way, and to support them with precise and relevant examples.

Assessment in the D.P.

The method of assessment used at IICS is the one set by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). It is criterion-referenced, not norm-referenced. That is to say, the method of assessment judges the candidates by their performance in relation to identified assessment criteria and not in relation to the rest of the candidates.

There are different sets of published criteria for each programme: Language Ab Initio, Language B, Language A2 and Language A1. Different sets of descriptors are provided for higher level and standard level. The descriptors concentrate on positive achievement although, for the lower levels, failure to achieve may be included in the description. The first line in each descriptor is a summary of that descriptor.

For each assessment criterion, six descriptors are defined, denoting achievement levels 0–10. The lowest level of achievement is represented by 0; the highest level of achievement is represented by 10. For each assessment criterion, teachers should find the descriptor that conveys most adequately the achievement level attained by the candidate's work. They should then judge whether the work should be placed at the top of that band or at the bottom of it.

7. Language B Philosophy

In Language B, the teaching should be delivered in the target language as much as possible. Teaching a foreign language in the target language is the common approach all over the world. The department strongly believes that creating a classroom environment like a "target language bubble" is a key aspect in creating more authentic situations of communication. It is widely recognised that the more someone hears the language, the more ready they are to use the language as they unconsciously internalise what they are hearing. The language barrier (between the students' Mother Tongues and the target language of the class) can be overcome by offering a variety and change in activities within a steady, consistent, learner-centered, communicative approach. Finally, the importance of taking into account different learning styles in our daily teaching to overcome this language barrier is fully recognised.

Before Gr 9, all students are studying a language at Standard level "by default". The students who have a prior experience of the language are Advanced students. By prior experience we mean that the students may have lived in a country where language B is spoken or they may speak the language at home, but have had little formal education in the language. The Foundation level appears in grade 9 for students who have no experience of the language and therefore they have to be taught and assessed differently than Standard level students who have studied the language for at least 2 years. (updated June 2010)

Aims

The aims of the teaching and study of modern foreign languages are to:

- enable the student to use language(s) effectively as a means of practical communication, providing a sound base of communication skills necessary for future study, work and leisure
- enable the student to understand the nature of language and the process of total language learning, which comprises the integration of linguistic, cultural and social components

- enable the student to develop an appreciation of a variety of literary and non literary texts
- offer insight into the cultural characteristics of the communities where the language(s) is (are) spoken
- encourage an awareness and understanding of the perspectives of people from other cultures
- promote involvement with different communities, where relevant
- provide access to varied sources of information
- foster curiosity, a lifelong interest and enjoyment in language learning.

Objectives

At the end of the course students should be able to:

- communicate information, ideas and opinions
- demonstrate comprehension of specific factual information and attitudes, expressed in spoken and written contexts
- identify main ideas and supporting details and draw conclusions from spoken and written texts
- understand and appropriately use structures and vocabulary
- request and provide information in both spoken and written contexts
- engage actively in oral production using comprehensible pronunciation and intonation
- take part in formal and informal communications.

Practice

At PYP level, French is taught in mixed ability classes from 1st to 6th grade.

In the MYP, students are placed in Language B classes based on their level of competence in the target language. IICS is able to accommodate students of German, French or Spanish in all MYP phases from 1 to 5. In French and Spanish, a class would typically consist of students in the same phase; however, with smaller class sizes, it is sometimes necessary to combine students from two phases.

At DP level, three courses are offered:

- Language B (standard or higher level) French, German, or Spanish
- Language B Spanish Ab Initio
- Language A Language & Literature (standard or higher level) French, German, Spanish, or Turkish

There is the option for students continue their language study off campus; currently Korean A and Russian A are available, and this is arranged on a needs basis. If a student wishes to study a language off-campus as part of their Diploma Programme, the parents are responsible for organising tuition and payment.

8. Mother Tongue

It is our belief that students should maintain and develop their mother tongue, and where appropriate, be encouraged to use it in order to access texts and class room materials.

Students in the PYP, MYP, DP are encouraged to use their mother tongue whenever possible in connection with the curriculum. Set texts for classes such as English can be read in the mother tongue in order to ensure understanding. In addition, research for assessment can be conducted in the students' mother tongue. Students are also encouraged to use mother tongue dictionaries, search engines, and peer-to-peer consultation in order to ensure understanding, as appropriate.

9. Maintaining Mother Tongue proficiency

As part of the school's commitment to maintaining Mother Tongue language proficiency, there is a mother tongue collection in the library and resources classrooms have been purchased.

mother tongue reading events will be run annually led by the library and inviting participation from the whole school.

Summer reading events run through the library will incorporate mother tongue reading.
(Edited June 2010)

10. Host Culture Language

Due to current regulations regarding the teaching of Turkish Language, IICS is only able to offer elements of Turkish language teaching which are incorporated into the Turkish Culture lessons for Primary students and Turkish A at the Diploma level.

11. Roles and responsibilities

IICS recognises and promotes the full understanding and involvement of all members of the community in language acquisition and development.

Role of the Community

- All members of the IICS Community have a role in implementing and promoting the aims and objectives of our Language Policy.
- As a community, our primary responsibilities are:
 - To become informed about the theory, issues and practice of language acquisition and development
 - To promote and value language development both in the school and in the home

Role of the Administration

- Provide a variety of ongoing professional development opportunities to better enable teachers to be effective instructors of students with a range of language proficiencies
- Promote communication with parents concerning students' language development
- Provide translations of key documents, and translators where needed
- Ensure that policies and procedures regarding language acquisition, placement and assessment are developed and implemented, and are regularly reviewed.

Role of the Faculty

- Acquire a professional knowledge base in second language acquisition processes, bilingualism, students' developmental language behaviours, and familiarity with students' language cognitive styles
- Use scheduled meeting times to meet with ESOL teachers to appraise individual student's needs
- ESOL teachers to attend grade level planning meetings where appropriate
- Support and encourage language self-assessment
- Hold high linguistic and academic expectations for all students
- Integrate appropriate technology that enhances language development
- Select resources that are linguistically accessible and culturally inclusive
- Use teaching methodologies which support students' linguistic development

Role of the Parents

- Have a positive attitude towards both the language of instruction and their Mother Tongue
- Be knowledgeable about Language Acquisition and development in order to support the school and home efforts
- Promote the advantages of learning other languages
- Maintain Mother Tongue literacy skills in the home
- Understand the benefit of, and support, the ESOL programme
- Review with their children material covered in school in order to match their Mother Tongue vocabulary with their English vocabulary

Role of the Students

- Demonstrate respect for others by using the language of instruction in class
- Equip themselves with the necessary materials to help their language learning (i.e. to carry the appropriate dictionaries at all times)
- Be knowledgeable about their own language learning skills
- Have a positive attitude towards their language learning, and support and respect their peers in their language learning
- Share the responsibility of including all students in mixed language groupings
- Understand the importance of, and to work actively towards, developing both their Mother Tongue and English Language skills

12. Language Policy Review Process

The language policy is to be reviewed annually as new ideas are developed, the results of research are gathered and the school language profile changes. As the language policy is a working document the school recognizes the need to include roles and responsibilities for its effective evaluation.

The school language committee is responsible for the review of the language policy who will publish a timeline for the process at the commencement of each academic year.

The school language committee's role is to consider the Action Points from the previous year and through discussion and review implement changes to the language policy.

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