



المدرسة الكندية الدولية

Language Policy

Philosophy

Language is fundamental to learning and is the primary means by which learners construct meaning and gain knowledge and skills that enable them to succeed in life. Language permeates all aspects of life and learning and thus has an integral role in the curriculum. Therefore, at CIS we take the approach that all teachers are language teachers and have a pivotal part to play in developing students' language.

As learners develop language through interaction with it and in it, we believe that by learning language and learning through language students become confident communicators and critical thinkers, as well as develop clear values and ethical principles in an increasingly challenging multilingual world. We offer a strong languages programme and ensure that language is taught using multiple modalities to ensure all students learn effectively.

We also believe that through multilingualism, students gain access to different cultures and learn to appreciate and respect difference considering that learning more than one language promotes intercultural perspectives and international mindedness, both pivotal concepts in the International Baccalaureate Programme.

At CIS, we focus on both English and Arabic languages to ensure that our students establish and develop a strong skill base in both languages which is determinant to their success in the MYP and DP programmes. Also, through learning French as an additional language, students gain exploration of other cultures and become more aware of their role as global citizens.

Language in the Primary Years Programme (PYP)

Language of Instruction:

English is the language of instruction within the school; therefore, learners' success in the programme depends on their level of competency in this language. From K to Grade 5, our focus is to provide learners with the necessary rudiments of language learning, setting a strong skill base on which to build future learning. This entails that all teachers are encouraged to become active language teachers, as language transcends curriculum areas, and all teachers are language teachers within their subjects. Language is always taught meaningfully and in context, taking into consideration the developmental phases specified in the IB PYP Language Scope and Sequence, in which students build on what they already know to help them move forward.

By the time learners complete fifth grade, they will be able to communicate their feelings and needs clearly to others, using the appropriate tone when speaking to different people in different contexts. Also, by the time learners' move to Middle School, they will be able to read and understand different types of texts with increasing sophistication and write for different purposes.

Learning experiences are designed to ensure that all aspects of language learning are operating and to engage students in an authentic and meaningful process that involves:

Learning language where language is a communicative tool, and learners build their communicative skills and use language to construct meaning and to interact. When learning language, learners develop their oral skills through listening and speaking, and their literacy skills through reading and writing. Language is a tool for learning and is fostered through reading.

Learning through language promotes further learning and cognitive growth through exploring dense academic texts that help learners to build their academic language proficiency.

Learning about language empowers learners who, as critical language users, understand the relationship of language and meaning and how languages works, and are able to make choices about language use according to purpose and audience.

Second Language (Arabic)

Arabic is the Second Language taught at CIS, and it is the language of the host country. Classical Arabic is taught to all students in grades K – 5, where they have 5 hours of Arabic each week. CIS is licensed by the Ministry of Education, and therefore must abide by all the MOE regulations. To fulfill this national requirement and to create balance between the IB requirements and those of the MOE, teachers along with the Arabic Language Coordinator, integrate the Ministry’s national curriculum within the school’s Arabic Language scope and sequence. Islamic religion is also taught in Arabic.

Arabic language curriculum is organized into standalone sessions where the three language strands (oral, visual, and written) are integrated within the teaching practices. Students are given the opportunity to use and develop the three main strands of listening and speaking, viewing and presenting, reading and writing simultaneously in an inquiry-based approach. Where possible, Arabic is tied to the units of inquiry for curriculum enrichment.

At CIS, Arabic Language teachers are committed to develop and hone learners’ receptive and expressive skills, building a strong language base that equips them with the essential tools to communicate and express themselves, share thoughts, ideas and emotions in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences.

Mother Tongue Language

Support of mother tongue allows students to embrace their cultural heritage and establish a personal identity. At CIS, we fully acknowledge that mother tongue support promotes learning additional languages and assists in the formation of internationally minded students as a result of their intercultural awareness and understanding. To meet this end, we have adopted some practices that help support the mother tongues at CIS.

Since mother tongue is the language that is most strongly linked to the culture that an individual identifies with as their culture of origin and is often the language used at home, we aim to maintain students’ mother tongues through the efforts of parents and community. Hence, we liaise with parents to achieve shared goals by promoting the use of mother tongue at home as their main language, and we also encourage reading in the students’ mother tongue.

During instructional time, and for reinforcement of learning within the classroom, CIS students are given the liberty to choose their mother tongue, Arabic, (mother-tongue of 90% of CIS students) in situations where they are unable to fully communicate their understanding using the language of instruction (English). Also, during teaching and learning, students can choose to interact with others in home

languages. In some cases, especially when students are learning in a language other than their mother tongue, teachers' support might extend to using translation tools if needs be.

Data about the CIS community's languages is collected and shared with everyone so they can be used as a school resource. A welcome sign in all of CIS community's languages is visible at the entrance of the school. Also, name and table cards are displayed in different languages.

As the library is seen as a hub for exploring languages, the school librarian has taken steps to ensure the availability of resources in the different mother tongues of CIS community. Resources are displayed on a special shelf in the Resource and Media Center.

CIS shows respect and interest in its diverse student population through celebrations and special events. We encourage all practices that reflect the diversity of languages and cultures among the learning community such as morning assemblies and after-school language clubs.

Additional Language (French)

CIS promotes multilingualism through additional language teaching where we aim to create more opportunities for students to develop international mindedness through language exposure.

In CIS, French language is compulsory from Grades 1 – 5 where learners have one hour a week dedicated to additional language skill-based instruction. We support students in getting the basic knowledge of the French language while adopting the same approach to language acquisition learning: learning the language, learning about the language, and learning through the language.

Through learning an additional language, students are given the opportunity to explore a new intricate system of rules, structures and lexis which contributes to developing cognitive and critical thinking skills, problem solving and increases understanding of other cultures.

Support Programme:

At CIS, teaching and learning supports students who are not proficient either in the language of instruction (English) or the second language (Arabic), and thus addresses the varying language abilities of all students. Homeroom teachers differentiate their methods of instruction that include different teaching strategies, modifying tasks, working in small or mixed-ability groups to meet all individual needs while using different resources with different levels of language complexity.

However, in some cases, and depending on the student's language needs, Language Support teachers (ESL/ASL) might resort to support students using withdrawal methods. In such cases, homeroom, support teachers, and Language coordinators collaboratively design remedial plans for individual cases, which aim to support the student to meet the standards of their year level but at a lower phase.

Support Teachers update homeroom teachers, language coordinators, and parents on student progress. Once the student is able to meet the overall expectations of their year group, they are integrated back into their class.

To ensure the students' full engagement in the programme and to help them explore their full potential, teachers continue to implement differentiation strategies to meet the language needs of all students.

Language in the Middle Years Programme (MYP)

Language is integral to learning and an essential tool for communicating meaning. Students' success in the increasingly complex global society in which we live means that students need to develop and sharpen the full range of their language skills, which is a determining factor that leads to their success in the academic program and in life after school. English is the language of instruction at CIS including the Middle Years, except for Arabic and Religion, which are taught in Arabic.

English is the common language in which all communication and access to the curriculum occurs, support and development of English within the school is essential. English language learning takes place across the disciplines and all teachers are language teachers responsible for the development of students' language skills, which is a joint responsibility between student, parent and teacher and between subject and support teachers. All subject teachers ensure that they teach the subject specific language, unpack command terms and deconstruct and rebuild text e.g. science vocabulary, science information text.

CIS offers the following language courses in the Middle Years Program:

- Language and Literature: English and Arabic
- Language Acquisition: English and Arabic

CIS determines students' performance regarding their language skills through a range of formative and summative assessment strategies and tools. Continuous assessment is a fundamental aspect of planning for learning with the intent of achieving the desired learning objectives and standards.

Language and Literature

CIS offers MYP language and literature classes in both English and Arabic for all students providing a rich language environment in order to hone their linguistic, analytical and communicative skills. As language is integral to personal development and cultural identity, MYP students are given the opportunity to love literature, engaging them in the study of a wide range of literary and non-literary text types from different historical periods and cultures, writing styles and techniques, allowing students to interact with a range of texts, think critically and ethically to form their own opinions, and comment on the significance of any possible contexts, audiences, purpose, and the use of linguistic and literary devices. The program builds on experiences in language learning that students have gained in the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and provides students with ample opportunities to improve their skills in the six areas of listening and speaking, reading and writing, viewing and presenting in the Middle Years.

Language Acquisition

CIS offers MYP Language Acquisition in both English and Arabic for students, aiming to develop their language competency. Within the Language Acquisition discipline, students extend their communication skills necessary for further language learning in a range of authentic contexts and a variety of audiences and purposes. Language Acquisition enables 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. Language Acquisition is integral in developing confident language learners who are ready to progress to the IB Diploma Programme.

Students' Pathway in English in the MYP

- English is the language of instruction at CIS from K-12.
- In the MYP, students are expected to study English as Language and Literature (LL) or Language Acquisition (LA), depending on their proficiency level.
- The streaming into LL or LA as well as the phases within them are determined by a yearly diagnostic test taken by students at the beginning of the scholastic year in addition to the results found in summative and formative assessments.
- Students who are in LA for a particular year and acquire a level 5 or 6 the following year on their diagnostic exam will be transitioned into LL.

- Any existing student who tests below the allocated LA phase for their MYP year level (see below) will be offered ESL support.
- Due to the rigorous expectations for English language proficiency at CIS, new admissions who acquire less than phase 3 for LA in their MYP allocated year will be asked to find a more suitable program to meet their needs.
- All phases previously referred to (including those upon which the diagnostic tests were built) are taken directly from the continuums in the LL and LA subject guides.

MYP Years	MYP – 1	MYP – 2	MYP – 3	MYP – 4	MYP – 5
MYP Course	English Language and Literature	English Language and Literature	English Language and Literature	English Language and Literature	English Language and Literature
	English Language Acquisition (Phases 3-4)	English Language Acquisition (Phase 4)	English Language Acquisition (Phases 4-5)	English Language Acquisition (Phases 4-5)	English Language Acquisition (Phase 5)
Potential Support	ESL	ESL	ESL	ESL	ESL

Students' Pathway in Arabic in the MYP

- All students learn Arabic, the mother tongue of the majority of its student population and at the same time the language of the host country taught from K-12.
- Although the language of instruction in the MYP is English, students are still expected to study Arabic as language and literature or Language Acquisition.
- The transition between phases is based on a diagnostic test taken at the start of each scholastic year.
- Any student, who tests below the allocated phase for their MYP year level described in the table below, will be offered Arabic Acquisition at Phases 1-2.
- Arabic Language is also reinforced through other disciplines such as Religion, Interdisciplinary Units and SEN support.

MYP Years	MYP – 1	MYP – 2	MYP – 3	MYP - 4	MYP – 5
MYP Course	Arabic Language and Literature	Arabic Language and Literature	Arabic Language and Literature	Arabic Language and Literature	Arabic Language and Literature
	Arabic Language Acquisition (Capable: Phases 3-4)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Capable: Phases 3-4 or Proficient: Phase 5)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Capable: Phases 3-4 or Proficient: Phase 5)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Capable: Phases 3-4 or Proficient: Phase 5)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Capable: Phases 3-4 or Proficient: Phase 5)

Potential Support	Arabic Language Acquisition (Emergent: Phases 1-2)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Emergent: Phases 1-2)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Emergent: Phases 1-2)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Emergent: Phases 1-2)	Arabic Language Acquisition (Emergent: Phases 1-2)
Transition between LA Phases	*The phases are determined by a yearly diagnostic test taken by students at the beginning of the scholastic year in addition to the results found in summative and formative assessments. This is based on the rubric requirements for each allocated phase in the Language Acquisition Guide.				

Mother Tongue:

At CIS, the Middle Years Programme encourages and provides an opportunity for students to develop their mother tongue language. CIS believes that every student brings their unique cultural background to the school and therefore we aim to support students and families in the maintenance and development of both mother tongue language(s) and literacy skills. This belief encourages the attributes identified in the IB learner profile, as well as promotes responsible action and international mindedness.

Parents and students are encouraged to speak, read, write, and develop their mother tongue at home. This strengthens the child's language skills while instilling a sense of importance about his or her culture. In addition to this, the school organizes many events wherein there is always an integration of the mother tongue and the host country language as one of the areas of performance and presentation. Festivals and morning assemblies are conducted in the various home country language(s) (according to the Global Events Calendar, available at the school). Moreover, the school promotes a collection of books in the library that provide students with literature in the range of mother tongues that are spoken in the school's community.

Additional Language (French):

We place significant importance on language learning including additional languages. Therefore, we offer our learners French as an additional language in the MYP Years 1 – 3 as a continuation of their French language learning after the completion of Grade 5 in the PYP. With this, CIS learners are provided with the opportunity to develop insights into the features and practices of a third language, paving the way for students who would wish to continue with the French language ab initio in the DP.

Language Support:

All MYP teachers are language teachers within their disciplines and are responsible for the development of the students' academic language across the grade levels. Support is provided directly to students whose language skills in English or Arabic need further development. Teachers in the Middle Years differentiate their methods of instruction and apply different strategies in planning and the delivery of the curriculum to ensure the development of the students' academic language for success in the mainstream courses.

In order to determine a student's eligibility for further language support, and according to CIS Admissions Policy, students are required to sit for a language proficiency test in English and Arabic at admission. Furthermore, CIS students sit for a diagnostic test in both English and Arabic at the beginning of each scholastic year. Data collected from both tests provide further clarity whether a student requires language support or not.

As for the Arabic language support, both the language proficiency test at admission and the diagnostic assessment at the beginning of each scholastic year are the key indicators to determine whether a student requires a remedial or an intervention plan and this all depends on his/her performance on both tests.

Language in the Diploma Programme (DP):

In the DP, the language of instruction is English except for the offered courses of Arabic language, Arabic language and literature, and the requirements mandated by the Ministry of Education. Continuing from the tradition in both the PYP and MYP years the approach to learning language, learning about language and learning through language remains the same within the outcomes set for the DP.

The pathway for language courses in the DP is divided into studies in language and literature and language acquisition courses. Each student is required to take at least two languages.

A Brief Description of IB DP Language Courses:

Studies in the Language A: Literature Course: This course develops understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism and promotes the ability to form independent literary judgments. In language A: literature, the formal analysis of texts and wide coverage of a variety of literature—both in the language of the subject and in translated texts from other cultural domains—is combined with a study of the way literary conventions shape responses to texts. Students completing this course will have a thorough knowledge of how to deal with a range of texts and gain an understanding of other cultural perspectives. They will also have effectively developed skills of analysis and the ability to support an argument in clearly expressed writing, sometimes at significant length. The course will enable them to succeed in a wide range of university courses, particularly in literature but also in subjects such as philosophy, law and languages.

Studies in the Language A: Language and Literature Course: Throughout this course, students will study a range of literary and non-literary texts from a variety of sources, genres and media to develop skills of textual analysis and to question the meaning generated by language and texts. Students will recognize the importance of the roles of context and culture in which texts are written and received in shaping meaning. Students will also study translated literature from other cultures, which contributes to the further development of a global perspective.

Language Acquisition Course:

- i. **Language B:** is designed for students with some previous experience of the target language where they will further develop their ability to communicate through the study of language, themes and texts. In this course, students will learn to communicate in the target language in familiar and unfamiliar contexts, developing a level of competency in the receptive, productive and interactive skills.
- ii. **Language ab initio:** Offered at SL only, language ab initio is a language acquisition course designed for students with no previous experience in—or very little exposure to—the target language. In Language ab initio students develop their receptive, productive and interactive skills while learning to communicate in the target language in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

CIS is planning to offer the following language courses in the DP:

Studies in Language and Literature: Language A: Language and literature:

1. Arabic: Higher and Standard Level
2. English: Higher and Standard Level

Studies in Language and Literature: Language A: Literature:

1. Self-taught Literature: Standard Level

Language Acquisition: Language B

1. Arabic: Higher and Standard Level
2. English: Higher and Standard Level

Language Acquisition: Ab Initio

1. Arabic: Standard Level
2. French: Standard level
3. Spanish ab initio online through Pamoja

Guiding principles for language course selection:

- **For CIS existing students (MYP Year 5 students promoted to DP Year 1)**
 - i. Course selection and entry into a course will be guided by each student's language interest, proficiency level and university admission requirements during a one-to-one language selection consultation session between student, parents/legal guardians, DP coordinator and college counselor
- **For Prospective Students:**

Language course selection will be determined first by the results of CIS English and Arabic entrance exams and informed by the student's language history and the language profile of the family. A one-to-one meeting including the DP Coordinator, the student and the college counselor will then follow to support final selection.

 - i. The student's language interest, proficiency level, university admission requirements
 - ii. One-to-one language selection consultation session between student, DP coordinator and college counselor
 - ii. The results of the CIS English and Arabic language entrance tests which comprise of three sections: reading comprehension, writing, and an oral interview
 - iii. Student language history and the language profile of the family

Procedure followed in language selection:

- DP students and their parents attend an orientation session which explains the programme subject groups including languages. After the orientation session, students submit their subject selection form to the DP Coordinator.
- A one-to-one consultation session with the DP coordinator and student is conducted after which subject options will be approved or altered based on the student's best interest.
- DP students may transfer from language B to language A or vice versa during the one-month trial period. After the trial period, no subject transfers will be allowed.

Mother Tongue Support:

To support students whose mother tongue or most proficient language is different from the language A subject(s) offered at school, CIS allows students to take an IB Diploma Programme self-taught Literature SL course. The school will provide support through:

1. CIS Language teachers who will assist students in their understanding of the requirements of each section of the course, how to choose appropriate works from the prescribed lists, and how to prepare for the assessment tasks.
2. Finding external tutors to assist Self-taught courses students throughout the two years of the course (if needed).
3. Providing students with clear deadlines to help them organize their calendars accordingly.
4. Arranging for internal assessment for the oral component.

Language Support:

Students who are not able to successfully complete language B courses and are not willing to do a bilingual Diploma are advised to take an ab initio language course. Spanish ab initio through Pamoja platform will be available to these students. Moreover, CIS is planning to offer French and Arabic ab initio in the future.

Bilingual Diploma:

Students who complete and receive a grade 3 or higher in two languages selected from the DP course studies in language and literature are awarded a bilingual Diploma.

Library:

Our school library is integral to the teaching and learning process as it includes a wide range of literature to support and complement classroom resources and help learners to become autonomous readers. Our library offers a carefully selected and regularly updated variety of fiction, non-fiction and periodicals in English, Arabic, French and other languages.

Our librarian collaborates with teachers to identify and support students' language and literacy needs, provide quality fiction to develop in students the habit and enjoyment of reading for pleasure and to implement inquiry-based programmes that will ensure learners acquire the skills to research, analyze and share their findings.

CIS Language Review Cycle

The document is a roadmap which provides an overview of language learning and teaching. It is designed and studied to be in line with the Standards and Practices of the International Baccalaureate programmes.

The Language Policy has been developed by the three sections of the school involving language coordinators, programmes' coordinators and teachers with the intent of constant future discussion and revision of each component, based on the changing needs and learning styles of students.

The language policy is reviewed every 5 years, based upon feedback collected throughout the review cycle.

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