



Eastern Public School

Affiliated to the International Baccalaureate Organization. .

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Language Policy



“Language is the armoury of the human mind, and at once contains the trophies of its past and the weapons of its future conquests.”

Introduction

Languages have always been at the heart of the IB. It is impossible to build an international organization without including them, and one can't nurture international-mindedness without enabling students to do the same. The language development is fundamental to the instinctive need to communicate and is essential to the evolution of sustained personal development and identity. It is socially constructed and dependent on the number and nature of our social interactions and relationships. It is a major connecting system within, between and among all societies. Developing language as a communicator is critical in language development.

Academic language is inseparable from successful learning at school. Beyond that, language is such an issue that no educator can ignore: studies show that a firm grounding in the first language is essential for academic development, and learning additional languages like 'mother tongue' and 'national language', enhances the student's communicating capabilities and broadens the worldview. We believe that students, who are cut off from their mother tongue are also alienated from a culture, heritage, and sometimes even a family. But equally, students who are shut out from other languages are denied a valuable point of access to other cultures and ways of thinking. So, our curriculum is based on a three tier approach towards language development, teaching our students English (as language and literature), Urdu and Hindi (as language acquisition).

This policy sets in English Language Development Standards along with the other language acquisitions and the Implementation Plan identifies major phases throughout the EPS educational system. The plan describes the philosophy and strategies for the successful integration of ESP (English Support Programme) and Language classes, with special focus to English Language and literacy skills, English learners need in key content areas. The goal of this Language Policy is to serve as a guide of the major steps in the development, adoption, and implementation of Language Standards considering the special needs of students with a local background.

Language: Philosophy

Through language students connect with other people and make sense of their real life experiences and learning. We shape a child's language development to reflect the identity, values, and experiences of the family and community. Therefore, it is up to us to create a warm and comfortable environment in which our students/ children can grow to learn the complexities of language. The communication skills that our students/children develop early in life (in PYP) will be the foundation for his or her communication abilities for the future (MYP & DP). Strong language skills are an asset that will promote effective communication. Learning just one language bounds our knowledge and experience, so this is where learning another language broadens our horizons and allows us to see and comprehend the world in different ways. Languages always will have a firm grip on the world, no matter how changing it is at the moment. Developing language within meaningful and enjoyable contexts raises appetite for making connections, apply learning, and transfer conceptual understanding to new situations. This progressive conceptual development, together with an enjoyment of the process, provides the foundation for lifelong learning. It catalyses the inquiry process at each stage of learning. Learning another language sets up our brains in more efficient and absorbing ways. Benjamin Whorf, linguistic researcher said that 'learning other languages could be beneficial because it would free our minds from such linguistic constraints'. He says that one can embrace new concepts about life and other cultures, if you have learnt more than one language (Keeping these words in mind, our language policy deals with three languages Hindi, English and Urdu).

The importance of Language Skills

Language is absolutely central to learning: without it, one cannot make sense or communicate his/her understanding of a subject. A rich development of language and literacy for all learners is crucial for the success of the programme. It is highly essential that language skill (Language A, Language B), and specifically, academic English, witness a sound development in order to:

- Understand and make the most effective use of the study material.
- Develop the specialized language and vocabulary relevant to the subjects.
- Interpret assignment questions and select relevant and appropriate material for the response.
- Write well-structured and coherently presented assignments, without plagiarism.
- Communicate his/her needs in an efficient manner.
- Work productively with other students in collaborative tasks.

Philosophy of language is concerned with four central problems: the nature of meaning (semantics), language use, language cognition, and the relationship between language and reality. It deals with the philosophical investigation of the nature of language; the relations between language, language users, and the world; and the concepts with which language is described and analyzed, both in everyday speech and in scientific linguistic studies. The philosophy of language is distinct from linguistics, though of course it must pay attention to the facts that linguistics and related disciplines reveal. Based on this philosophy, our motive is to concentrate on Language as well as its Linguistic patterns.

According to the cognizance of IB, our students are expected to develop their Language skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking) as they learn. A good command of English is vital to many of these skills. Our motive is to transform our students into capable communicators through:

Level 1 (PYP)	Level 2 (MYP)	Level 3 (DP)
Developing skills in communicating information accurately and in a way that is appropriate to the subject, purpose and audience. This includes collaborative and group working.	Communicate information, ideas and arguments effectively, using a style and language appropriate to the subject, purpose and audience. This includes collaborative and group working.	Communicate complex information, ideas and arguments effectively, using a style and language appropriate to the subject, purpose and audience. This includes collaborative and group working.

One of those factors that influence language planning was a linguistic factor and they can be regarded as the status and characters of a language. It means that the phonemes, morphemes, semantics and structures of the language have to be considered with the intention of developing the simpler and more appropriate pattern of language teaching.

English language is one tool to establish our viewpoint. We can learn from others experience. We can check the theories of foreigners against our experience. We can reject the untenable and accept the tenable. We can also propagate our theories among the international audience and readers.

We can make use of English to promote our worldview and spiritual heritage throughout the globe, the leading language of science, technology, computers, and commerce; and a major medium of education, publishing, and international negotiation. For this reason, scholars frequently refer to its latest phase as World English.

School's Initiative for English language Development

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that will ensure the permeation of IB values and the organization's mission. The students are provided ample scope for transformation into responsible and internationally minded beings. The school works closely with the local needs of community to teach its language and culture in MYP classes, from specific classes in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction to support units in Art, Science and English. PYP classes are running similar initiatives, with the aim of reviving a language falling out of use as English became increasingly prevalent among IB students in various schools.

Guiding Principles

1. Language learning at EPS synchronizes with the governing policies and practices of IB.
2. All departments in the school work towards promoting the EPS language policy and abide by and adhere to the guiding principles of the Language policy, within their specific practices.
3. **All teachers are required to act as language teachers at EPS:** Language-learning reaches beyond the use of words and have an impact on culture, identity and international-mindedness. Laura Bridge stock discovers how the global IB community is responding to the challenges of a changing linguistic landscape. We would be heading the development of a course and collaborations that will be open to all IB teachers and will provide guidance for school's coordinating language teaching across the curriculum, with a particular focus on improving support for students learning in a language other than their mother tongue.
4. **All members, at EPS are language learners: This principle, in practice requires that:**
 - All members at EPS should realize the importance of communication and language. They should recognize that language learning is a lifelong and a crucial process.
 - All members at EPS have access to language material and language classes, which helps in providing language learning opportunities, thereby supporting the concept of constructive feedback.
 - All members are encouraged to learn key vocabulary, which helps them assist communication in the classroom and otherwise while interacting with students.
5. **Devising of language programmes and activities using scaffolds to aid the students learning:** EPS encourages teachers to use scaffolding, which assists students in language learning and develops clarity of concepts. It is noticed that this method also helps in Zone of Proximal Development. This means that:
 - Teaching and learning builds on students' prior knowledge.
 - Lessons are designed and implemented to make students work independently.
 - Developing a habit of reading, thinking critically on the text, note-taking and communicating their knowledge in an efficient manner.
 - Maintaining an on-going record of students' performance and development.
6. **Students will study English as Language A** and thus it should receive due importance and 'English as a means to communication' should be prioritized throughout the school community. Students and teachers should be encouraged to use English, as a means to communication, every time and everywhere in school campus.

In PYP

Teachers:

- Collaborate with each other on a regular basis, to discuss the performance of students and to find better ways to develop language skills in students.
- Homeroom teachers concentrate more on developing Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills of students.
- Instructions are purely given in English so that the children develop an understanding towards the international language.
- Strive to develop a caring language community in which all students feel accepted and confident that they will be supported by others in language learning and in taking risks.
- Cooperative discussions in the classroom are encouraged in order to promote language update.
- Use mother tongue, if appropriate explicitly to activate learners' prior understanding. Knowledge of learners' prior understanding is tracked to differentiate tasks that will build up further background knowledge necessary for new learning to occur.
- It is a prerequisite to record information in terms of learner profile, skills and attitudes' development that will support planning for future differentiation.
- The time and strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge for a unit of work or lesson are thoughtfully and collaboratively planned.
- Nurture a love and appreciation of words and their use since the goal of vocabulary instruction is to have students gain control of vocabulary that can be used for their own expression.
- Students need many experiences that allow them to encounter and use words in meaningful ways.
 - ❖ Remember Children need many exposures to words before those words become part of their "working vocabularies"!
 - ❖ Vocabulary instruction doesn't just happen in language arts—it happens all day long in every content area!
- Spelling is a fundamental skill that every child needs to develop sincerely, in order to successfully write the English language. Teachers' goal is to instill these skills in our students by creating phonemic awareness.
- Develop a range of independent spelling strategies.
- Student-selected reading materials which arouse their interest are supplied regularly.
- Refer culturally diverse materials in the library and classroom.
- A range of appropriate assessment strategies, such as portfolios, conferencing, miscue analysis, writing sample analysis, response journals are collaboratively planned.

In MYP

- In MYP students study English as Language A (Language and Literature) and Urdu as language B, with Language Acquisition (Hindi) running parallel. The school makes it compulsory for students to study Urdu as language B till grade 8 and offers a choice between Hindi and Urdu to grade 9 and 10 students.
- Regular collaborations of MYP teachers, discuss language related issues and reach out to solutions through healthy and constructive discussions.
- Students prior knowledge is kept in mind while designing unit planners and planning activities.
- Students with special needs are kept in mind, while framing learning engagements and assessments.
- ESP (English Support Programme) is offered to students according to their learning capacities and prior assessments. ESP programme is flexible and categorized into Beginner Level, Low Intermediate Level and High Intermediate Level.

In DP

- In DP, the school offers a choice to students in Group A and Group B. In Group A, students can choose to study English Language and Literature or Urdu Literature. In Group B, students can choose to study English B or Hindi B as per their selection. The student also has a choice to study two languages from one group (in accordance to IB) and be considered a Bilingual student.
- All subjects, with the exception of Urdu and Hindi language classes are strictly taught in English Language.
- Students are grouped for language classes according to their ability in Language and Literature and their performance in MYP throughout.
- DP students can be invited to MYP grades, to give guidance, to assist MYP students in various tasks and to share their experiences, while learning English Language.
- Parents are being encouraged to motivate their children to use English, as means of communication to a greater extent.

Language Selection Criterion in DP:

Students wishing to select a particular language (Group 1 or Group 2) will have to undergo a **Screening test**, which is divided into two phases; phase 1: Written Test and phase 2: Oral Test. The main aim of this screening test is to find out the particular language capabilities in the student/s. The following is a brief outline of the test:

Phase	Nature	Content
Phase1 The paper will be divided into three parts.	Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unseen Passage (Literary) and questions based on the same. • One non-literary text will be given and the student has to comment (in 300 words) on the style and context. • The student will write an essay of 1000 words on the given topic.
Phase 2	Oral	Student will give an oral commentary of 5 minutes on a given topic/literary text.

Common Practices (at PYP, MYP and DP levels)

1. Various Linguistic concepts should be used to develop language skills in students, to make learning practical and interesting.
2. Designing class activities in such a way, so that students can explore multiple systems of communication across all disciplines.
3. Students are provided with opportunities to participate in debates, JAM sessions, speech competitions etc., which will enhance the communication and critical thinking skills of students.
4. Students are given research work about languages, so that they explore how language functions and the principles/ conventions that support communication and language.
5. Students are being made aware of the similarities and differences between the languages they are learning for better understanding.
6. Special focus is on inculcating the habit of reading in the whole EPS community.
7. Students are being encouraged to carry a dictionary to school every day.
8. Teachers are encouraged to use standard British English only while communicating with students, as well as while teaching.

9. Language through Literature: Literature helps students develop interpretative abilities. It is further observed that, “literature will enhance all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax” It is emphasized at EPS, that learners should learn “to use English not mechanically and diffidently, but creatively and critically”. While developing students’ English language skills, literature is used as a means, as it simultaneously appeals to their imagination, develops cultural awareness and encourages critical thinking. This technique can have more beneficial effects upon the whole language learning process, as long as the reader is well-motivated, and as long as the experience of engaging with literature is kept sufficiently interesting.

10. Other Activities to support language development:

- Weekly assemblies to nurture language skills.
- Introduction of the ‘Weekly Speech’ by any one student at the assembly to develop public speaking skills.
- Student led conferences to nurture their productive and interactive skills.
- ESP assembly and ESP relay to make language learning an interesting and competitive venture.
- Essay competitions and reading week completely devoted to language and critical thinking skills.

ESP Plan (English Language Development)

ESP is introduced to cater to the needs of students' learning English as a second Language. Until recently, the task of improving the students' language skills is left to ESP teachers. Many students felt cut off from a system that seemed to favour native English speakers. "Language is power, and the second-language students have always felt the first-language students had more power." We are now running a series of programmes, looking at ways of integrating language development into all lessons.

Learning English through Entertainment:

Classroom activities are designed for the students after a test is performed to determine the language deficiencies of the students. The main aim of this test is to understand the language deficiencies in students. To deal with the above mentioned deficiencies in Language A, following action plan is implemented:

- The students are given lessons one hour a week, supplemented with the text and other related materials, such as other contextual and culture friendly stories, rhymes and jokes. It consists of local or national stories ensuring that the students know the background culture and may already know the story. Writing their opinions on any simple incident from the text, the students learn to express in their own ways.
- Often the class is switched to common everyday topics which are discussed by the students in their individual turns. "The most important thing is that sometimes the students' blossom more with this kind of task and are able to express them more confidently."
- The top priority is given to the importance of having a warm classroom rapport which rather accelerates the progress of the learners.
- The lessons designed in ESP have to be fully integrated with the language needs of students and including class journals, which would offer another outlet to those students who don't speak much in the class.
- Sharing the stress and success of the learners through plenty of encouraging and short in-class practice helps the students a lot. These were considered seriously while they were taught in the class.
- The students' proficiency level is also taken into consideration before selecting a text for them. Texts based on real- life incidents experienced by students themselves can help the learners appreciate and respect the culture and the values of various groups from a story that comes from their own part of the world.

In order to utilize the literary texts properly in the language classrooms and make the language learning experience enjoyable and fruitful, we apply the following:

- Students feel more at home with culture friendly texts. These activate students' schemata in reading literature and help to personalize the learning experience which increases their participation and motivation. The learner-centred activities ensure interaction and motivation.

- Motivation of the learners is enhanced through positive feedback. Their involvements are encouraged and reinforced.
- Freedom of expression is ensured to facilitate students' communicative ability and thereby helping them to acquire the language with ease.

With these standard practices, we hope that the students will develop vocabulary, grammar, syntax, semantics, speaking and comprehension of the language slowly and gradually. Their communication skill will also improve. Their level of confidence will go up. They would have learned to think critically and write answers properly.

Developing Mother Tongue and National Language

(Urdu as Mother tongue and Hindi as National Language in MYP and as Language Acquisition, Group 2)

In the context of EPS curriculum, the main goal of teaching languages is to strengthen pupils' qualifications for gaining a command of expression and thus enhance their learning options through the development of fundamental reading and writing skills, vocabulary and comprehension of terms and concepts in their mother tongue. The teaching of mother tongue at EPS is intended to help develop sound learning strategies and promote insight into the pupil's own language learning. The major focus of EPS curriculum is to develop the following language skills in terms of mother tongue and national language:

Listening and speaking

The aim of *mother tongue* development is to enable pupils to

- express their own feelings and opinions
- listen to, understand and talk about the content of oral narratives and other texts
- speak coherently about their experiences related to their school day, their family and their community

Reading and writing

The aim of mother tongue/national language development is to enable pupils to

- recognize numbers and the letters or characters of their mother tongue/national language
- relate letters to sounds and blend the sounds to form words, or use characters
- read adapted texts fluently and coherently
- listen to others and respond to their fellow pupils during presentations
- write their own texts, digitally and in functional handwriting
- employ simple strategies for reading comprehension
- find and read books or digital texts in their mother tongue/national language

Language and Linguistic Learning

The aim of mother tongue/ national language development is to enable pupils to

- experiment with speech sounds, words and expressions, rhymes and jingles
- relate personal experiences by means of words, drawings, pictures
- talk about how words and pictures work together in a given text
- understand and reflect on the relationship between speech and written language
- describe and assess their own language learning work

Language and Culture

The aim of mother tongue/national language development is to enable pupils to

- talk about the content of fairy tales, songs or poems
- talk about and summarize the gist of puzzles, jokes or other humorous texts
- talk about persons and actions in texts about everyday life, stories or other relevant literature
- talk about linguistic images in their mother tongue/national language
- tell about well-known persons, places and events of significance for their mother tongue/national language
- discuss and elaborate on how language is used differently in different social contexts
- discuss and elaborate on how language can express and develop? attitudes on the part of individuals and groups

National Language Acquisition

1. A minimum level of knowledge of Hindi for all grades is fixed and compulsory.
2. Hindi education is made compulsory up to Grade 8th, so that the students will familiarize with their national language and learn to express their thoughts in Hindi whenever required.
3. The focus of all Hindi classes remains on Language. Equal weightage is given to teaching of literary texts in Hindi and Grammar.
4. In grade 9 and 10 students are given a free choice between Urdu and Hindi as Language Acquisition.

Future Prospects.

- Establishment of a Multimedia Language Lab, to provide students with rich and fun filled learning experience.
- To initiate the teaching of Arabic (ab initio) in group 2 (language acquisition) in DP.

Professional Development

- Opportunities for professional development for all teachers will be considered to enhance their skills in language teaching and learning. Facilities for regularly updating knowledge of teaching staff will be prioritized.
- Regular interactions, collaborations and training sessions for the better functioning and knowledge upgradation of teachers.
- Internal and external workshops on teaching and learning strategies of languages.
- Monitoring and providing constructive feedback to teachers on a regular basis to incorporate 'qualitative teaching'.
- The school? provides an opportunity of 'English Spoken' classes to teachers willing to strengthen their communication skills.

Resources for Language Support

1. A well-equipped library with literary and non-literary texts; books for all age groups; for teachers and for students.
2. Internet access facility in all the classes, to make teaching and learning easy.

Policy Revision:

The last revision of the policy is done in November 2016 and the next revision is due after two years.

List of References

1. www.ibo.org/.../languagepolicy/documents/language_policy_2011englis...
2. www.ibo.org › *Who we are* › *Mission and strategy*