

AICS LANGUAGE POLICY

1. Philosophy

Language is integral to exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural understanding. As well as being the major medium of social communication, it is tightly linked to cognitive growth as it is the means by which meaning and knowledge is negotiated and constructed (IBO, MYP Principles into Practice, 2008, p.11).

AICS endorses and supports the views of the IBO regarding the pre-eminence of language as a tool both of communication and of learning. We at AICS seek actively to broaden the experience of our students in this respect. We recognise that we are teachers of language and communication as well as of specific subjects. We recognise the importance of supporting students in their acquisition of the language of instruction, in additional languages and in their best language maintenance and development.

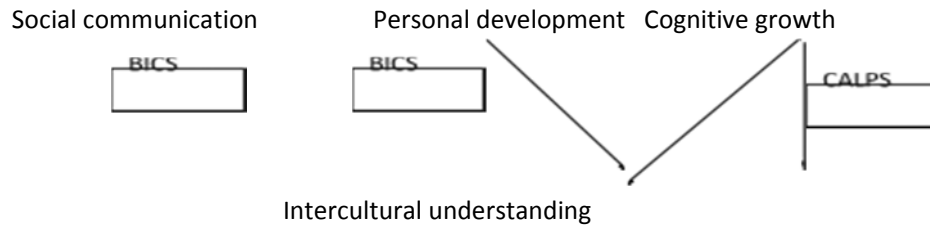
AICS recognizes the distinction between two pathways of language acquisition. The first is the acquisition of language as a basic intercommunication skill (BICS, see Cummins, 1980) which enables the student to communicate socially in the language being studied. The second is the cognitive acquisition of language proficiency (CALPS, see Cummins, 1980) which enables the student to conceptualise and engage in critical and analytical thinking in the language being studied.

It is the intention of the AICS that all students will have the opportunity to acquire the cognitive acquisition pathway (CALPS) in the language of instruction and in all other languages facilitated by the school.

-Cummins, J. (1980), The cross-lingual dimension of language proficiency: implications for bilingual education and the optimal age issue, in: TESOL Quarterly (19) 2, pages 175-182.

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2. General language acquisition opportunities at the AICS



Pathways	CALPS	BICS
A (CALPS) and B (BICS)	=think critically and analytically in the language studied	=communicate socially and develop personally in the language studied
PRIMARY	World Literature, Dutch and TTL	EEL/Dutch/EAL
SECONDARY	English, Dutch, STL and TTL	EEL/Spanish/English/French

The IBO and the AICS recognise two types of language course. Language A courses are designed for students who need to be challenged to think critically and analytically in the language studied. Language A language courses involve the study of literature and language in translation and in the original. It is intended that these courses will assist students to attain the IBO and AICS goal of exploring and sustaining intercultural understanding.

Language B courses are designed for students who need to be challenged to communicate socially and develop personally in the language studied. The Language B courses teach the language as a foreign language to students who may have little or no experience of them. These courses are

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intended to assist students to attain the IBO and AICS goal of exploring and sustaining intercultural understanding.

3. Specific language acquisition opportunities at the AICS

The main language of instruction at AICS is English and all classes except for language classes are offered in English. AICS is committed to ensuring that our students are enabled to study for the IBO Diploma Programme and to sit for its examinations in English. English language courses are offered at two levels, A and B.

3.1 Dutch language courses

The second language taught at AICS is Dutch. Dutch, the language of the host country, is obligatory for all students, as required by law. Dutch is offered at level A and B: Dutch

A courses are taught in Dutch and AICS is committed to encouraging students to work towards studying Dutch A in the IBO Diploma Programme.

Dutch B courses are taught in Dutch too and AICS is committed to encouraging students to work towards studying Dutch B in the IBO Diploma Programme

Note that, as an international school whose ultimate qualification is the IBO Diploma, AICS cannot guarantee that all students entering the school will be equipped linguistically to enter the Dutch education system at a later stage.

3.2 English language courses

AICS is aware of the difficulties experienced by less proficient users of English in studying in English. AICS teachers are committed to enabling students to overcome these problems in each subject area and AICS is committed to supporting the efforts of its teachers by ensuring that appropriate professional development courses are made available. Students who enrol at the AICS with a need to be challenged to communicate socially and develop personally in English will be moved into Language B courses. All students in all subjects are challenged to think critically and analytically in the language studied.

3.3 Additional language courses

AICS offers also a choice of French and Spanish to all students in MYP 2 and above. These languages are offered at the B level. Students are thus exposed to an additional language spoken widely both inside and outside Europe and to Romance languages which provide a contrast to Germanic languages which are the major languages of the school. This also allows for continuity with other school systems where French and Spanish are frequently taught.

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AICS aims to enable students of French, Spanish and Dutch B courses to study either of these languages in the Diploma Programme, depending on enrolment.

3.4 Best language courses other than English and Dutch

AICS recognises the need to support best language maintenance as part of the processes of *exploring and sustaining personal development, cultural identity and intercultural understanding* (IBO). The AICS encourages parents to support their children in maintaining their best language and the school assists in this process by helping parents to locate courses of study and tutors, providing classrooms and interviewing prospective tutors. A teacher supervises the TTL programme and reports to the LFL. All tutors working at AICS must have tertiary level language qualifications.