



Mashrek International School

Language Policy

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* Revised by Language Policy Steering Committee in 2016

"The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages." (*IB Programme standards and practices. Standard A, 7) January 2014*

"The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme(s)".
(*IB Programme standards and practices. Standard B1, 5) January 2014*

Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning in a language(s) other than mother tongue. (*IB Programme standards and practices. Standard C3, 7) January 2014*

Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students. (*IB Programme standards and practices. Standard C3, 8) January 2014*

Purpose of Language Policy

Mashrek International School Language Policy is designed to provide clarity and understanding for faculty, parents, students and the community on our practicing of language usage as a vehicle of communication among each other. Our aims are to:

- Communicate our shared beliefs about language and language learning
- Meet the standards of the PYP, MYP and DP IB along with our Ministry of Education objectives
- Identify the overall needs of the students at Mashrek and concerns that have to be addressed by the school regarding the teaching of Language & Literature in both languages Arabic and English, as well as, language acquisition courses.
- Provide opportunities for promoting and maintaining the mother tongue language
- Make provision for the follow-up, monitoring and revision of the policy itself
- Integrate and align with other policies of the school

Philosophy

Language is perceived as a vital tool for learning and developing through simulating active thinking, knowledge acquisition and communication. Since language development is an ongoing process from K to 12, thus all teachers are perceived as language teachers.

The school aims to develop oral communication (listening and speaking), written communication (reading and writing) and visual communication (viewing and presenting) skills in its students across all strands of the subject areas as fundamental instruments of communicative action.

Development of the mother tongue language is eminent for the child's cognitive and personal growth therefore Mashrek International School believes that it is crucial for students to develop full understanding of their heritage, civilization and culture whilst understanding, accepting, connecting and appreciating other cultures. Hence, a strong and challenging bilingual educational program is offered to all students at all levels, where Arabic Language is the mother tongue and English is taught at an equal level of efficiency.

Linguistic Profile

Bilingualism

Mashrek is a bilingual school that encourages the development of students' abilities in gaining a deeper understanding of effective use of language in a variety of contexts. Therefore, English and Arabic Languages are both adopted as the languages of instruction, and since Mashrek International School implements the three IB programmes, all students are provided with practices that ensure inclusion and equity.

Mother Tongue Language

Arabic language is the mother tongue for most of our students at Mashrek International School whose parents are mainly from Arab nationality; accordingly Arabic Language is their mother tongue and English language is the second language for the majority of our population. The rest of our students are of mixed nationality marriages where Arabic language is the mother tongue of one of the parents or Arab students whose English is their first language due to their presence in international schools in Jordan or abroad. Very few students are of European, American, Canadian or Asian origins.

English Language

English language is the language of instruction learned as proficient as the mother tongue and is used in different contexts to broaden our students' perspective of diversity, multilingualism, intercultural understanding and global engagement.

Effective Practices of Language

Developing language skills is not only about language learning, but also learning about language and through language. This means that it needs to be part of students' lives in a variety of contexts. Mashrek International School places special emphasis on literature and language learning as an integral part in education that enables students to explore and sustain personal development, cultural identity, and provides an intellectual framework to support conceptual development through inquiry based learning. Language and literature are viewed as fundamental tools that demonstrate internalization and application of the attributes of the IB learner profile. Language enables students to be effectively integrated into spheres that build cultural awareness. It also enables them to abstract, signify, conceptualize, inquire, consider and communicate reality.

The following strands are the aspects of language learning that may help teachers' better understanding and enhance students' learning:

- Language Learning: Language teachers focus on developing and interrelating oral communication through enhancing listening and speaking skills, written communication through reading and writing skills and visual communication through visual and presentation skills.

- **Learning through Language:** All teachers are considered language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication. Language is being used as a communicative tool all through the curriculum. All staff including administrators, teachers, information centers staff and other school staff are familiarized with the language policy as a working document.
- **Learning about Language:** At Mashrek, students are supported to be proficient through the curriculum planning and settings in both languages of instruction

(Arabic and English) as well as students are provided with a variety of resources to encourage to continue to practice their mother tongue language beyond school hours.

Specific Practices in the Primary Years Programme

We offer a balanced and challenging curriculum in the Arabic and English language to students from K to 4. Language learning takes place in authentic contexts, both within and outside of the Programme of Inquiry. Language is a powerful tool to engage learners and is used by students when negotiating new meanings and understanding new concepts. The classrooms are language rich environments, with a lot of print and a wide variety of literature available. The curriculum provided builds on students' prior knowledge and understanding as we use developmental continuums to plan for teaching and learning in language. We provide differentiated learning engagements in the four strands of language, all teachers review the language scope and sequence to ensure that it is as relevant and comprehensive as possible. Teachers then plan collaboratively, during grade level meetings, grade meetings, meetings with the PYP coordinator and with learning support staff.

Language Strands

Oral Language

Students are provided ample opportunities to develop and utilize oral language across the curriculum. Planned experiences in speaking and listening in an inquiry based approach allow for rich discussion and a collaborative approach to learning. Beyond their daily conversations, students develop skills through oral presentations, debates, speeches, poetry recitations, songs, and dramatic readings. Children are encouraged to ask questions, negotiate, socialize, inquire and experiment in a range of settings that allow their ideas, opinions and thinking to be heard. Teachers model the correct language usage in conversations and instructional presentations while maintaining sensitivity to the students' language proficiency and cultural background.

Written Language

There is a focus on language acquisition through developing lifelong reading habits and meeting the individual needs of each child. Teachers plan and deliver learning experiences using a range of reading procedures and strategies from the Guided reading programmes -using hard copy and online resources- for both languages. Students are encouraged to incorporate reading in their forms of communication by reading aloud, reading in groups, and reading expressively. Diagnostic reading assessments, reading records (Primary) and Reading continuums (kindergarten) are done a minimum of three times a year. Students are encouraged to develop their language skills through writing in all subject areas. Writing skills are fostered by giving students real purpose for expressing themselves through writing. They are exposed to varied, challenging, and meaningful writing opportunities corresponding to the requirements of the subject area. In the kindergarten, students are exposed to various opportunities to develop their pre-writing skills.

Visual Language

Environmental print and visual language play a vital role in enriching the learning environment, developing learners ability to critically analyze images and apply his/her understanding to infer. The use of graphic organizers, picture books, art work, posters, magazines, and video clips are integral in all Units of Inquiry. The ability to view and present using a multi modal approach is explicitly taught and students are given choice in presenting their ideas and knowledge.

Practices that Promote the Mother Tongue Language in the PYP

In the PYP, we consistently encourage students to learn in their mother tongue. We encourage parents to talk, read and write with their children in their mother tongue, and we also host a Mother Tongue and Other Languages Day each year at the KG and Primary. During lessons, students are encouraged to bring in their own language experiences and cultural observations to share with all students. This practice supports the students' mother tongue while helping to promote intercultural awareness among our students.

Specific Practices in the Middle Years Programme

Mashrek implements the components of the MYP model and is guided by the fundamental concepts of holistic learning, intercultural awareness and communication. The school offers MYP language and literature classes for all students in order to equip them with linguistic, analytical and communicative skills that can also be used to develop interdisciplinary understanding across all other subject groups. Students' interaction with chosen texts can generate insight into moral, social, economic, political, cultural and environmental factors and so contributes to the development of opinion-forming, decision-making and ethical-reasoning skills, and further develops the attributes of an IB learner.

Mashrek International School offers the following languages in the MYP:

Language and Literature

Arabic The national curriculum is modified and applied to meet the requirements of the MYP. This level is offered to Jordanians and Arabs whose mother tongue is Arabic. Arabic Language is also reinforced through subject groups that are taught in Arabic such as Individuals and societies, as well as Religion, and through Interdisciplinary Units.

English This is offered to Arab and foreign students who are proficient in English and are capable of fulfilling the language requirements and objectives through the prescribed criteria of the program. English is also reinforced through the different subject groups that are taught in English such as Math, Sciences, and Design, Arts, Physical and Health Education as well as through Interdisciplinary Units.

The following practices aim to provide students with an authentic and diverse language learning experience and align with the MYP Language and Literature Objectives:

Oral Communication

Students are provided ample opportunities to develop and utilize oral language across the curriculum, enabling students to construct meaning through the process of articulating thoughts in a variety of ways. examples of learning experiences students as listeners and speakers engage with in order to develop their oral communication skills are Debates, role plays, discussions, Socratic seminars, oral essays, lectures, speeches, interviews, simulations, poetry recitals, and dramatic as well as oral interpretations of literature.

Written Communication

For the purpose of developing the language learning, students are engaged in interactive reading that involves a variety of genres and text types of fiction and non-fiction (for example, novels, short stories, biographies, autobiographies, diaries, letters, pastiches, parodies, cartoons, graphic novels, poetry, song lyrics, drama, screenplays, advertisements, blogs, emails, websites, appeals, brochures, leaflets, editorials, interviews, magazine articles, manifestos, reports, instructions and guidelines), in order to enrich student's language experiences. Furthermore, students are invited to write in the same variety of genres to develop, organize communication of thoughts and ideas, while focusing on multiple learning experiences.

Visual Communication

In order to develop their visual communication skills, both as viewers and presenters, students are exposed to a variety of texts, such as; advertisements, works of art, dramatic interpretations, postcards, graphic novels, animations, cartoons, comics, films, music videos, video clips, newspapers and magazines, graphs, tables, diagrams, leaflets, posters and television programmes.

Language Acquisition

Mashrek believes in catering for the diverse linguistic needs of its' students, to provide them with the opportunity to develop insights into the features, processes and craft of the language and the concept of culture, and to realize that there are diverse ways of living, behaving and viewing the world. Language learning is recognized as a developmental process in which students have opportunities to build on prior knowledge and skills in order to help them progress to the next phase of language development.

The MYP structures additional language learning in phases so that the complexity and range of language profiles that students bring to their MYP classroom is acknowledged and fostered. Students beginning their MYP studies may have limited or no prior experience in the language.

Language acquisition as a course in its 6 phases, is designed to cater for students' linguistic needs depending on their prior knowledge of their additional language learning to enhance their ability to communicate. Students at Mashrek are given the opportunity to commence their language acquisition course at any phase that suites their language proficiency in the main 4 skills; reading, writing, viewing and speaking.

Therefore, language acquisition is offered for students as a second language as follows:

Arabic Language Acquisition

Mashrek International School offers Arabic Language Acquisition at its various phases as to meet the needs of non-Arabic speaking students and develop their language proficiency. Arabic Language Acquisition is offered to students whose mother tongue is not Arabic. In the MYP Year 4 and 5 phase 1 and 2 of the language is only offered to students newly enrolled to the program or have been exposed to the language for less than two years.

English Language Acquisition

In The MYP part English Acquisition is offered upon need; for students who have limited or no prior experience in the language in accordance to the school's philosophy in developing the students' language proficiency as to meet the objectives of Language and Literature, however, we are towards removing English acquisition as all of our students are being able to cope with the needs required for English Language acquisition.

French or Spanish

MYP students at Year 0 are given the opportunity to choose one of the above additional languages which are offered at their various phases according to year, level for all students whose mother tongue is neither French nor Spanish. However year 5 students are currently provided with French Language acquisition only. Newly joining students are offered the language acquisition at phases 1 and 2.

The following practices aim to provide students with an authentic and diverse language learning experience and align with the MYP Language Acquisition Objectives:

A. Comprehending spoken and visual text

Comprehending spoken and visual text encompasses aspects of listening and viewing, the student will be given the opportunity to listen for specific purposes and respond to show understanding, interpret visual text that is presented with spoken text, and engage with the text by supporting opinion and personal response with evidence and examples from the text.

B. Comprehending written and visual text

Comprehending written and visual text encompasses aspects of reading and viewing, the student will be given the opportunity to read for specific purposes and respond to show understanding, interpret visual text that is presented with written text, as well as engaging with a variety of texts by supporting it with contextual views that represents perspective and cultural awareness.

C. Communicating in response to spoken and/or written and/or visual text

In our language acquisition classroom, students will have opportunities to interact and communicate in writing and speaking in various situations to express thoughts, emotions, views and information for specific purposes.

D. Using language in spoken and/or written form

In order to reach the objectives of the target phase, students are given the opportunity to organize, communicate views, emotions and information in writing and speaking accurately in the target language. The aim of introducing language acquisition courses is to provide students with opportunities to enable them to appreciate the diversity and social component of a variety of cultures through understanding the nature of language and the process of language learning.

Specific Practices in the Diploma Programme

The course offered in the Diploma program reflects and ensures the continuum from the MYP. This is demonstrated in the following arrangements offered for MYP students continuing to the DP;

- Students who opt for English/ Arabic as Language and literature during MYP can continue in Group 1 Language A: Language and literature or literature at both HL and SL.
- Students who opt for English/ French/ Arabic as Language acquisition during MYP can continue in Language B at HL.
- Students who opt for French as Language acquisition in MYP can continue in language B SL.
- Students who had no experience in Arabic /French during MYP can choose Group 2 Arabic/ French ab initio.

Mashrek International School offers the following languages in the DP

Language A

Practices in the Language A Course

The course aims to develop in students skills of textual analysis and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary. Teachers have the opportunity to construct the course in a way that reflects the students' interests and concerns while developing the necessary transferable skills. The objectives of the course are met through the following practices:

Knowledge and Understanding

Students develop textual analysis skills through enhancing their understanding of the formal elements such as context, purpose and audience as well as the form and style. The process of analysis is taught and practiced through class discussions on previously unseen texts. Students engage through organized collaborative work to come to an understanding of the form style content and context of the texts under examination. Students are assessed on their detailed knowledge and understanding through written tasks and oral activities.

Application and Analysis

Students demonstrate their ability to analyze language and style and the effect on the readers' understanding of the meaning, the ability to comment on literary features and using appropriate terminology through various tasks. The written tasks, paper 1, paper 2 as well as oral tasks oral commentaries and further oral activities. These are all assessed formatively and feedback is given to students before final assessments.

Synthesis and Evaluation

Students are required to compare and contrast texts synthesize ideas to explore connections between content, context and style, and evaluating viewpoints through different course assessment components. The process is scaffold for students through class activities, lectures, questioning strategies, using organizers, modelling and sampling.

Selection and Use of Appropriate Language

Students are expected to express their ideas in clarity and use appropriate style and register and use of literary terms, all presented in effective organization and a clear sense of structure. The students are presented with various practices to develop these skills such as class discussions, debates, role play, reading, writing and oral presentations, practice of rhetorical skills and effective feedback.

Language B Practices in Language B

Students are expected to communicate clearly and effectively in a range of situations, demonstrating linguistic competence and intercultural understanding. The objectives of the course are met through the following practices:

Text Comprehension and Analysis

Students are exposed to various and authentic written and visual texts to enhance their skills in understanding analyzing and responding as well as interacting in the target language within the context of different situations. At higher level (HL) students are expected to understand and interpret literary texts. Students demonstrate an understanding of literary works and are able to complete a creative task based on the literary works.

Oral Communication

Students interact with the teacher in classroom activities using a range of structures responding to a range of ideas with accuracy and fluency. Students orally describe and react to a visual stimulus, respond to questions and engage in a general conversation using appropriate interactive skills. Through classroom activities Students interact appropriately with the teacher on a range of topics. Students practice vocabulary grammatical and syntactical skills that enable them to use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and/or cultural contexts.

Writing

Through written assignments Students practice the process of developing a coherent and organized response. Students respond to the task using the appropriate conventions, register and format using a variety of text types and appropriate structure. Appropriate corrective feedback relevant to learners' needs is given regularly.

Language ab Initio Practices in Language ab Initio

Students are introduced to prescribed topics that help them to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the intercultural elements through which students can compare the similarities and differences between his or her own culture and those of targeted culture. Empowering students with tools and skills to communicate clearly and effectively in a range of situations including cultural values and behaviors as well as a range of global issues through class discussions and instructions that help them to understand and use accurately the basic structures of the language. A range of appropriate vocabulary is introduced to enable student to communicate both in writing and orally using a register and a format that are appropriate to the situation.

Self-taught SL only

If a student is not proficient in the languages of instruction (Arabic and English) or wants to have a bilingual Baccalaureate, Mashrek International School can support the family and encourage the student to follow the self-taught Language A Course in his/her mother tongue. In this case, Mashrek can provide the curriculum, the prescribed lists of the books and resources and if possible teachers to contact depending on the language chosen.

Information Centre

Mashrek Information Resources Centers offer a wide range of print and non-print resources for the purpose of fostering love for reading. Students are given the opportunity to borrow resources at anytime from a variety of genres, including but not limited to fiction and non-fiction; poetry, plays, short stories, and newspapers/magazines. In addition to reading material that is offered to support the development of the mother tongue language of international students at Mashrek. Mashrek Information Resources centers hold book clubs, Reading races, Arabic reading challenges, host authors, and provide literacy promotion collection from different languages to support the ones offered at school.

National Requirements

Mashrek International School uses Both English and Arabic Languages as languages of instructions, yet, Arabic Language is compulsory for students with Jordanian nationality throughout the PYP, MYP and DP.

In addition social studies and religion are taught in Arabic language to support the Arabic language and it's a requirement from the Ministry of Education.

Other Policies Aligning with the Language Teaching and Learning

- **Assessment Policy**

Language development is a continuous and ongoing learning process. It is evaluated across a broad range of assessment strategies and various tools; and it is done both formatively and summatively, this allows for revision and refinement of each student's language development. (Refer to Assessment and portfolio policy).

- **Admission Policy**

In the admissions process, students sit for both an English and an Arabic Language assessments in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses against the required linguistic profile.

- **Ithraa' Department Policy**

Mashrek has an Intensive Language Programme which provides services in Arabic Language to students who are at the introductory level of the language. Students benefit from this service for a maximum of two consecutive years in the Primary School and/or when they meet the standards of their class –whichever comes first. In the Middle School enrichment classes are provided in both languages (Arabic and English) in order to further support students' language acquisition in the targeted languages.

Recruitment and Professional Development

For recruitment, the language used during the interview depends on the needs of the position.

During professional development meetings the language of instruction is made clear to all teachers in both Arabic and English Languages.

Resources Used

- PYP, MYP, DP Guidelines for developing a School's Language policy, published April 2008 International Baccalaureate
- Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme Language and learning in IB programmes, Published September 2011
- Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, Published April 2008
- Language and literature guide, for use from September 2014 or January 2015
- Language acquisition guide, for use from September 2014 or January 2015
- Towards a continuum of international education
- IBO Programme standards and practices
- IB learner profile Reviewed booklet, April 2013
- Making the PYP happen in the classroom
- A curriculum framework for international primary education
- MYP: From principles into practice
- Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy, published 2011, International Baccalaureate.

Language Policy Steering Committee

Policy Revision Procedures

The Language Policy is reviewed at the end of each scholastic year.

2015

The Policy was first developed in the year 2015 by the below mentioned steering committee;

- Head of Primary School – Ms. Haneen Atmeh
- Head of Middle School – Ms. Lina Hamarneh
- PYP Coordinator – Ms. Reem Dajani
- Arabic Language reference teacher – Ms. Faten Aranki
- English Language reference teacher – Ms. Diba Attar

2016

This Policy was updated in January 2016 in accordance to new or modified publications by the IBO by;

- Head of Middle School – Ms. Lina Hamarneh
- Head of Primary School – Ms. Reem Dajani

2017

The Language Policy was revised and updated in June 2017 in accordance to new publications, by the below mentioned Steering Committee;

- Head of High School – Ms. Diba Attar
- Head of Middle School – Ms. Lina Hamarneh
- Head of Primary School – Ms. Reem Dajani
- KG Principal – Ms. Tamara Majali
- Kindergarten KG Coordinator – Ms. Reem Samara
- Middle and High School English Language Reference Teacher – Ms. Amal Ateyat
- Information Center Coordinator – Ms. Majida Akroush
- Middle School Arabic Language Reference Teacher – Ms. Fotoun Ziadat
- Middle School English Teacher – Ms. Nada Tahboub
- Primary School Homeroom Teacher – Ms. Zaina Jabri
- Kindergarten Homeroom Teacher – Ms. Jumana Sweidan