

Language Policy

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Language Policy

In line with the Vision, Mission and Aims of the International School of Vietnam, this Language Policy document is designed to give a clear and concise description of the role of language in our school.

ISV Vision

The International School of Vietnam aspires to nurture, empower and connect students with their local and global communities, to become international citizens who are active, compassionate and lifelong learners.

ISV Mission

The International School of Vietnam empowers and inspires students to become active, lifelong learners by providing a challenging, globally relevant curriculum that meets the needs of individual learners.

Our holistic and balanced approach nurtures each student's potential and inquiring mind. We foster international-mindedness by connecting students to local and global communities towards awareness and sustainable action.

Aims

- Provide transferable education appropriate to international students.
- Teach and learn conceptually through inquiry-based units.
- Ensure quality assurance of all aspects of our school.
- Provide a first-class, safe and healthy learning environment.
- Promote the internationally-minded values of the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile.
- Provide highly qualified, caring teachers who challenge students to develop intellectually, physically and socially to reach their fullest potential.
- Encourage engagement with the language, history, culture and society of the host community of Hanoi and Vietnam.
- Enable students to grow in self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Nurture - Empower - Connect all stakeholders of our community to the concept of international-mindedness.

Overview

At the International School of Vietnam (ISV), we believe that *'high-quality learning thrives in an environment of tolerance, respect, and cultural and linguistic diversity'*. We acknowledge that language is fundamental to learning and permeates all subject areas; with learning and language being inextricably bound, the responsibility of this language policy belongs to every teacher.

ISV teachers collaboratively plan instruction in developmentally appropriate ways, which are reflective about curriculum and instruction, scaffold teaching in response to formal and informal assessment of students' progress, and model for students how to learn.

Primary Years Programme (PYP):

Roles within our Learning Community

What are the roles of the ISV pedagogical leadership team and the language specialists?

A responsibility of ISV's pedagogical leadership team is to support teachers. The PYP coordinator manages issues regarding curriculum, instructional techniques, assessment and student progress.

ISV language specialists (Vietnamese, EAL, etc) have knowledge of language development, culture, grade-level subject matter, instructional resources, and assessment tools. The specialists set out to reach the following goals:

- Promote effective language teaching and assessment practices
- Nurture the articulation of language expectations in all curricula and programmes
- Work with the pedagogical leadership team to enhance the language programmes

What are the roles of ISV staff?

Since learning and language are inextricably bound, the responsibility for the implementation of this language policy belongs to every teacher.

Specific facilitating behaviours include:

- Acquiring a professional knowledge base in additional language acquisition processes, students' developmental language behaviours and familiarity with students' language learning cognitive styles
- Integrating language instruction with content instruction
- Providing responsive learning conditions as recommended by the IB and Cambridge (activating background knowledge, scaffolding meaning, extending language, and affirming identity)
- Giving strategic feedback to students and parents on their linguistic and cognitive development
- Holding high language and academic expectations for all students
- Involving parents in the language and academic development of their children

What is the role of the ISV community?

A number of parental actions will facilitate language and academic success for ISV students. They include:

- Having a positive attitude towards English, Vietnamese, Korean, French and their mother tongues
- Modelling how much is to be gained by learning languages (other than mother tongue)
- Maintaining mother tongue literacy skills in the home
- Encouraging and emotionally supporting their children's additional language acquisition and schooling efforts
- Supplying mother tongue materials in the home
- Having realistic expectations of their children and their school
- Sharing mother tongue resources such as books and games
- Promoting their mother tongue in school, through storytelling and games with students during special school events.

Parent involvement is integral to student success. The importance of whole-school communication cannot be over-emphasized, and volunteering or providing assistance at school is always welcome.

Statement of Philosophy

English Language Arts

ISV is an English medium school, as such, all lessons, apart from other language courses, will be in English. We believe that all teachers at ISV are language teachers and that teachers and parents play an important role in language development. ISV has an open door English language admissions policy in the PYP, up to the second one. Students entering ISV after the Grade 1 level must meet specifics in the ISV language entrance criteria.

Through language development, students are given the tools they need to interpret the world around them. Language is also a major component in encouraging understanding and tolerance of other cultural groups and perspectives.

At ISV, English Language Arts is taught in context and addresses the following strands: speaking and listening, reading, writing, and viewing/presenting (media literacy). Instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of individuals. Language teaching occurs with the understanding that students bring their own unique cultural backgrounds to any new situation.

Teaching Methods

By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, ISV is teaching students the importance of culture, diversity, and sensitivity towards others, which in turn enhances their personal growth, cognitive development, and facilitates international understanding. Through the strong emphasis on language, the school's goal is to foster a deep understanding of language and a love of literature.

Teachers are expected to offer conceptually based programmes that take the language needs of the students into account. All teachers are required to attend professional development and to be responsible for ensuring EAL development is considered when carrying out curriculum planning. The EAL teacher(s) will support class teachers and will take part in collaborative planning. They will also help to prepare resources for the language needs of students and to incorporate appropriate content in their lessons.

Mother tongue and additional language learners

In Pre K to K2, the focus on language development for all students caters for the needs of EAL learners alongside those of native speakers. From Grade 1 to Grade 5, our qualified EAL teacher(s) as required will support students from non- English speaking backgrounds.

Language acquisition is a developmental process that needs to be supported.

While students are encouraged to use the language of instructions to include all students, the home language may be used at the teacher's discretion to support learning, according to the age, maturity and confidence of the individual student.

By identifying our mother tongue language populations, we are able to inform our teachers and staff so that we can strengthen our learning community and integrate languages into instruction, specific to students needs. Students that are in need of additional services will be identified at the beginning of the school year or when the student enters ISV. In line with the 'Admission Policy', the English

proficiency test will be given to incoming students from Grade 1 and above. For incoming Grade 1 students, the proficiency test will be used to inform the homeroom and specialist teachers, but will have no impact on admissions.

For incoming Grade 2 students and above, the admissions test may have an impact on admissions.

Additional support for Grades 1 students and above may include: differentiated instruction in class; in-class support with the EAL teacher; identified student may be pulled out for one-on-one instruction with the EAL; or all of or any combination of the aforementioned.

Students identified as in need of additional support will be tracked weekly by the EAL teacher and the classroom teacher, followed by a termly evaluation meeting to assess level of student progress and to determine if less, additional, or the same amount of support is needed for the coming term.

Diversity is something that is highly valued at ISV and having support systems in place to meet the needs of our learners from non-English speaking countries is a school priority. However, if a student has been attending ISV for two full academic years and is not progressing as expected, demonstrating an inability to access the curriculum adequately, then the parents of the students will be informed that there might be a limit to what ISV can offer. At this point, other educational institutions may be identified for more suited tuition towards their child's needs.

Host Country Language For Students Learning Vietnamese

What is our host country language policy?

Learning languages at an early age opens one's mind to learning about other cultures, sharpens one's perception and promotes creative and critical thinking. Collaborative work is actively encouraged among students. In the Vietnamese class, students express ideas and explore concepts using Vietnamese; learning the language is not an end in itself.

- Students should be actively involved, feel successful and enjoy the learning experience
- Students are encouraged to take risks in Vietnamese, overcome obstacles, and accept mistakes as part of the learning process
- The ability to communicate in Vietnamese is of importance
- Learning a new language is a window to different world cultures and a path towards international-mindedness
- We acknowledge that acquiring fluency in Vietnamese requires 5-8 years of consistent exposure
- We support students wishing to deepen the knowledge of their mother tongue

What is the role of Vietnamese?

The primary focus of Vietnamese teaching at ISV is the learning of Vietnamese as an additional language. Learning Vietnamese takes on special significance as it is the language of our host country. Students study Vietnamese to gain the communication skills, both in oral and written language, to deal with familiar and practical needs for future study, work and leisure. In addition, through the teaching of Vietnamese, and through links to Vietnamese culture across the curriculum, students develop an appreciation of our host country's culture as well as an awareness of different perspectives. The learning of Vietnamese at ISV seeks to instil an enduring interest in Vietnamese culture alongside a lifelong enthusiasm for language learning. Mother tongue language speakers will receive differentiated instruction within the Vietnamese programme.

Teaching Methods

To implement the overall purpose of learning Vietnamese at ISV, a variety of teaching methods and strategies are used. These strategies address the essential elements of the PYP. The Vietnamese programme gives students practical real-life language skills, which can be used outside of the classroom. Students are provided with meaningful and authentic speaking and listening, reading, writing, viewing/presenting (media literacy) tasks. Through these tasks, students develop confidence to use the language in their daily lives.

Vietnamese lessons will be offered to students from Kindergarten 2 to Grade 5. There will be Vietnamese lessons for native-speakers and non-native speakers. All students who are Vietnamese passport holders are required, by the government, to take Vietnamese classes.

Korean as a Mother Tongue Language

Korean is offered as a Mother Tongue option in our school to cater to the school community needs. Korean is relevant in the school and community context because of the business connections between the two countries. Consequently, at ISV, we also offer Korean for Kindergarten 2 to Grade 5 students.

Students that are Korean passport holders may select either Korean, Vietnamese or French classes for their additional language learning area.

French as an Additional Language

French is offered in many other international schools around the world, and is the second most widely taught foreign language after English. It continues to be one of the official working language in many global organizations. Learning French is also relevant in the Vietnamese context because of their historical connections. Consequently, at ISV, we also offer French for Kindergarten 2 to Grade 5 students.

Students that are non-Vietnamese passport holders may select either Vietnamese or French classes for their additional language learning area.

Secondary School:

Secondary School English Language

ISV is an English-medium school, as such, all lessons, apart from other language courses, will be in English. We believe that all teachers at ISV are language teachers and that teachers and parents play an important role in language development. ISV has an open-door English language admissions policy in the PYP. Students entering ISV after between Grades 6 and 10 must meet specifics in the ISV language entrance criteria.

Through language development, students are given the tools they need to interpret the world around them. Language is also a major component in encouraging understanding and tolerance of other culture groups and perspectives.

At ISV, English Language in Grades 6 to 8 is taught in context and addresses the following strands: speaking and listening, reading, writing, and viewing/presenting (media literacy). Instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of individuals. Language teaching occurs with the understanding that students bring their own unique cultural backgrounds to any new situation.

Students in Grade 9 and 10 follow the Cambridge IGCSE English programme.

Mother tongue and additional language learners

From Grade 6 to Grade 8, our qualified EAL teachers as required will support students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Language acquisition is a developmental process that needs to be supported.

While students are encouraged to use the language of instructions to include all students, the home language may be used at the teacher's discretion to support learning, according to the age, maturity and confidence of the individual student.

By identifying our mother tongue language populations, we are able to inform our teachers and staff so that we can strengthen our learning community and integrate languages into instruction, specific to students needs. Students that are in need of additional services will be identified at the beginning of the school year or when the student enters ISV. In line with the 'Admission Policy', the English proficiency test will be given to incoming students from Grade 6 and above.

Students requiring additional support to access the curriculum will with the guidance of the EAL department develop an individual support programme including in class and pull out support as well as extra sessions as required within the Extra Curricula structure. The aim of all EAL support is to reduce the input required over time so that by Grade 10 all students are operating in English as the language of instruction confidently.

Teaching Methods

By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, ISV is teaching students the importance of culture, diversity, and sensitivity towards others, which in turn enhances their personal growth, cognitive development, and facilitates international understanding. Through the strong emphasis on language, the school's goal is to foster a deep understanding about language and a love of literature.

Teachers are expected to ensure their programmes take the language needs of the students into account. All teachers are required to attend professional development and to be responsible for ensuring EAL development is considered when carrying out curriculum planning. The EAL teachers will support class teachers and will take part in collaborative planning. They will also help to prepare resources for the language needs of students and to incorporate appropriate content in their lessons.

Use of monolingual English dictionaries in both internal and external examinations

We follow the guidelines set by the CAIE and IBO regarding use of these:

The CAIE states:

- Students are not permitted to use dictionaries in Cambridge IGCSE language exams, except where specified otherwise in the syllabus. Simple translation dictionaries are permitted in other Cambridge IGCSE exams.¹

The IB DP Notice to Candidate states:

- A bilingual translation dictionary for non-language [Groups 1 & 2] examinations, that does not contain notes of any kind.²

We envisage only a small number of our students needing to follow the above procedure.

Secondary School Vietnamese programme

Vietnamese first language

All students who are Vietnamese passport holders are required, by the government, to take Vietnamese classes, up to the end of Grade 10. In Grades 6 to 10 these students will follow a version of the local National Curriculum.

Vietnamese as an additional language in Secondary School

Vietnamese is not currently offered to students from Grade 6 to Grade 10. As ISV expands and students who have studied Vietnamese in PYP move through the school, it is envisaged that there will be, in addition to Vietnamese lessons for native-speakers, a programme for Vietnamese learners.

Vietnamese Classes will be developed for Grade 6 and 10 for non-native speakers as the school expands and as an addition to the IGCSE programme in Grades 9 and 10 (NB Vietnamese is not available within the IGCSE) with the option of offering Vietnamese B at IB Diploma in the future.

French as an Additional Language

French is offered in many other international schools around the world, and is the second most widely taught foreign language after English. It continues to be one of the official working language in many global organizations. Learning French is also relevant in the Vietnamese context because of their historical connections. Consequently, at ISV, we also offer French from Grade 6 to students.

Currently students that are non-Vietnamese passport holders currently take French classes for their

¹ Section 5.1.6.2 of the Cambridge Handbook

² IBO DP Conduct of the examinations Notice to candidates

additional language learning area.

In Grades 9-10 students follow the IGCSE French programme.

Korean first language in Secondary School

Korean first language is offered at all levels in Secondary School, including IGCSE and IBDP Language A school.

Korean as an additional language in Secondary School

Currently Korean is not offered as an additional language. As ISV expands, opportunities will be investigated to offer Korean as an additional language.

Host country language policy

Learning languages at an early age opens one's mind to learning about other cultures, sharpens one's perception and promotes creative and critical thinking. Collaborative work is actively encouraged among students.

While Vietnamese as an additional language is not available at ISV, the school does much to encourage an appreciation of the host language.

Within the curriculum opportunities are developed to create links between the host culture and the wider global community.

Local opportunities are sought to engage the curriculum in real world experiences. This includes the host language as well as culture.

Within the wider school community Tet provides a focus for direct celebration of Vietnamese culture and International Day the wider cultures of the whole school community.

Diploma Programme and Post-16 studies:

As in all other sections of ISV, English is the language of instruction within the Diploma Programme. It is the common language in which all communication and access to the curriculum occurs. As such, the support and development of English within the school is paramount. English language learning is not something that happens at a set time with a set teacher, instead it happens across the disciplines and every teacher is required to model the use of language, emphasizing clear and concise communication.

All assessment with the exception of additional Language A and B courses is conducted in English as outlined in the ISV Assessment Policy. Reporting and feedback on assessments is also undertaken in English, with the exception of Group 1 and 2 where reporting occurs in the language of instruction. Where required, ISV administration can translate reports into Vietnamese and Korean for parents, based on individual request.

Language and admission to the IB Diploma Programme.

Students who progress from Grade 10 into the Diploma Programme at ISV will have the opportunity continue to language development based on course selection at IGCSE or through the addition of a School-Supported Self-Taught Language A programme if suitable. Language choice, maintenance and progression are a major focus of the IB Diploma Options process undertaken during Grade 10.

Students entering the Diploma Programme at ISV into Grade 11 are supported in making language choices during the application process and then developed with the Diploma Coordinator during admission.

Placement testing may be required for English, Vietnamese and French currently and Korean in the future, to aid the selection of the correct level and course.

Diploma Subjects and Language teaching

By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, ISV is teaching students the importance of culture, diversity, and sensitivity towards others, which in turn enhances their personal growth, cognitive development, and facilitates international understanding. Through the strong emphasis on language, the school's goal is to foster a deep understanding about language and communication.

While the language of instruction in the Diploma Programme is English, the curriculum emphasis is on communication and the links language can make. Subject teachers are required within their planning to develop possibilities for those links to be highlighted and fostered.

Teachers are expected to ensure their programmes take the language needs of the students into account. All teachers are required to attend professional development and to be responsible for ensuring individual language development is considered when carrying out curriculum planning. Where required EAL teachers can support class teachers and will take part in collaborative planning within the Diploma programme. They will also help to prepare resources for the language needs of students and to incorporate appropriate content in their lessons.

Language A (Group 1)

This level is for a fluent language user, studying in his or her most competent language. This is normally the language of the environment to which the student has been exposed from an early age or for an extended period. Students study literary texts and demonstrate analytical skills in writing and speaking.

Most students in the Diploma Program study English A at either higher or standard level. However, ISV also offers Language A classes in Vietnamese and Korean. All students who are Vietnamese passport holders are required, by the government, to take Vietnamese classes, until the end of Grade 10. While Vietnamese and Korean students have the opportunity to study an additional foreign language in both Grades 9 and 10 and the IB Diploma Programme, ISV encourages students to maintain their cultural first language where possible.

School Supported Self Taught Programme

Students at ISV may also study other “mother tongue” Language A subjects at standard level through the IB school-supported self-taught (SSST) option. Students studying SSST languages do so under the direct guidance of our Group 1 team in a dedicated scheduled support period each week.

Where possible an outside tutor may also be co-opted, to under the direction of our Group 1 team, to allow more authentic assessment of student progress within the SSST programme.

IBDP Language A as an Additional Language

ISV recognises that many international students are “3rd Culture” and as such may be proficient in more than one language in Group 1. Students who fit this profile may opt to study two Language A courses from within those offered or from those that can be supported by SSST. These students would not be required to take an additional Language 2 and would be eligible for a Bilingual Diploma.

English as an Additional Language in the Diploma Programme

In the Diploma Programme, English language support is not routinely provided at ISV. Students are generally required to already have an academic level of English that will allow successful completion of the Diploma when enrolling. Exceptions to this exist where a student is enrolled to complete IB Diploma Courses or is studying a Language A course in Korean or Vietnamese but still requires support in full access to Groups 3-6 in the language of instruction. In this instance, Additional English Language Support may be required through the ISV EAL programme, inline with the updated IB Access to Assessment policy (Language) 2017

English language in acquisition:

Classes in DP English B or ab (acquisition) may be offered if deemed appropriate. In these cases, the student may take a DP Language A other than English in the final examinations. This option is suitable for students who are non-native English speakers or who have recently arrived from a non-English speaking country. On entry to the Diploma Programme, students with this profile will be evaluated to establish whether a full Diploma Programme or a Diploma Courses Programme is more suitable.

Additional Language Acquisition

“Learning in more than one language is considered essential to an international education and for enriching intercultural understanding” (Towards a continuum of international education, 2008, p25).

All students in the full Diploma Programme are expected to complete a second language (Language B or an additional Language A) study. ISV offers IB DP Languages B in French at both B HL and SL and, via Pamoja, ab initio; and from August 2020 Spanish ab initio SL. Students taking the full Diploma Programme, must continue the study of a second language in one of the following ways:

DP Language B higher level or standard level (for language learners who have had three or more years of experience with the language): Students learn to communicate effectively in a number of situations, from everyday exchanges to literary texts. In this way they develop mastery of language skills.

DP Language ab initio (ab) standard level (for a beginner who has little or no experience of the language): Students gain a basic level of communication based on everyday exchanges and prescribed situations.

ISV offers French B, English B and Spanish ab initio. Classes will be reviewed yearly, dependent upon need.

Students studying for Diploma Programme Courses are encouraged to either continue previous language study or study a language offered at ab initio.

Language and our community.

While the language of instruction at ISV is English our community speaks many different languages. As such, ISV embraces this diversity. However, in the understanding of a holistic community English is the predominant language of all communication across the school.

Students and wider community are encouraged to be inclusive of all around them as appropriate. Use of other languages is therefore fully permissible as long as doing so does not exclude anyone from that communication.

Communication with parents and other stakeholders

All school or programme wide communication with parents as a body is conducted in English, with summaries in Vietnamese and Korean. Semester written reports are produced in English. Only for Vietnamese A and Korean A, is there a translation into the appropriate language. Academic transcripts are only produced in English. Where required for ease of communication, Vietnamese and Korean translation is available at all school events.

Reviewing the Language Policy

ISV recognises that it is important to remain abreast with best international learning practices. With this in mind, the ISV Language policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

PYP section Accepted within IB Verification 2016

Reviewed October 2016 and January 2017 to include the development of the Secondary School and IB Diploma Sections of the Language Policy.

Updated February 2017 – Secondary School

Reviewed February 2020 - Whole School