

# B.I.S.

## Language Policy

*South Campus*

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## Table of Contents

<b>1. Mission and Philosophy Statement</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Language of Instruction &amp; Communication</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Language Learning at Bogaerts International School</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Home/mother tongue learning support</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5. Multilingualism support</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6. Inclusion and equity of access to the IB programmes</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7. EAL support</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>8. Language policy as a living document at BIS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>9. Language Policy Review Cycle</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>8</b>
Procedures	8
Language Learning in the PYP (ages 3 to 11)	8
Language Learning at Bogaerts International School: MYP (ages 11-16)	9
Language Learning at Bogaerts International School: DP (ages 16-18)	11
Language Learning & Support	11

The aim of this document is to present and explain the role of language at BIS, both as a medium for communication and for learning and teaching. The BIS teachers aim to make multilingualism a paradigm for the international community while they offer students all the necessary support to develop their communication skills.

## 1. Mission and Philosophy Statement

Our mission is to combine passionate, student-centered approaches to teaching and learning with shared community values, in order to stimulate student agency, a love of inquiry and a dedication to positive action around the world.

At Bogaerts International School, we believe that every teacher is a language teacher as language is the pathway to interculturalism. We consider it to be our responsibility as educators not only to foster learning within our language of instruction, but also to encourage pride in our cultural diversity and our own language of choice, nurturing a culture of respect for diversity and international mindedness.

## 2. Language of Instruction & Communication

Communication from the school's official channels is in English, as is the language of instruction. All teachers work on subject specific vocabulary and apply various techniques for the students to understand the language and be able to use it in constructing their knowledge and facilitate their communication. Due to the cultural demand in our particular community for the French language, we have a programme that does emphasize French as a second language. We do value all other languages equally, and those languages can be used in social situations or to help clarify information when required.

## 3. Language Learning at Bogaerts International School

In the PYP, MYP, and DP, integrating language acquisition into the program and activities outside of classes is a key connecting factor. Its use in the fields of oral, written, and visual communication is evident across the transdisciplinary/interdisciplinary program of inquiry, and students study about it in all subject areas.

Students have several opportunities to listen, speak, read, and write in their classrooms in order to effectively communicate and build and sustain relationships. The school library is closely related to learning languages. The homeroom teacher and subject teachers co-design the units of inquiry, and the school librarian (resource manager) is constantly on hand to help students and teachers with pertinent literature that will broaden their inquiry horizons. The main goal of the library is to provide curriculum-supporting materials while taking into account teachers' and staff members' professional needs as well as student interests and demands.

Our Language Program aims students to:

- Use language to convey ideas clearly, precisely, and in an appropriate way.
- Investigate language in relevant circumstances.

- Acquire linguistic proficiency and use it in speaking, writing, listening, and other activities.
- Gain the courage to take chances in all of their language experiences.
- Recognize that language acquisition is a continual process dependent on prior knowledge.
- Gain knowledge of the literary tradition's importance, position, complexity, and connections to other cultures.
- Acquire reading and writing skills at the same time.
- Acquire language proficiency for oral presentations.
- Give heed to the best ways to convey ideas or facts (functional language)

*(Guidelines for reviewing a language*

*policy, 2008).*

#### 4. Home/mother tongue learning support

The phrase "mother tongue" may refer to the language that was learnt first, the language that a person is considered a native speaker of, the language that is best known, or the language that is spoken the most. Because mother tongue is the language most closely identified with a culture, we think it should be developed as such. Mother tongue instruction also significantly improves the student's sense of cultural and personal identity as well as their self-esteem.

French is the most common language in the area where Bogaerts International School is located. Additionally, English is the first language taught to BIS students starting in Early Years.

#### 5. Multilingualism support

At BIS, we provide chances for Spanish language acquisition in the MYP and DP programs in addition to teaching French as the native language in all programs and English as the primary language of communication. Every learning experience is a literacy experience. Language is used for speaking, listening, and writing. The rules of language apply to every part of our existence. Every class offers opportunities for speaking, listening, reading, and writing in the context of specialized subject-specific language.

A fundamental skill, literacy is essential for developing imagination, creativity, and critical thinking. We want learning to be engaging, exciting, and inherently rewarding for our students. As a result, we employ a number of tools and techniques to help learners become accountable for and receptive to their own learning.

Teachers educate students how to apply tactics by serving as models for them. Instead of focusing on discrete abilities, teachers emphasize techniques that are applicable to all taught languages. Through guided reading, genre studies in reading and writing, inquiry, as well as writing styles, author studies, and specialized topic matter, reading and writing abilities and methods are taught. In spelling, vocabulary, and word study, specific skills and techniques are explicitly taught. The read-aloud selections are meant to challenge the class's reading abilities ( *Guidelines for reviewing a language policy 2008, p. 1* ).

## 6. Inclusion and equity of access to the IB programmes

In PYP, MYP, and DP, differentiation is influenced by three characteristics:

- a. Differentiation according to readiness, in which the teachers adhere to the following key principles: concrete to abstract, simple to complex, slow to quick, structured to open-ended, dependent to independent, simple faceted to multiple faceted. Diverse scaffolding, tiered activities, products, and assessments, small-group teaching, home learning opportunities, mentorship, negotiated criteria for quality, and a variety of graphic organizers are some of the tools our teachers utilize to encourage readiness differentiation.
- b. Interest-based differentiation, in which teachers adhere to the following guiding principles: create open invitations for student interest, develop effective means of sharing interest-based findings, keep an open mind and an open eye for students who have serious passion, and link interest-based exploration with important curriculum elements. Group investigations, web quests, jigsaw puzzles, and literature circles are just a few of the numerous methods our instructors employ to foster interest differentiation.
- c. The principles of differentiation based on learning profiles serve as a helpful reminder that not all students share the same learning preferences. To this end, teacher-structured and student-choice learning-profile differentiation strategies can both be used to help students reflect on their own preferences. The teachers are conscious of elements such as learning preferences, culture, and gender. Teachers employ a variety of strategies to enhance learning-profile differentiation, including entry points, key words, and various organizational techniques (Domen et al., 2020).

## 7. EAL support

For students who struggle to understand English-language instruction in the mainstream and have little experience or proficiency with the language, an EAL program is set up. These children are in small groups, and target language instruction to effectively meet their specific requirements. We are aware of the diversity in our student body and the range of English competence among the students we educate. Some arrive with no or little knowledge of the English language, and some are even completely unfamiliar with the way the alphabet is organized, particularly in the elementary level. The primary goal of the school is to offer EAL (English Additional Language) training to students who need to raise their English proficiency to a level that is on par with that of the mainstream classroom. This will eventually allow them to successfully integrate with their peers (Costley et al., 2020).

## 8. Language policy as a living document at BIS

In terms of language learning and instruction, all BIS teachers are aware of the ongoing requirement for professional development (nano PDs offered through the PRC, IB workshops, webinars). To aid in the learning process and to guarantee the quality of teaching and learning, reference materials (books, hands-on resources) are given to PYP, MYP, and DP teachers.

## 9. Language Policy Review Cycle

This Language Policy will be set for review once every two school years. However, the procedural information may be reviewed on a yearly basis. Review will occur first with selected SLT members and then continue into collaborative sessions with all staff as needed.



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## Appendix

### Procedures

#### A) Language Learning in the PYP (ages 3 to 11)

In EY/PYP, our language programme is based upon the PYP scope & sequence documents that are based on the PYP phased approach to language learning. This scope & sequence is referred to for planning, teaching, assessing, and reporting for English language learning and French language learning.

##### Phases of Language Learning

The scope & sequence document that we employ is a continuum of 5 language phases, and those phases are broken into strands of learning. The strands of language learning, as described in our scope & sequence document, are as follows:

- Reading
- Writing
- Listening and Speaking
- Viewing and presenting

Within the 5 phases described in the document, learning outcomes for each phase and each strand indicate individual skills, as well as conceptual learning, that should take place for each student. However, as students will enter phases at different times and achieve at different levels within a phase, language education is highly differentiated. One cannot assume that all students of a specific age or year level will be working on the same phase or strand at the same time.

In the PYP, it is necessary to approach all language learning in an authentic, relevant way for each student. This can occur in the context of a unit of inquiry, but also should take place outside of it, allowing students a free range of linguistic approaches to gaining literacy skills. Therefore, in the

PYP (Year 1-Year 5) we adopted a specific, student-driven approach to language education in both English and French as another language. This approach is known as “The Daily 5.” It was originally developed by classroom teachers in the U.S., but has continued to grow and improve over the years as more and more classrooms adopt the approach.

##### *English Language Approach – “The Daily 5”*

“The Daily 5,” at its core, is a fully independent method for students to explore literacy. Through a mixture of whole- class, targeted group, and individual instruction, students learn not only to identify their own materials for study, but also their own literacy strengths,



weaknesses, goals, and methods for improvement. The process is highly metacognitive, and extremely well-suited for classrooms that represent beginner to advanced English skills. Using our school library, students choose their own books and, with the assistance of individual teacher conferencing, their own methods for learning the strands of literacy as outlined above. It is fair to say that 90% of the work conducted in a “Daily 5” classroom is dictated by the student and his or her knowledge of the structure of the programme. 10% is individual teacher conferencing, targeted group support, or whole-class instruction.

#### French Language – Phase Approach

The Daily 5 approach, which was fully instituted in the 2017-2018 school year in English and then transitioned to in French for the 2018-2019 school year, has proved to be a valuable and educationally challenging learning experience for both staff and students. Though the focus on differentiation and authentic language learning experiences has shown itself to be strongly aligned with our educational philosophy and mission, reflection leads us to conclude that practical obstacles still lay in our path with regards to the teaching of French language.

Therefore, as a result of extensive community feedback, B.I.S. will be reinstituting phases of learning for French language based first on proficiency of understanding. Students from upper PYP, Years 4 to 5, will be placed in one of two language phases: beginner, or advanced learners. Within these mixed age classrooms, French teachers will still employ highly differentiated and student-centered learning techniques, but we believe that, based on our previous experience with skill level phases, this will produce a balance of inquiry-based and academically rigorous learning in the French language.

#### English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Due to the size of the school and the competing demand for English language support for our students entering the school with little to no English skills, Bogaerts International School has spent a great deal of time trialing methods of support for students still acquiring the English language. The support offered at this time is a targeted intervention that provides three hours of English language support with a specified English language teacher. Students who are assessed as beginners of English, or students who require additional beginner’s English support, are pulled out of French.

The EAL teacher works in collaboration with the rest of the PYP staff. The materials and lesson content may or may not be directly aligned with “The Daily 5” approach, but the concepts of independence and inquiry are always emphasized in the support environment.

The goal of this EAL programme is to provide students with a functional, foundational knowledge of English so that they can be returned to homeroom English study and French as another language classes as soon as possible during the school year.

### **B) Language Learning at Bogaerts International School: MYP (ages 11-16)**

The MYP structures sustained inquiry in Language & Literature and Language Acquisition by developing conceptual understanding in global contexts. Conceptual understanding is framed by prescribed key and related concepts, as prescribed by the MYP approaches to learning.

English and French are the main languages studied at BIS. Students are placed either in

Language & Literature or Language Acquisition, depending on individual needs and language ability.

In Language & Literature, students are grouped by MYP Year. Assessment is closely aligned with the written and taught curriculum. Each strand from MYP Language & Literature has a corresponding strand in the assessment criteria for this subject group:

- Criterion A: Analysing
- Criterion B: Organising
- Criterion C: Producing Text
- Criterion D: Using Language

In Language Acquisition, students are grouped by Phase and are placed depending on individual needs and language ability.

In MYP 1-3, students are grouped in Phase 1 or Phases 2-3, before joining English Language & Literature when their language ability allows.

In MYP 4-5, students are grouped in Phases 2-3 or Phases 4-5, before joining English Language & Literature when their language ability allows.

In MYP 1-5, students are grouped into French Language Acquisition Phase 1, Phases 2-3, or Phases 4-5, before joining French Language & Literature when their language ability allows. As with English, the groups are split separately among MYP 1-3 and MYP 4-5.

Assessment is closely aligned with the written and taught curriculum. Each strand from MYP language acquisition has a corresponding strand in the assessment criteria for this subject group:

- Criterion A: Listening
- Criterion B: Reading
- Criterion C: Speaking
- Criterion D: Writing

As students enter language acquisition phases at different times and achieve at different levels within a phase, language acquisition education is differentiated. One cannot assume that all students of a specific age or year level will be placed in the same phase at the same time.

MYP Spanish Language Acquisition is offered as a third language. Students in MYP 1, 2, 3 and 4 have the opportunity to join a Phase 1 (beginner) or Phase 2-3 (pre-intermediate) class. We also offer an advanced Spanish Language class during this time (see MYP Mother Tongue Support).

In MYP 5, students have the possibility to study Spanish Language Acquisition at Phase 1 (beginner) level and at Phase 5-6 level for advanced students. These lessons prepare students for the possibility of studying Spanish B or Spanish Ab Initio in the Diploma Programme. Offering Spanish Language Acquisition in the MYP allows us to support students who have Spanish as their mother tongue.

### **C) Language Learning at Bogaerts International School: DP (ages 16-18)**

#### Phases of Language Learning

In the Diploma programme, as part of the IB requirements, students can take two Language A (mother tongue) and a Language B (language acquisition).

#### Language Level: English

It is expected that to access the IB Diploma curriculum, students have a language level of at least B2 to enter onto the programme. This ensures the student can understand the curriculum and not be disadvantaged. A language test will be given on entry to ensure that the language level is sufficient. If the student does not have this level, an intensive English Language course can be done to gain the sufficient level of English and gain access to the Diploma course.

#### Language Acquisition

The Diploma Programme has the requirements for students to acquire a second language as part of the Group 2 Language B programme. Students can take the languages of French, English and Spanish as a language B or second language.

All three languages are offered as a Language B. Language B is for students who have more experience of the language, usually at least a year or more, but as a second language. It is not meant for mother tongue speakers or native speakers of a language. This is offered at HL with 240 hours of teaching and SL with 150 hours of teaching.

French and Spanish are also offered as Ab initio. Ab initio is intended for students with no or little previous experience. This is for students with no prior exposure to the language or less than a year. This is offered only at SL as per the IB criteria.

It is required that English be taken as either Language A or Language B to fully support the student in their IB Diploma studies. Students are required to take English Language B at HL to fully support their language acquisition and therefore support their learning. English Language B Students are expected to undertake additional reading in the English language along with any other exposure to English language such as audio books, tv, film etc.

#### School Supported Self Taught (SSST)

Bogaerts International School fully supports students in the continued learning of the “mother tongue” and as such, offers SSST Language A Literature Standard Level (SL). The school will support the student and family finding an SSST tutor, where the family will bear the costs. The school will provide an SSST Coordinator to work with coordinating the programme and communicate with the Mother Tongue language tutor and student and help prepare for the assessments.

It will be mandatory that students take English B HL alongside their SSST Mother Tongue language to fully support their IB Diploma Programme delivered in English.

### **D) Language Learning & Support**

#### PYP Language Support

In the PYP, language support begins in PYP 1, and is provided both within the curriculum and outside of the curriculum, primarily for English. English support is provided in the curriculum at approximately 3 hours per week. Our “EAL” (English as an alternative language) pull-out support is provided to students with little to no exposure to English. At this time, demand for additional French support is lower within the community, but in the past, we have also offered extra- curricular French support at both a beginner and advanced level.

#### MYP Language Support

Due to the size of the school and the competing demand for English language support for our students entering the school with little to no English skills, Bogaerts International School has spent a great deal of time trialing methods of support for students still acquiring the English language. The support offered at this time depends on the language ability of the students entering the MYP.

MYP students who are assessed as beginners of English, or students who require additional English support, receive 3.5 hours a week of specialised EAL instruction in addition to the 3.5 hours of English Language Acquisition classes. These EAL classes not only focus on the English language, but also aim to integrate the students back into regular MYP classes as soon as possible during the school year. Thus, students cover aspects of the MYP curriculum in a simplified form or may review work directly given in MYP curricular classes.

MYP French Language & Literature students who are assessed as requiring learning support due to learning difficulties and/or gaps in French-language knowledge follow a French Language & Literature Reinforcement class during the 3.5 hours of MYP French Language & Literature instruction.

#### DP Language Support

As was detailed in Section V of this document, the DP offers significant choices of support within the structure of its programme for language.

However, at this particular level of study, should a student require additional support outside of Ab Initio or Language Acquisition, the school can offer (at additional cost) further language support. This is particularly true of English, but can also be procured for French or Spanish. It is important to note that, by the DP level of instruction, students must ensure that they are at the appropriate English level of “B2” to gain access to the curriculum.

As mentioned, School Supported Self Taught (SSST) requires the use of a mother tongue teacher which Bogaerts helps to find, however the cost of this is passed on to the parent.