



INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL
RIYADH

LANGUAGE POLICY

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1. Introduction

The purpose of our school's Language Policy is to establish the principles, objectives, recipients and strategies related to the language curriculum that affects the entire learning community.

The main objective of the language policy is to offer a coherent common linguistic framework within the mission and vision of our school, the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Organization as well as integrating the application of rules of the IB continuum (PYP, MYP and DP).

The Saudi Ministry of education and SEK International Schools Riyadh share the curriculum guidelines for Arabic language and literature. Language acquisition is monitored and evaluated by SEK International School Riyadh.

2. Mission and Vision

SEK Riyadh MISSION

At SEK International School Riyadh members of the community are empowered to learn and grow, becoming curious and compassionate citizens of the world.

IB MISSION STATEMENT

IB mission statement is “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.”

SEK Riyadh VISION

Our vision is to consistently provide high-quality education to an international community of students, preparing them to become responsible and productive global citizens who actively contribute to the communities in which they live and work.

IB VISION

IB does not have an officially published vision statement. Despite its absence, the organization emphasizes that education is its primary agenda.

Based on its focus, IB considers international education as an integral component in the growth of the world as a whole. It also sees knowledge as an important tool for individual satisfaction. This explains its undivided attention towards maintenance of high qualities in the programs that it offers. In fact, potential students must satisfy a particular process of authorization.

3. Language profile

The IB learner profile is the central axis of SEK Riyadh. It reflects the qualities of an internationally-minded student body with a positive attitude towards learning. Through the acquisition of languages, the door is opened to different cultures and perspectives. In a school community all the integral parts should aspire to demonstrate the attributes of the profile. All members of our school community aspire to be:

Inquirers: we inquire about the use and structures of the language. We use language to gather information and to make the world around us meaningful.

Thinkers: we are able to clearly express our thoughts and ideas.

Communicators: We are competent in oral, written and visual communication. We listen carefully. We speak clearly and confidently. We read with ease and understanding. We write clearly and precisely, in a style appropriate to the situation.

Risk takers: We dare to read, write or read in situations where we do not feel completely safe.

Knowledgeable: We master the vocabulary and knowledge to talk about linguistic structures, forms and literary styles.

Principled: We are aware of the power of the language, that it can have a huge impact and must therefore be used responsibly.

Caring: We show care when using the language and we are aware of how the use of the language can affect others.

Open-minded: We respect the differences and similarities between languages, dialects and individual styles of communication. We understand that language can serve as an expression of opinion.

Balanced: We can express ourselves orally and in writing and find a balance between listening and speaking when communicating with others. We read a wide variety of texts and we are able to use the appropriate registers according to the objective and our audience.

Reflective: We reflect on our language acquisition process and consciously strive to improve our command of it.

4. Use of Language

The language of instruction at SEK Riyadh is English. While the school community is formed by a population where about one third of the students, families and staff comes from the host country and their first language is Arabic, the remaining of the school population comes from all over the

world. In order for pupils to gain from the virtues and benefits of both the IB method as well as the rich Arabic cultural heritage, SEK Riyadh has the dual purpose of combining an international program with a strong Arabic language and culture background.

As an international school, the teachers come from various nations with distinctive dialects of English, resulting in the acceptance and recognition of all varieties of English. Language teachers use languages other than English in their lessons. Also, if an English-only instructor is fluent in another language (such as Arabic, Spanish, French, Dutch, Polish, Chinese), they can use that knowledge to help ELA (English language acquisition) students.

Home languages are celebrated and acknowledged; for instance, during student-led conferences, children can present to their families in their home language. Because English is the language of instruction, we want to make sure that students are firmly placed in an English-speaking environment while at SEK RIYADH.

Learning three languages beginning in the Early Years is encouraged at SEK RIYADH because we believe that it helps students become more globally-minded.

Language Acquisition; Language and Literature

Considering it part of its responsibility as an international school, SEK RIYADH is a non-selective institution that encourages the enrolment of every student seeking an international education. Hence, there are no entry-level English, Spanish, or Arabic language requirements up to Grade 2.

Language Acquisition lessons are taught as part of the curriculum in all three subjects. There are varied activities in class which support students whose starting level of English, Spanish, or Arabic is below the grade-working level. The school wants to give non-native English speakers the chance to enroll in the program starting in Grade 2 if they achieve the minimum standards and have a strong desire to learn. Due to this, the enrollment of English Language Acquisition students will be analyzed on entry on a case-by-case basis, and the best-tailored solution will be put into action. We offer extracurricular English Language support (ELA) where needed. Nonetheless, any learning experience associated with the units of inquiry, regardless of context, promotes the learning of English, Spanish, and Arabic and aids in the development of that ability depending on the individual learning of each student.

Students who are placed in different language and literature (LL) or language acquisition (LA) groups may, at some point, be moved to a different group based on their individual needs. The change will be based on the following criteria: observations of the students' work, both summative and formative results will be collected and evaluated by the LA and L&L teachers. For students needing LA support, assessments are conducted at the end of each semester using

relevant standards. Parents, Homeroom Teachers and the School Counselor will be informed of results and any proposed changes.

Placement Guidelines

English Language Acquisition

For ELA, WIDA grade level assessments will be used to determine:

1. Whether or not a student needs ELA support
2. Which level of support is needed
3. How a student has progressed

A screener will be administered at the end of each term. Once a student reaches level 5 on the WIDA screener, they will be deemed proficient enough to no longer need ELA support in the Primary Years Programme and the Middle Years Programme.

Spanish

Moving a foreign learner from the subject 'Language Acquisition' to the subject 'Language and Literature' involves a major transition in the curriculum and in the skills required.

Initial assessment: Before making the change, a thorough assessment of the learner's level of proficiency in the language in which "Language and Literature" is taught will be carried out.

Language proficiency: The learner must demonstrate an adequate level of proficiency in the language in which "Language and Literature" is taught. This includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Language assessment tests DELE may be required to ensure that the pupil meets the necessary requirements.

Curricular adaptation: If the student does not have a sufficient level of language proficiency to join the "Language and Literature" class immediately, curricular adaptations may be necessary. This involves providing the student with additional activities and materials to help him/her achieve the objectives of the programme.

Additional support: The student may need additional support, such as language support classes, tutoring or the assignment of a language support teacher. This will help ensure that the learner has the tools and support needed to succeed in the new learning environment.

Ongoing assessment: Once the learner has joined the "Language and Literature" class, there should be ongoing assessment of the learner's progress and teaching strategies should be adapted as necessary.

The Spanish department designs the tests that will be taken by the learners. The professionals have the correct preparation facilities for the preparation of these tests and the appropriate levels.

According to the European Language Framework MCER (Marco Común Europeo de Referencia) and the PCIC (Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes), all teachers must prepare their level and access assessment tests according to the MCER's guidelines. The European Language Framework is an internationally recognised standard which describes language skills at different levels, from A1 (basic level) to C2 (proficiency level). Selection of suitable tests according to MCER: There are different types of tests that can be used in ELE teaching, such as standardised tests, oral tests, essays, comprehension exercises, among others. Select those that fit your assessment objectives and are appropriate for the level and age of your students.

Arabic

Students who are Saudi nationals are automatically required to take Saudi National identity as per the Ministry of Education's guidelines. The determination of non Saudi's placement will be based on a placement test: for the following skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking, and formative assessment. The results of this placement will determine which of the 3 levels students will enter. A screen will be administered at the end of each term. Once a student reaches an adequate level, they will be deemed proficient enough to pass to Language Literature. Students who need additional support will be supported by extra activities and materials to reach a proficient level.

Mother tongue support

To the best of our abilities, there will be assistance for native languages other than Arabic, Spanish and English at school. To aid in the learning of many languages, especially mother tongue languages, SEK RIYADH offers a vast array of multilingual materials

Native languages other than English, Spanish or Arabic will be supported in the Diploma Years part via the availability of self-taught language courses. Students in lower grade levels will have access to extracurricular activities that the school plans, depending on the need of particular learner. Spanish now has a mother tongue program, and there are plans for implementing programs for French and other languages.

The library/learning hub will provide assistance to learners at all levels with sections devoted to the various student local languages. Also, the school offers access to a variety of technological resources, including reading applications, online platforms, digital books, and online publications with content in languages other than English.

5. Language in the continuum

Language in the PYP

For young learners to build meaning and generate connections that will promote their growth, language is an essential tool. All of the teachers at SEK RIYADH are language teachers, and language education is transdisciplinary and integrated into the school's program of inquiry. In order to promote real-world learning experiences for language development, constructivist, inquiry-based language teaching is also used for language education and learning outside of the program of inquiry. The IB Language Scope and Sequence, which consists of the three interconnected language strands of oral, written, and visual language, is followed by the PYP. These three interconnected strands promote a balanced approach to language development by taking into account both the receptive and expressive parts of language.

Phonics, grammar, guided reading, subject-specific vocabulary development, reading a variety of texts, authentic writing experiences and writing for various purposes, the writing process, and creative expression are all included in language instruction, which attempts to foster balanced learning. All students' requirements are taken into account when planning lessons, and classroom teachers continuously monitor their students' linguistic growth to guide one-on-one and small-group instruction. Families and teachers talk about students' progress frequently. In the PYP, parents are urged to read to their children and/or support their language learning at home because they are an integral part of the SEK RIYADH community.

Although English is the language of instruction, beginning in the Early Years, all learners take three teaching hours of Arabic education and two teaching hours of Spanish every week. Starting in first grade, primary learners take five teaching hours of Arabic and two teaching hours of Spanish education every week. Additionally, we work to establish relationships with our families so that kids have access to materials in their mother tongue in our PYP library. Children are also encouraged to speak and study their mother tongues. To assist the ongoing growth of mother tongue language learning, families are also urged to speak their mother tongue frequently. For PYP learners and their families, the school now offers classes in Spanish and French.

Language in the MYP

The language classes offer direct language education. To make sure that students have access to the required abilities for oral, writing, and visual communication, all teachers—who are also regarded to be language teachers—are obliged to employ teaching and learning practices that enhance language development.

Language & Literature and Language Acquisition are the two departments that make up the language component of the MYP. Three different languages must be studied by every student.

The level of fluency in the chosen language directly influences whether students are placed into language and literature or language acquisition.

Every MYP student takes one Arabic language course, one Spanish language course in addition to English as the primary language of teaching. Students who speak Arabic as their first language, take an IB MYP Arabic Language & Literature course that satisfies the requirements of the national curriculum. Non-native Arabic speakers enroll in the Language Acquisition course. For Spanish, students who speak Spanish as their first language take an IB MYP Spanish Language & Literature course, and non-native Spanish speakers enroll in the Language Acquisition course.

The IB's continuum of language acquisition phases are used to place students in different groups. In accordance with how each student is progressing through this curriculum, the school maintains a flexible placement policy that permits student movement during the academic year.

The language acquisition subject group is structured into three phases for teaching and learning. There is no correlation between the phases and specific age groups or MYP years. Depending on their earlier experiences, students can start in any phase and exit from any phase on the continuum, therefore they are not required to start at phase one.

Students will be assigned to the appropriate phase at the start of the school year based on their level. Yet, it is crucial to prioritize a manageable combination of proficiencies in one class and an acceptable distinction within it. Depending on how well students are progressing in all areas of language over the year, they may be moved from one phase to another. Pupils who fully complete the requirements for one phase of the continuum of language acquisition will go on to the following phase.

Students in the Arabic language's third phase of the language acquisition continuum will be allowed to move in the language and literature course after agreement with them and their families.

The school helps organize Mother Tongue lessons outside of the school curriculum using school facilities at the end of a regular school day for students who cannot receive official instruction in their mother tongue during school hours. There are presently courses available in Spanish and French. There are books in different Languages in the school library to ensure support for multilingualism at school.

Language in the DP

To enroll students in the Diploma Programme, there is one requirement: all new students must be proficient enough in English, the school's language of instruction, to enroll in one of the following IB Diploma Program courses from groups 1 or 2: English A or English B at HL or SL.

When students apply for the Diploma Program, language tests will be given to determine their level of ability in English, Arabic, and/or Spanish. Students will be properly placed based on test results.

For students moving up from the MYP, successful completion of a high phase at the MYP5 level will allow students to register for a group 1 language if required by their study plan.

The DP stipulates that all candidates take either two group 1 language courses, when appropriate, or one group 1 language course and one group 2 language course. Instead of studying a group 6 subject, one could study a different language from either group 1 or group 2.

The languages offered at school:

- English A Language and Literature HL/SL
- Arabic A Language and Literature HL/SL
- English B HL
- Arabic B HL/SL/Ab Initio
- Spanish B HL/SL

The DP Coordinator will guide students and parents when selecting the most appropriate course when making their subjects choices for the DP.

If the mother tongue language is offered by the IB, students whose mother tongue is neither English nor Arabic may study it on a school-supported self-taught basis. Students will receive the required assistance and materials to comprehend the course requirements and assessments through direction from a teacher, acting as a supervisor. To help them with their native tongue, these pupils may need to seek external help. The Language A Literature guide, Sections C1a.12: "School-supported self-taught candidates," C1a.13: "Responsibilities of a school with language A: literature school-supported self-taught candidates," C1a.14: "External assessment for language A: literature SL school supported self-taught candidates," and the Diploma Program assessment procedures are all provided to tutors by the IBDP coordinator.

6. Non-native English-speaking Teachers

Non-native English speakers are required to have an appropriate level of the language, which is defined as a complete C1 or upper intermediate level, in order to teach subjects in English. Teachers and employees who want to or need to raise their level can take advantage of the professional language training the school offers. Those opportunities are offered by our university UCJC. The school seeks the best teachers for our students, regardless of their origin.

7. Policy development and revision

The School Principal, Academic Coordinator and the pedagogical leadership team oversaw this policy's development in January 2022. As indicated below, all members of staff have been involved in the revision of this policy in June/August 2023.

At the time of first revision of the policy, members of the Team involved were:

School Principal: Iván Martínez

Head of Learning and Innovation (PYP Coordinator): Sandra Ospina

General Manager: Joan Blázquez

IT Director: Jesús Castillo

Head of Counselling and Admissions: Julie Alonso

The process of revising policies is under the control of the pedagogical leadership team, which consists of the school principal and the coordinators of the academic programs (PYP, MYP, and DP).

The policy is being drafted by the pedagogical leadership team using information from IB papers. If the input is in line with IB standards and the school vision, teachers will be asked for feedback on the draft, and the policy will be amended as a result.

The policy will be reviewed annually for the first two years and either confirmed as is or changed appropriately. The updated version will need to be approved by the school's principal and academic coordinator before being shared with the student body on Managebac and the school website.

After that, the policy will be revised on a rotational basis at least every evaluation cycle.

8. Bibliography

IB publications:

- o Guidelines for developing a school language policy (April 2008)
- o Language and Learning in the IB Programmes (September 2011)
- o Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB Programmes (April 2008)
- o IB: Programme Standards and Practices
- o MYP: From principles into Practice (August 2008)
- o Second Language Acquisition and Mother-tongue Development (January 2004)
- o Towards a continuum of international education (September 2008).

o Subject Guides (MYP language A and B, DP Language A1, Language B, Language A: Literature, Language A: Language and Literature)

Other publications:

- o SEK International School Ciudadcampo. (2021). Language Policy.
- o SEK International School Qatar. (2020). Language Policy.
- o World International School of Torino. (2019). Language Policy.