

Language Policy

INTRODUCTION

SCIS' mission is the foundation of our school's language policy. As language forms the basis of all learning, this policy is critical in helping guide our school to achieve its mission. SCIS' language policy has been developed around the needs of our specific school community, programs and local context, with our students at the center. Thus, our language policy document is constantly evolving. The purpose of this document is to serve as a guideline connected to key resources that we use in our language programs at SCIS. Our language policy is shaped by our core values, language ideologies, and our commitment as an IB World School. It is a statement of purpose and action, describing practices for achieving and evaluating our goals.

PURPOSE

According to Hornberger & McKay, a school's language policy is shaped by the school's language practices, language management, and language ideologies (International Baccalaureate 2011). The IB requires authorized schools to have a language policy in place; this policy is to be derived from the school's language philosophy and outline goals for language teaching and learning. It is also a statement of action, describing practices for achieving and evaluating goals, which takes into consideration the particular language factors of the local context (International Baccalaureate 2011).

The specific IB standards and practices that relate to language are:

Standard A.7 The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages.

Standard B1.5 The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme(s). The school has developed and implements a language policy that is consistent with IB expectations.

Standard C3.7 Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of students' language needs, including those for students learning in a language(s) other than mother tongue.

The above statements are taken from the 2014 IBO Programme Standards and Practices

PHILOSOPHY

In our increasingly global society we strive to educate our students to think and communicate with a holistic worldview. Aligning with the IB learner profile attributes of being "open-minded" we encourage our students to understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and to be open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. The acquisition of additional languages helps students develop an understanding of the culture of other countries and an understanding of the role culture plays in one's global perspective and international engagement of the world.

We aim to create a dynamic multilingual learning community in which the language of instruction is English, while also fostering the acquisition other languages, including mother tongue, so our students thrive within our culturally rich environment. We recognize the critical role of language in teaching and learning. Language is involved in all learning and is central to educational progress. In addition to learning how to use language, students must also learn about language and through language.

CORE VALUES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Core Value:	Therefore we strive to:
Language is fundamental to learning and permeates the entire curriculum	Provide an appropriate language and learning program in order to allow all students to access their curriculum in a supportive environment
All teachers are language teachers	Ensure all staff members are supported to understand the needs of students learning in a language other than their mother tongue, particularly in English (the language of instruction)
Language learning best takes place in a meaningful context	Students are provided with opportunities to learn language, learn about and appreciate language, and learn through language
A proficient level of literacy in the mother tongue language facilitates the transfer of skills to other languages	Support the maintenance and development of mother tongue directly and indirectly
Language learning is shaped by each learner's background and experiences	Value the students' language and literacy backgrounds as the foundation for additional language acquisition and development
Language is a key component of enhanced cognitive development, cultural identity and self esteem	Foster in students the ability to think and express themselves with precision, clarity, confidence and imagination in more than one language
The acquisition of language links people locally and globally and promotes international mindedness	Ensure that relationship between language and culture is prioritized and explored through the language curricula and beyond in other subjects. Provide opportunities for all students to be exposed to the host country language and culture.
Parents are an intrinsic part of our community of learners and they provide crucial support for language learning.	Parents are involved as organizers and teachers of our mother tongue programs

ENGLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English is the working language of SCIS. Although multilingualism and diversity are highly valued, English is the primary language with which SCIS communicates with its community and in which it is committed to providing instruction for learning.

ADMISSIONS AND ELL CLASSIFICATION

SCIS seeks to offer educational opportunities to all eligible students who identify with the school's mission and our desire to maintain a co-educational school with a diverse student population, representing a range of nationalities, languages, economic and cultural background and abilities.

All students at SCIS are expected to be able to benefit from the formal curriculum and hence it is important to be able to determine the proficiency in English for all students during the admissions process. SCIS accepts students with no English up to the beginning of Grade 7. From Semester Two in Grade 7 through to Grade 12, students must have some working knowledge of English. Recommended entry levels: Semester 2 G7 – G8 - at least Phase 2; Grade 9 and above – at least Phase 3.

If an applicant uses a language other than English, the student is administered the WiDA MODEL English Language Proficiency assessment. The MODEL results, school records and recommendations, along with Language information reported by parents and a Language Survey (In PYP only) determine if the student qualifies as an English Language learner. The MODEL is valid and reliable, and assesses social, instructional and academic English proficiency in the four domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. There is one-time fee charged at admission for students identified as English Language Learners.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) SUPPORT

Our English Language Learners (ELLs) access the core curriculum in mainstream classrooms as we embrace the pedagogical underpinnings of Teaching ESL Students in Mainstream Classrooms. Learning and language support is provided to assist in the acquisition of the English language at all grade levels across the diverse course offerings in the PYP, MYP and DP. ELL support is provided through:

- Assessing of the progression of language acquisition using multiple points of data including: WiDA MODEL Assessment, NWEA MAP Assessment, Writing Samples, Class and Subject Assessments and other work samples, observations, teacher feedback and student feedback;
- Collaborative planning of curricular content and instruction, across subject areas, highlighting specific language goals;
- Offering professional development learning and training opportunities to teachers to develop and refine ELL instructional strategies;
- In the PYP, providing in-class support to teachers through various models of co-teaching and through pull-out support; and
- In the MYP and DP, ELLs are placed in Language Acquisition English courses that provide the following support: mirroring the critical content and skills of the language and literature courses with appropriate scaffolding.

MOTHER TONGUE SUPPORT

Mother Tongue is the term used for the language that the student predominantly uses at home, and/or outside the school environment. Research clearly links second language acquisition to mother tongue literacy. SCIS recognizes the importance of maintaining mother tongue languages and therefore offers a range of formal and informal mother tongue support. This involves:

- Presentations to parents and community groups;
- Educating all stakeholders on the vital importance of maintaining mother tongue language for our students;
- Through parent information sessions, encouraging Fee Supported Mother Tongue classes within the schedule during the World Language block within the MYP;
- Supporting After School Language Programs across the school.

ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE COURSES

Language A is a curriculum term usually referring to the first language of the student, but some cases an acquired second language in which the student is highly proficient and cognitive. The following Language A programmes are offered as a part of the formal curriculum: Korean and Mandarin. SCIS aims to support student’s first language however this is not practical in all cases. SCIS allows students to take Private Language A classes during the scheduled World Language class time if the language offered by the IB as an examination and if a suitable teacher is available. These classes must be funded by the parents.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION COURSES

In the PYP, all students participate in Mandarin Chinese. In the MYP and DP placement in Language Acquisition classes is made on entry through discussions between parents, students and relevant staff members. Class determination depends upon a number of factors including nationality, past experience, language competence, expected length of enrollment, and availability of teachers or tutors. Dutch Nationals may study Dutch through a separate fee supported program.

Language Acquisition Progression from PYP to MYP

PYP	Options for MYP Year 1 (Grade 6)
	Mandarin
Mandarin	Spanish
Dutch (Fee Supported)	French
	Dutch or other Mother Tongue (Fee Supported)

Recommended Pathways Mandarin Chinese from PYP to MYP

Grade 5	Novice 1		Novice 2			Intermediate 1		Intermediate 2		Experienced		
Grade 6	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 4	Phase 5	Lang&Lit

Language Acquisition (in the MYP) and *Language B* (in the DP) are curricular terms for a second or learned language for a student. SCIS offers the following Language Acquisition courses as a part of its formal curriculum: French, Spanish, Mandarin.

The aims of the teaching and learning of MYP Language Acquisition and DP Language B are to:

- gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting maintenance of their mother tongue and cultural heritage
- develop a respect for, and understanding of, diverse linguistic and cultural heritage
- develop the student's communication skills necessary for further language learning, and for study, work and leisure in a range of authentic contexts and for a variety of audiences and purposes
- enable the student to develop multiliteracy skills through the use of a range of learning tools, such as multimedia, in the various modes of communication
- enable the student to develop an appreciation of a variety of literary and non-literary texts and to develop critical and creative techniques for comprehension and construction of meaning
- enable the student to recognize and use language as a vehicle of thought, reflection, self-expression and learning in other subjects, and as a tool for enhancing literacy
- enable the student to understand the nature of language and the process of language learning, which comprises the integration of linguistic, cultural and social components
- offer insight into the cultural characteristics of the communities where the language is spoken
- encourage an awareness and understanding of the perspectives of people from their own and other cultures, leading to involvement and action in their own and other communities
- foster curiosity, inquiry and a lifelong interest in language learning, within an enjoyable setting.

Language acquisition guide for use from September 2014 or January 2015 page 7

PHASE DESCRIPTIONS

Phase 1: Students understand and respond to simple phrases, statements and questions. They identify basic messages; facts, opinions, feelings and ideas presented in oral, visual and written language, and demonstrate their comprehension in simple oral and written phrases. They convey basic information in a limited range of everyday situations, using oral and written language appropriate to a very limited range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They begin to be aware that language use is connected to a purpose and an audience.

Phase 2: Students understand and respond to simple spoken and written texts. They identify messages, facts, opinions, feelings and ideas presented in oral, visual and written language, and demonstrate their comprehension in short oral and written form. They interact to share information in a limited range of familiar situations, using basic language appropriate to a limited range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They are aware that language varies according to purpose and audience

Phase 3: Students understand and respond to a limited variety of spoken and written texts. They understand specific information, main ideas and some detail presented in oral, visual and written language, and demonstrate their comprehension in a limited range of oral and written forms. They engage in conversation and write structured text to express their ideas, opinions and experiences in a range of familiar and some unfamiliar situations, in a limited range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They understand that they can speak and write in different ways for different purposes and audiences.

Phase 4: Students understand and respond to a variety of spoken and written texts. They interpret specific information, main ideas and some detail presented in complex oral, visual and written language, draw conclusions and recognize implied opinions and attitudes in texts read and viewed. They engage in conversation and write structured text to share informative and organized ideas on topics of personal interest and global significance, in a range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They can communicate

substantial information containing relevant and developed ideas and justified opinions on events, experiences and some concepts explored in class. They identify aspects of format and style, and speak and write with a clear sense of audience and purpose.

Phase 5: Students analyze specific information, ideas, opinions and attitudes presented in oral, visual and written language. They draw conclusions, infer information and recognize implied opinions and attitudes. They respond and react to questions and ideas in a range of spoken, visual and written texts. They engage actively in conversations in social and some academic situations to contribute substantial information containing relevant and focused ideas supported by examples and illustrations. They organize information and ideas into a clear and effective structure to express their understanding and opinions on topics of personal interest and global significance. They interpret aspects of format and style, and are able to adapt register and style of language to suit the context.

Phase 6: Students evaluate the important information, details and ideas presented in spoken, written and visual language in social and academic contexts. They analyze the information, draw conclusions and make inferences about ideas, opinions and attitudes implied in a wide range of spoken, visual and written texts. They engage actively in conversations in social and academic situations to contribute substantial information and give detailed analysis and explanation. They organize information and ideas logically and effectively to communicate their understanding, opinions and perspectives to a wide range of audiences, and for a variety of social and academic purposes.

DP: COURSE OVERVIEWS G11 TO G12

The language teachers, Diploma Programme coordinator and divisional Principal will ensure that, as far as possible, students are following the course that is most suited to their needs and that will provide them with an appropriate academic challenge. Students select courses during the DP information sessions prior to beginning the programme.

Group 1: These courses are suitable for students who have experience using the language in an academic context. The following courses are offered in the Diploma in Grades 11 and 12: Language and Literature (English) SL and HL; Literature (English, Mandarin Chinese, Korean) SL, HL and Self-taught in various languages.

Group 2: Language acquisition courses exist to provide students with the opportunity to acquire or develop an additional language (or languages) and to promote an understanding of other cultures through the study of language. The language skills are to be developed through the study and use of a range of written and spoken materials. The materials, which are related to the target cultures, enable students to develop mastery of language skills and intercultural understanding. The following courses are offered in the Diploma in Grades 11 and 12: Mandarin Chinese B, Spanish B, French B HL and SL, and English B HL.

Language *ab initio* and Language B are language acquisition courses designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural competence that will enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken. The *ab initio* course is designed for students who have little or no experience of the language. Language B is intended for students with prior learning of the language. SCIS offers the following courses: Chinese *ab initio*, Spanish *ab initio* and French *ab initio*. While all courses listed in this section are offered, they may not take place if they are undersubscribed.

Language A teaching will develop critical, creative and personal approaches to studying and analyzing literary and non literary works. Students should be able to apply Language A skills and knowledge in a variety of real life contexts. Movement from MYP language to languages in the IB Diploma will consider the rate of progress made by a student as well as the phase they have reached the end of Grade 10. In some cases, continuing the same language may not be advised and more details about the progression of languages is provided by admissions and and relevant staff.

Recommended Pathways French, Spanish and Mandarin from MYP to DP

MYP Phase	DP Course
Phase 1	Ab initio
Phase 2	Ab initio
Phase 3	Language B SL or HL
Phase 4	Language B SL or HL
Phase 5	Language B SL or HL or Language and Literature or Literature
Phase 6	Language B SL or HL or Language and Literature or Literature

CRITERIA FOR TRANSFER TO THE NEXT PHASE OR LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE COURSE

In all three IB programmes, language learning is recognized as a developmental process where there are opportunities for students to build on prior knowledge and skills in order to help them progress to the next phase/course of language development. The following criteria and requirements will be used when transferring students:

1. When a teacher has gathered enough data about the student to support the transfer.
2. When a student is regularly achieving levels 7- 8 across most of the criteria or when the teacher trust that the student is ready to move to the next phase based on his professional judgement.
3. When the following phase in LA or the L&L course has enough space to transfer the student.

ALLOCATED INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Grades 1 -5	Host Country Language Learning in the PYP - (Mandarin); Dutch Nationals may study Dutch through a separate fee paying program.	320 minutes per 8 days
Grades 6-10	MYP Languages (French, Spanish, Mandarin, English)	320 minutes per 8 days
Grades 11-12	IB Diploma Language Options	480 minutes for Higher Level 320 minutes for Standard Level

MANDARIN CHINESE PROGRAM

The school is committed to providing opportunities for students to engage with their host country, China, in an authentic and meaningful way. Interactions with members of the Chinese community within SCIS, and in Shanghai, form an integral part of the curriculum and provide genuine opportunities for students to develop and use Chinese language for real purposes. Through learning more about Chinese culture and society, students develop an understanding of globally significant themes. China is considered to be a key platform for learning at SCIS, providing opportunities for real-life investigations and experiences.

The PYP Chinese Language program is for students from Grade 1 to Grade 5, with all students enrolled in the program unless they are enrolled in the Mother Tongue Dutch Program. Whenever appropriate, Chinese lessons are connected with the homeroom Programme of Inquiry (PoI), in order to provide authentic connections and deep conceptual understanding. Students in grade 1 to grade 5 attend Chinese language classes daily. Placement of students into the appropriate Chinese language level is based upon a variety of student factors including: language proficiency, academic background, and primary language. Chinese language proficiency is determined by interviews with the Lower School Chinese teaching staff and by viewing student records.

The MYP and DP Chinese Language program is fully articulated above.

COMMUNICATION OF THIS POLICY

A shortened version of this policy will be printed in the student handbook and parent handbook and on the website. The full policy will be made available to staff and faculty and will be part of the orientation at the start of each academic year.

POLICY REVIEW

According to Hornberger and McKay, language planning includes language policy as both problem solving and an interactive democratic practice (International Baccalaureate, 2011). To this end, a representative group will review the SCIS Language Policy regularly. The Senior Leadership Team will regularly review the implementation of the policy in classrooms and throughout the school.

WORKS CITED

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