



Hanoi International School

Language Policy



Language Policy

Acknowledgements

This language policy was put together by a variety of stakeholders. A language committee was formed in September 2014, with the goal of reviewing the current language policy. Thanks to all teachers input, but a special thanks goes to the following people:

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Last Updated: September 2016

Review: June 2018



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1. Language Philosophy

- H.I.S. Mission Statement –

“Hanoi International School enables all students to realise their full potential in a caring and positive learning environment. Through our broad and balanced, international curriculum we endeavour to develop responsible, globally conscious citizens. We strive to develop the whole child as a life-long learner with a strong sense of self worth.”

The HIS language policy is shaped around a set of shared beliefs and values, as well as a set of language goals. Language plays a crucial role in supporting the school’s Mission Statement. In line with the IB, HIS’ focus is on preparing world citizens who are responsible and self-confident, and who have developed a strong commitment to the respect and tolerance of others. A truly globally conscious citizen is one who values the language and culture of both their own country and that of other countries and cultures.

In HIS, we believe that

- all our teachers are language teachers.
- students rely on language as a tool for communicating, developing logical thinking, creating and sustaining cultural identity, as well as developing social skills and values.
- a command of English provides a tool for accessing information and communicating within our school community and within the international community.
- a language environment where bilingualism and multilingualism thrive will develop students as global citizens, and increase their future opportunities for success in life.
- language acquisition and development play a crucial role in each student’s personal development.
- possession of a strong mother tongue is essential.

2. Language of Teaching and Learning and Profile

English is the language of instruction at HIS, and therefore has priority in the school’s language program. Providing quality education in English for children from a variety of cultural backgrounds demands a commitment from the school to providing support for students weak in English. It is important to have a strong foundation, including literacy skills in one’s mother tongue, as it facilitates other learning and inquiry.



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Within the Hanoi International School community, many languages and cultures exist side by side and students are encouraged to appreciate and compare the languages and cultures that are associated with them.

In order to enable all students in the school to access the curriculum in a manner that allows them to benefit fully from their education and to reach their full potential, HIS provides an English as an Additional Language (EAL) programme for students entering the school with limited proficiency.

The Student Support Coordinator works with other subject teachers to assist students with enhancing their subject-specific vocabulary. After the first year of additional English language support, students receive further testing to determine the amount of support necessary. Depending on these results, students may return to all 'mainstream' classes or perhaps continue into a second year of English language support, but with fewer sessions scheduled.

3. Additional Languages and Mother Tongue

Language is an important factor in sustaining a student's cultural identity and intercultural understanding. Learning an additional language is a valuable skill. Therefore, HIS promotes foreign language learning and mother tongue learning in addition to English. All students are encouraged and assisted where possible to maintain the study of their mother tongue language.

4. Importance of Host Country Language and Culture

Hanoi International School recognizes the importance of promoting the host country language and culture. We are proud to be from Vietnam, our host country and we have a range of activities throughout the year which promote awareness of Vietnamese language and culture throughout the school. Our CAS programme is also used as a vehicle for forging links with the local community and culture.

5. Language Practices and Programmes

Classroom instruction takes place in English. However EAL students are encouraged to use mother tongue in order to inquire and further access the curriculum, where appropriate. At Hanoi International School we believe that language is fundamental to learning, thinking and communication and, to that end, we ensure that language skills are developed and used across the curriculum. It is necessary not only to learn language but also to learn about language and through language. We believe that learning takes place best in authentic contexts, and literature



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takes a special place in ensuring that this learning happens. The strands of oral (speaking and listening), written, and visual communication are learned across the entire school curriculum.

Teachers at HIS attend Professional Development workshops held regularly within and outside the school.

Primary Years Programme

The PYP English scope and sequence and programme of inquiry is delivered in English and promotes the acquisition of language through inquiry as its core belief. This is in line with the HIS mission and and also the IB philosophy.

All students from Reception to Grade 5 also study Vietnamese. Students in Grade 5 also study French.

Middle Years Programme

English

English Language and Literature is offered in grades 6-10.

Vietnamese

Vietnamese is offered as Language and Literature for Vietnamese nationals and as Language Acquisition for non-native speakers in two sections: Phases 1-2 and Phases 2-3.

Japanese & Korean

As of school year 2015-16, these languages are offered in HIS as follows:

Japanese from Grades 8-12 as Language and Literature. (This is under review due to staffing and low Japanese student enrolment)

Korean from Grades 6-12 as Language and Literature.

Japanese and Korean nationals will normally study their mother tongue language.

Language Acquisition

In Grades 6 to 8 we offer Language Acquisition English and French. In grades 6-7 we offer Language Acquisition Vietnamese.



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Students in Grades 9 & 10 complete either the MYP Language and Literature/IGCSE¹ English First Language or the Language Acquisition/IGCSE English as a Foreign Language course, as appropriate. Students may also enrol in MYP Language Acquisition French/IGCSE French Foreign Language.

Self Taught Languages

HIS will support the provision of self-taught languages in grade 10. The MYP Coordinator will meet with parents in order to discuss possible arrangements and language pathways for individual students.

The Courses are organized into the following phases:

MYP Grade	Phase	Language
6-7	Phases 1-2	English
6-8	Phases 3-5	English
9-10	Phases 3-5	English
6-7	Phases 1-2	Vietnamese
6-7	Phases 3-4	Vietnamese
6-8	Phases 1-3	French
9-10	Phases 3-4	French

Placement for MYP Language Acquisition Courses

Applicants are required to complete a Student Background Survey that indicates their proficiency in their mother tongue, English and other languages along with a diagnostic assessment.

In the MYP and DP, any application for a student who indicates that English is not their mother tongue will be reviewed by the Language Acquisition Head of Department as part of the

¹ IGCSE at HIS will be phased out by academic year 2018-2019.



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admissions policy. A Language Acquisition review form will be placed in the initial application of each candidate in Grades 6-12 for review by the Language Acquisition Head of Department.

Exit Criteria and Evidence Examined

A student who reaches the highest levels of achievement in the end of year report will be reviewed by the Language Acquisition Head of Department to determine movement to the next phase. Other assessment data and any portfolio work will also be considered. If a student is at the point of exiting Language Acquisition, the heads of department for both Language Acquisition and Language and Literature will review assessment data and any portfolio work to determine placement for the next academic year.

Exemptions and extraordinary circumstances

If an MYP student is determined to need extra English Language support or has been identified as needing SEN provision, the student may be pulled out of additional language courses and/or other subjects in order to adequately provide assistance where needed. The student would be enrolled in Language and Literature in their Mother Tongue. The MYP Student Support Coordinator, Language Acquisition Head of Department and MYP Coordinator will meet quarterly to determine when the student is able to begin/return to all mainstream classes.

Diploma Programme

English

Students entering Grade 11 are placed in the appropriate English course: English B (HL or SL) or English A Language and Literature (HL or SL), based on the recommendation of the English A and B teachers in agreement with the students and in conjunction with the IB DP Coordinator.

All students are expected to take one Language A course as well as an additional language. The choice of language level depends upon the student's preference, level of proficiency and literacy in that language and his/her overall DP program.



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Non-English Courses

All students are required to study a language in addition to English. Where possible, students are expected to study their mother tongue in preference to learning a new language.

French

French is offered as a Language B at both SL and HL

Spanish and German can also be made available within the DP programme as ab initio (beginner) courses.

IB Diploma students are strongly encouraged to study their mother tongue. Support is actively provided for them to study the IB DP School-Supported Self-Taught (SSST) Literature course in their language, wherever possible and appropriate. For Grade 9 & 10 students, we also support self-study language options wherever possible.

Vietnamese

DP Vietnamese Literature is offered at both HL and SL.

Japanese & Korean

DP Japanese and Korean Literature are offered at both HL and SL.

Japanese and Korean nationals will normally study their mother tongue language.

6. Teaching and Learning at HIS

The IB Learner Profile is integral to teaching and learning of language across the whole school. It represents the qualities of effective learners and internationally-minded students. The Learner Profile together with the five essential elements of the programme – knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action – informs planning, teaching and assessing in language.

(International Baccalaureate publication, September, 2008, “Towards a Continuum of International Education”)

Language Learning plays a central role in all learning across the curriculum. Teachers at Hanoi International School structure teaching/learning situations so that students have opportunities



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for success. This includes using techniques that support students during the communication process and bridging the gaps when meaning is not able to easily be expressed.

Students use a range of language skills when they research and communicate not only through printed media but also through global range of multimedia resources. At the same time students participate in many regular classroom activities in which teachers are aware of the EAL students' needs and modify or differentiate lessons accordingly. Physical Education, Art, Music, and ICT are subjects in which all students participate regardless of their English competency. In this way, children not only achieve competency in meeting academic goals but are able to participate fully in the life of the school and become a fully integrated member of it. Students need many opportunities to speak and listen in order to communicate effectively and to establish and maintain relationships. Talk in the classroom is fundamental to the promotion of language.

In HIS, we consistently aim:

- to understand that students use language to clarify and extend their experiences.
- to understand that listening and speaking, reading and writing, viewing and presenting are interrelated and interdependent.
- to appreciate the richness and variety in language that changes according to context, style, audience and purpose.
- to share the responsibility for students' language learning and evaluation.
- to have all students develop their linguistic and critical thinking tools, so that they can become independent, successful and contributing members of society.

Teachers of languages at HIS are required to:

1. Know their students.
Our students come from a diverse range of socio-cultural backgrounds with different aspirations. Our students all have different capabilities and have different learning styles. We ask our teachers to be sensitive to these differences and to cater for each child's uniqueness in his/her classroom.
2. Know their subject.
Our teachers are all trained with certified teaching qualifications. We employ teachers with a demonstrated knowledge of their academic disciplines, including specialist knowledge of the age ranges they teach. We encourage them to keep abreast of current curriculum documents and embark on appropriate PD.
3. Promote literacy as a lifelong pursuit for their students.
The best literacy teachers ensure that students are constantly learning new ways of using language as their knowledge, skills and experiences expand and mature. They give



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students purposeful language tasks and work collaboratively with them to ensure that they are active participants in their own learning.

4. Plan to ensure effective learning.

We encourage our teachers to maintain a constant dialogue with their students about learning goals, processes, content and outcomes. They should draw on a repertoire of different teaching practices to ensure that all students have the opportunity to engage with and achieve progress in their literacy learning. They should use a range of curriculum materials (and be able to develop and adapt these to meet individual needs) and include information and communication technologies.

5. Create a challenging learning environment.

This learning environment must respect the cultural and linguistic diversity of all the students within it. Teachers should plan to build student confidence so that they are prepared to take risks both within and outside the classroom. The learning environment should be balanced between listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting activities and should provide students with a range of print and non-print resource materials from a range of different cultures and eras. HIS aims to teach students how to study independently in order to become lifelong learners.

6. Assess and review student learning and planning for future learning.

Assessment plays a central role in promoting student learning, improving the effectiveness of teaching practice and contributing to the planning of future learning. HIS recognizes the importance of assessment and constantly strives to improve our practice in this area.

HIS has a regular assessment and reporting programme to provide students and parents with accurate feedback on progress in literacy and language development. Feedback must recognise achievement as well as indicate directions for improvement. Formative and summative assessments are used to evaluate student progress.

7. Demonstrate dedication.

HIS teachers value the experiences and insights the students bring to class. HIS teachers are enthusiastic about teaching, and enjoy creating language opportunities for students that are authentic, productive and imaginative. Teachers are encouraged to extend their professional knowledge and improve their teaching. HIS provides them with the opportunity to attend Professional Development conferences and embark on online courses.

8. Continue to learn.



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The context of teaching at HIS is continually changing and evolving. HIS teachers continually reflect upon, review and refine their teaching to improve students' learning. Research, reading, discussion, study, participation in conferences and workshops – HIS encourages teachers to do all of these and keep abreast of the latest research and debates in the field of education particularly in the field of literacy education.

9. Support the school in the community and wider educational contexts.

Teachers work together as a team to improve HIS as an effective learning community. At HIS we encourage our staff to work collaboratively, to help new teachers, to help each other to work through difficulties, to celebrate the achievements of colleagues, to share insights, to build strong links between home and school, to support each other's endeavours and initiatives, to minimize conflict and to actively contribute to the wider school community.



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Resouces

Guidelines for developing a school language policy (April 2008)

Language and Learning in the IB programmes (September 2011)

Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes (April 2008)

MYP: From principles into Practice (2015)

Second Language Acquisition and Mother-tongue Development (January 2004)

Towards a continuum of international education (September 2008)