



Language Policy

Updated 2019

Contents

Introduction	3
Language philosophy	3
Policy review process	3
Language profile	4
Admissions and course selection.....	4
Language A	5
Language B.....	5
Language ab initio.....	5
Supporting language development	6
Language use and support	6
Role of teachers.....	7
Role of parents	7
Appendix 1: Language profiles of students	8
Bibliography	8

Introduction

AICJ seeks to provide students with opportunities for higher academic achievement and a place in the global community as valuable, contributing and responsible members. Language development plays an essential role in enabling students to fulfil this aim together with the Learner Profile attributes. The purpose of this policy is to outline the school's language philosophy and approaches to support language development. The policy therefore details the language profile of students along with procedures for admitting and supporting students onto the IB course. It also explains expectations of teachers and recommends how parents can support their child's language needs at home. The policy must be shared with all stakeholders on the school's IB course.

Language philosophy

AICJ recognises that:

- Language underpins all learning and plays a pivotal role in students' development.
- Language is crucial in enabling students to explore and understand their own cultural and community identities.
- Proficiency in more than one language is essential in nurturing intercultural understanding across different global contexts.
- Language learning must be interdisciplinary and draw on a variety of approaches to teaching and learning.
- All subject teachers are language teachers and must teach and model subject specific language structures and vocabulary.
- Language learning is key in the planning and delivery of all courses.

(IBO, 2008)

Policy review process

This policy will be reviewed annually according the below timeline:

→ → → → → → → →			
July – August	Sept – Oct	Nov – Dec	January
IBDP Coordinator and Principal review policy.	Suggested changes discussed and agreed with teachers.	Changes finalized and confirmed by school management.	Updated policy implemented.

Language profile

As a Japanese Article 1 private school, the majority of students on AICJ's IB course are native Japanese speakers who have attended either an English immersion or international school in Japan during their elementary/junior high years. Most students have therefore gained significant exposure to both Japanese and English. For this reason, Japanese and English are the main languages represented at the school.

A minority of IB students are not native Japanese speakers, having transferred from overseas schools. These students typically have relative or limited fluency in Japanese as a second or third language. Data showing the current school language profile of students is shown in Appendix 1.

Admissions and course selection

Students' language proficiency is assessed prior to entering the IB course and their language profile (including mother tongue) is recorded. This assessment takes place through written entrance exams and interviews in both Japanese and English. Students who have not attained English proficiency of Eiken level 2, or whose Japanese proficiency is judged to be insufficient, may be denied admission onto the IB course. Students who are admitted onto the IB course with limited Japanese proficiency are provided with additional language support classes and are advised and expected to take Japanese B/Japanese ab initio in Group 2. Students whose mother tongue is not Japanese or English are only admitted onto the IB course if they have gained sufficient proficiency in Japanese or English to allow them to select either language in Group 1. In cases where students have a significant level of fluency in both Japanese and English, students are advised on their Group 1 and Group 2 subject selection in accordance with IBO guidelines that emphasise the importance of students being placed into a course that is academically challenging and most suited to their language development needs (IBO, 2019a). AICJ currently offers the below language subjects:

Group	Subject	Level
1	Japanese A literature English A literature	HL and SL HL and SL
2	English B Japanese B Japanese Ab initio	HL only HL and SL SL only

Language A

Language A courses are suitable for students who have experience of using the language in an academic context. However, the language profiles of students on Language A courses are likely to vary considerably from monolingual students to students with complex language profiles. Language A courses are designed to develop the social, aesthetic, communication and cultural literacy skills needed for further academic study. The courses therefore include the study of literary texts to provide a basis for understanding how language creates meaning in a culture and in particular texts. Students should gain an understanding of texts through their form, content, purpose and contexts and appreciate how language can sustain or challenge ways of thinking (IBO, 2013).

Language B

Language B courses are language acquisition courses suitable for students with some previous experience of the language. Language B courses are designed to develop students' ability to communicate through the study of language, themes and texts. At both higher and standard levels, students learn to communicate in the target language in familiar and unfamiliar contexts by developing the skills needed to describe situations, narrate events, make comparisons, explain problems, and state and support their personal opinions. Higher level language B courses also require the study of two literary works in the target language and are therefore suited to students with a higher level of proficiency (IBO, 2019a).

Language ab initio

Language ab initio courses are language acquisition courses suitable for students with very limited or no prior experience in the target language. Language ab initio courses are designed to develop receptive, productive and interactive communicative skills that enable students to communicate in the target language in familiar and unfamiliar contexts (IBO, 2019b).

In accordance with Ministry of Education regulations, all students on AICJ's IB course must study Japanese and English as their language subjects. Requests for further language course provisions are judged by management on a case-by-case basis. All group 3-6 subjects are delivered in English. However, to accommodate students' language needs, TOK is offered in both English and Japanese and students are recommended to study TOK in their strongest language.

Supporting language development

Language use and support

Students are encouraged to use their mother tongue language at school, but they are expected to place emphasis on the development of additional languages. Outside of class students are permitted to use any language. However, the language used during class must be the language in which the subject is taught in. Teachers and students must communicate in the language of the subject during class activities and any course related communications; for example, formative assessment. Students must place equal emphasis on developing all languages studied across the IB course and are therefore expected to dedicate themselves to improving their proficiency in both Japanese and English. Teachers are expected to support students' language development by modelling correct usage and good practice during lessons and subject related communications. Outside of class, teachers must encourage students to use both their mother tongue and additional languages.

Role of school

To support the development of both mother tongue and additional languages, the following measures will be taken by the school:

- Students' language profiles will be surveyed and recorded prior to being admitted onto the IB course.
- Admissions onto the IB course will depend on the school's ability to accommodate the mother tongue language needs of students.
- As the majority of students and parents speak Japanese or English as their mother tongue, all communications from the school related to the IB course will be provided in both languages. Communications involving the whole school will be provided in Japanese and assistance will be given to parents and students where necessary.
- The library will include a range of literature and other publications in Japanese and English. Teachers, students and parents will be able to request books in other languages.
- Advice will be provided to parents and students in relation to supporting and developing mother tongue languages at home.
- Students will be encouraged to develop their mother tongue through CAS activities.

- Professional development for teachers will be provided through internal and external workshops as well as teacher observations.
- The importance of language learning will be reflected and demonstrated across the planning and delivery of the IB course curriculum.

Role of teachers

To support students' language development teachers must:

- Demonstrate consideration of students' language needs in curriculum planning, delivery and assessment.
- Provide students with subject specific vocabulary and language structures and model their use.
- Provide students with language guidance and feedback during lessons and through formative feedback.
- Set clear boundaries for language use during lessons by ensuring that communications occur in the language of the subject.
- Encourage students to develop both their mother tongue and additional languages; for example through providing praise.
- Provide parents with guidance in supporting students' language development at home.

Role of parents

To support students' language development, parents are asked to:

- Encourage students to read at home in both their mother tongue and additional language(s).
- Encourage students to read a variety of texts that expose them to local, national and international contexts.
- Seek advice where necessary from the school/teachers about how to support students' language development.

Appendix 1: Language profiles of students

Mother tongue	Number of Students
Japanese	57
English	5
Bengali	1
Chinese	2

Bibliography

International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2008. *Guidelines for developing a school language policy*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.sjp2.us/images/pdf/ib/Guidelines-for-Developing-a-School-Language-Policy.pdf> [Accessed 31 January 2019].

International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2019a. *Language B guide*. Geneva: International Baccalaureate Organisation. Available at: https://resources.ibo.org/dp/subject-group/Language-B-first-assessment-2020/resource/11162-46910/data/d_2_ablan_gui_1802_2_e.pdf [accessed 28 May 2019].

International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2019b. *Language ab initio guide*. Geneva: International Baccalaureate Organisation.

International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013. *Language A: literature guide*. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization.