

# B.I.S. Language Policy

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## I. Philosophy Statement

At Bogaerts International School, we are proud, as an all-inclusive environment, to represent a multitude of nationalities, cultural heritages, and linguistic backgrounds. We consider it to be our responsibility as educators not only to foster learning within our language of instruction, but also to encourage pride in our cultural diversity and our own language of choice. At the heart of any internationally-minded citizen, we must find a respect for diversity, and an understanding of the importance of one's language. At the same time, achieving success in an inquiry-based education requires a common method of communication. It is with these ideas in mind that we strive to celebrate linguistic heritage while presenting a strong programme to assist students in expressing themselves clearly amongst each other.

## II. Introduction

This language policy describes the ideology and the framework of the language programme of Bogaerts International School. This policy was developed via collaboration from teachers from all programmes and the administrative team of the school, and reflects appropriately the school's approach to language learning. All staff have a vested interest, and therefore a commitment, to this language policy. This will allow the school to achieve its learning goals. This policy informs all decision-making regarding language for the school, and is founded in well-researched, rigorously assessed methods for language instruction. It also ensures that our language programme is continuously and thoroughly assessed for success.

## III. Language of Instruction & Communication

The language of instruction is English. Due to the cultural demand in our particular community for the French language, we have a programme that does emphasize French as a second language more than any other international school in Belgium. The language of instruction for all subjects outside of language is English, though substantial instruction in French language is provided to all students. Thus, the language of communication is shared between English and French. Students communicate with staff in English. Students speak both English and French with their peers depending on their language backgrounds. We do value all other languages equally, and those languages can be used in social situations or to clarify information when a speaker is available. However, being mindful of the many languages spoken in the school, our teachers use clear, correct English to communicate most of our instruction.

## IV. Language Profile of Bogaerts International School

As of the 2019-2020 school year, the school population represents 45 different nations and 26 different languages spoken predominantly in the home, as well as other languages that students speak proficiently due to travels and internationally-diverse parent backgrounds. Overall, while only 15% of our students would call their "first language" (or the language spoken predominantly at home) English, 80% of our students came into the school with at least an intermediate knowledge of English. In contrast, 30% of our students consider their "first language" to be French. Two other significant mother-tongue languages represented in our student body are Spanish, at 8%, and Portuguese, at 5%.

Other languages that are represented, but at less than 5%, are Albanian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Danish, Hausa, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Nepali, Norwegian, Odia, Romanian, Russian, Swedish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

## V. Language Learning at Bogaerts International School

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

In our primary school, assessment is based upon carefully built scope & sequence documents that are based in the PYP phased approach to language learning. This scope & sequence is referred to for planning, teaching, assessing, and reporting for English language learning and French language learning. Since our ELA program is a support system, rather than provided in a classroom setting, the ELA staff work collaboratively with the core language teacher to provide assessment and reporting.

### Phases of Language Learning

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

- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Speaking
- Viewing
- Presenting

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

In the PYP, it is necessary to approach all language learning in an authentic, relevant way for each student. This can occur in the context of a unit of inquiry, but also should take place outside of it, allowing students free range of linguistic approaches to gaining literacy skills. Therefore, the primary school has chosen to adopt a specific, student-driven approach to language education in both English and French as another language. This approach is known as “The Daily 5.” It was originally developed by classroom teachers in the U.S., but has continued to grow and improve over the years as more and more classrooms adopt the approach.

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

In the PYP, it is necessary to approach all language learning in an authentic, relevant way for each student. This can occur in the context of a unit of inquiry, but also should take place outside of it, allowing students free range of linguistic approaches to gaining literacy skills. Therefore, the primary school has chosen to adopt a specific, student-driven approach to language education for our English literacy. This approach is known as “The Daily 5.” It was originally developed by classroom teachers in the U.S., but has continued to grow and improve over the years as more and more classrooms adopt the approach.

“The Daily 5,” at its core, is a fully independent method for students to explore literacy. Through a mixture of whole- class, targeted group, and individual instruction, students learn not only to identify their own materials for study, but also their own literacy strengths, weaknesses, goals, and methods for improvement. The process is highly metacognitive, and extremely well-suited for classrooms that represent beginner to advanced English skills. Using an extensive, age and level- appropriate library, students choose their own books and, with the assistance of individual teacher conferencing, their own methods for learning the strands of literacy as outlined above. It is fair to say that 90% of the work conducted in a “Daily 5” classroom is dictated by the student and his or her knowledge of the structure of the programme. 10% is individual teacher conferencing, targeted group support, or whole-class instruction.

### French Language – Phase Approach

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

Therefore, as a result of extensive community feedback, B.I.S. will be reinstating phases of learning for French language based first on proficiency of understanding. Students from upper PYP, Years 2 to 5, will be placed in one of three language phases: beginner, intermediate, or advanced learners. Within these mixed age classrooms, French teachers will still employ highly differentiated and student-centered learning techniques, but we believe that, based on our previous experience with skill level phases, this will produce a balance of inquiry-based and academically rigorous learning in the French language.

### English as an Additional Language (EAL)

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

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

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

## Language Learning in the MYP

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

English and French are the main languages studied at BIS. Students are placed either in Language & Literature or Language Acquisition, depending on individual needs and language ability.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Criterion A: Comprehending spoken and visual text
- Criterion B: Comprehending written and visual text
- Criterion C: Communicating in response to spoken, written and visual text
- Criterion D: Using language in spoken and written form

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

For the 2019-2020 academic year, Spanish Language Acquisition has been introduced as a third language. Students in MYP 1, 2 and 3 now have the opportunity to join a Phase 1 class. In MYP 5, the school has introduced Spanish Language Acquisition Phase 1 and Phase 3, to prepare students for the possibility of studying Spanish B or Spanish Ab Initio in the Diploma Programme.

For MYP 1, 2 and 3, Italian is offered as an elective (extra-curricular lesson) which takes place during the Spanish Language Acquisition.

The intention is to offer a range of Spanish levels for the 2019-2020 school year as the level of Spanish increases. This also offers the possibility of supporting our students who have Spanish as their mother tongue.

### Language Learning in the DP

#### Phases of Language Learning

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

#### Language Level English

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

#### Language Acquisition

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

All three languages are offered as a Language B or Ab Initio. Ab initio is intended for students with no or little previous experience. This is for students with no prior exposure to the language or less than a year. This is offered only at SL as per the IB criteria. Language B is for students who have more experience of the language, usually at least a year or more, but as a second language. It is not meant for mother tongue speakers or native speakers of a language. This is offered at HL with 240 hours of teaching and SL with 150 hours of teaching.

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

#### School Supported Self Taught or SSST

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

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

## VI. Languages Other Than English or French/Mother Tongue Programmes

### PYP Mother Tongue Support

As a means of including mother tongue in our daily lives at Bogaerts International School, we have established a volunteer-based mother tongue reading and conversation programme, accessible to all students in the PYP (ages 3 to 11). This programme contains volunteers for the following languages: English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Italian, and Hebrew.

Parent volunteers coordinate with homeroom teachers across the programme to offer small sessions of reading, speaking, and other activities in one of the six languages listed. These activities take place approximately one to two hours per month.

Furthermore, primary core teachers do attempt to enthusiastically encourage the inclusion of limited mother tongue activities within the curriculum. For example, sometimes students are given the opportunity to create assignments or presentations in the language of their choice, and share that presentation with the student body. Parents are also invited to see these small presentations. Students are also encouraged to produce multi-lingual written work on a small scale in our upper primary classes.

### MYP Mother Tongue Support

At this time, we have no language course offerings for the other languages represented in our language profile. However, our MYP 4 students were offered the option to follow Spanish lessons during a study hall timeslot. This was declined for the current school year.

We are currently researching our ability to implement Chinese lessons during this school year to support Chinese students. This will allow them to maintain their mother tongue language should they wish to continue with Chinese Language A in the Diploma Programme. We are currently developing other solutions to expand our mother tongue support in the MYP.

### DP Mother Tongue Support

The two languages taught within school as mother tongue A languages are English and French. These are taught to the IB language criteria as the subjects "Language and Literature" and are for native speakers of the languages or near native speakers. As quoted by the IB "The language A: language and literature course introduces the critical study and interpretation of written and spoken texts from a wide range of literary and non literary genres. The formal analysis of texts is supplemented by awareness that meaning is not fixed but can change in respect to contexts of production and consumption. This course is available for study in 17 languages." Class hours for HL is 240 hours and 150 for SL.

There are opportunities to support a mother tongue language A other than English or French. The school fully supports the IB Language A programme of mother tongue languages in self-taught and will help students and parents to find a tutor to help support their mother tongue language learning. Please see the Diploma Programme Coordinator for further details.

## VII. Role of the Media Center

Currently, our media center exists in both physical and digital realms, with the physical being enhanced regularly based on funding availability, programme needs, and learning community input.

The physical portion of our library is smaller, and as we are building it from nothing, the resources in it currently cater mostly to PYP learning (by reading level of the learner). The library is used extensively by the PYP in its Daily 5 approach to literacy. The role of this set of resources in the MYP and DP is limited. However, based on staff feedback and programme needs, the resources of the physical library will be invested in as of December 2018. Once this process has been completed, students will be able to both visit the library space with their teachers to utilize programme-directed materials as well as individually to check out materials of general student interest.

The digital portion of our library is well-researched and well-used. For the PYP, we access a powerful digital library and literacy activity platform called Reading Eggs. For inquiry, all programmes have access to EBSCOhost, which includes ebooks, periodicals, reference resources, videos, etc. organized by topic and fully searchable. The DP students have special access to JSTOR for exposure to high-level academic journal research and reading skills.

### VIII. All Teachers As Language Teachers

As enumerated by IB philosophy, there is no one language teacher for a student – all teachers are teachers of language. As such, teachers are expected to approach their planning, regardless of subject area, theme, or concept, as a language teacher. Professional development for our teachers within the scope of language and literacy education occurs during mandated in-service opportunities on campus, primarily. Bogaerts International School has no less than four in-service days during the school year itself, as well as eight days of in-service preceding the start of the school year. Literacy-based topics are presented (typically by expert members of staff) and activities are completed during these in-service days.

### IX. Language Learning & Support

#### PYP Language Support

In the PYP, language support begins in EY 3, and is provided both within the curriculum and outside of the curriculum, primarily for English. English support is provided in the curriculum at approximately 2 hours per week. Our “EAL” (English as an alternative language) pull-out support is provided to students with little to no exposure to English. At this time, demand for additional French support is lower within the community, but in the past, we have also offered extra-curricular French support at both a beginner and advanced level.

#### MYP Language Support

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

MYP students who are assessed as beginners of English, or students who require additional English support, receive 3 hours a week of specialised EAL instruction in addition to the 3.75 hours of English Language Acquisition classes. These EAL classes not only focus on the English language, but also aim to integrate the students back into regular MYP classes as soon as possible during the school year. Thus, students cover aspects of the MYP curriculum in a simplified form or may review work directly given in MYP curricular classes.

MYP French Language & Literature students who are assessed as requiring learning support due to learning difficulties and/or gaps in French-language knowledge follow a French Language & Literature Reinforcement class during the 3.75 hours of MYP French Language & Literature instruction.

#### DP Language Support

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

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

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

## X. Language Policy Review Cycle

This language policy will be set for review and renewal once per school year. This will occur during the summer. Should there be a need to review the policy earlier, then a review will be scheduled as appropriate, as we acknowledge that language policy can change at any time. Review will occur with core teachers, all language staff, and the head teacher.