



IB COORDINATION

Language Policy

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1. Philosophy

At FCAQ, **all** teachers are language teachers. Therefore, language learning is embedded in every subject area.

We believe in an eclectic approach to language learning, we believe that students learn language through exposure but, as second language learners in a Spanish-speaking country, we also believe that formal instruction is needed (e.g. Phonics).

At FCAQ, we believe that:

- Language is best acquired in an authentic yet structured environment.
- Authentic language learning is achieved through an inquiry-based approach.
- Second language acquisition needs exposure to the language and formal instruction to foster students' metacognitive skills about their language learning process. Therefore, the language of communication between teachers and students must be the language of instruction. Teachers are expected to communicate with their students in their language of instruction at all times. Likewise, students are encouraged to communicate among them in the language of instruction when in class.
- International Mindedness is fostered through language; by being exposed to literature, culture, and other language-related manifestations of the language(s) of study.
- Student ownership of learning (agency) is achieved through translanguaging (which is exploring and learning new content in more than two languages and transferring knowledge from one language to the other).
- Language plays a key role in learning; thus, it's of ultimate importance to ensure that the three approaches of language learning and teaching are integrated: learning language, learning about language, and learning through language.
- Language (learning and development) plays a key role in all of the IB Approaches to Learning Skills.
- Multilingualism (Spanish and English learning environments) strengthens communication and thinking skills, affirms cultural identity, and develops international-mindedness.

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2. Language Profile at FCAQ

FCAQ offers bilingual education (Spanish and English) as part of its mission and vision.

The language of instruction depends on the Section and Level; each section seeks to strengthen Spanish (as the mother tongue of most of our students) at the same time as the acquisition of English.

Language of Instruction at FCAQ (teaching and learning):

Curricular Program	Level Section	National Section	International Section
Primary Years Program	Nursery (ages 3-4)	Spanish: Homeroom and Music English: 2 hours a week	English: Homeroom Spanish & Music: 2.5 hours a week
	Preschool (ages 4-6)	English: Homeroom and Technology Spanish: Spanish, Art, Music & PE	
	Primary (ages 6-12)	English: Homeroom (½ day), Technology, & Art Spanish: Homeroom (½ day), Music & PE	English: Homeroom, Art, Technology Spanish: Spanish, Music & PE
Middle Years Program	Middle School (ages 12-16)	English: Language Arts, Humanities, Science, Chemistry, Biology, Art, Technology Spanish: Language Arts, Ecuadorian Humanities, Mathematics, Physics, Technology, Music, PE	English: Language Arts, Mathematics, Humanities, Science, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Technology, Art Spanish: Language Arts, Ecuadorian Humanities, Music, PE
Diploma Program	High School (ages 16-18)	English: Language Arts, Chemistry, Biology, ESS, History, Business Mgmt, Economics, Psychology, Theory of Knowledge, Art Spanish: Language Arts, Mathematics, Physics, Music, PE	English: Language Arts, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, ESS, Physics, History, Business Mgmt, Economics, Psychology, Theory of Knowledge, Art Spanish: Language Arts, Music, PE

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In the International Section, all written communications for parents are sent home in both languages.

Meetings are conducted in the language the student and parents feel most comfortable with, and, if necessary, a translator is invited to the meeting.

3. Teaching Practices:

Effective language learning and teaching practices:

- a. Exposition to oral and written languages since early years (Nursery)
- b. Neurological Development (Neurofunciones) in Spanish and English before introducing literacy (symbols)
- c. Literacy (Lectoescritura) in Spanish and English; using the mother tongue as a basis for development and awareness for the second language
- d. Teaching Language through an inquiry approach (discovery, exploration, ATL skills.)
- e. Teaching Reading through exposition, phonics, and guided reading in English and Spanish
- f. Learn and teach language through three approaches: learn the language, learn about language, and learn through language
- g. Teachers are language models for all students. The language of interaction between a teacher and his/her student must be the language of instruction in all contexts (in and outside the classroom).
- h. Language is developed through interaction and collaboration. Students are expected to communicate among team members in the language of instruction.

Professional Development Continuum on effective language learning and teaching practices:

The school has a [5-year curriculum plan](#), language is included as part of the curriculum development, collaborative work and professional development.

Language scope and sequence identified: The American School of Quito uses Common Core Standards for Language from Nursery to Grade 10. In the Diploma Program, subject-specific standards are used; the evaluation criteria of each subject has specific criterion related to language.

Referencing and bibliography protocols identified: The American School of Quito has a Grades 1-12 Research Scope and Sequence, an Academic Honesty Policy, and a Student Honor Code for Grades 7-12. Both protocols are learned and conducted in English or Spanish, depending on the class and/or task. For further information, please see the Academic Honesty Policy.

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Expectations about language use around the school: As mentioned above, Spanish is the language mostly used outside the classroom. Students are expected to talk to their English teachers in English; inside and outside of the classroom. In a case of an emergency and in situations where students need to understand more abstract concepts, students are allowed to apply their mother tongue.

Library and media resources linked to teaching and learning with language as a focus: Librarians work closely to curriculum coordinators and teachers to organize and update books and resources for both languages of instruction (English and Spanish) for the three programs (Primary, Middle and Diploma). Special efforts are made to make sure some resources in the student population mother tongues (apart from Spanish) are included in the collections.

Technology and Library teachers in the Primary Section work collaboratively as part of the transdisciplinary team, teaching, strengthening, and helping students transfer literacy and ICT skills to their learning, in both languages.

4. Support for Student Language Acquisition:

Address needs of those learning in a language other than their mother tongue: The International Section - where the larger percentage of non-Spanish or English native speakers come from - has an ELL specialist for English acquisition. The Spanish Department has a SLL program for students who speak little or no Spanish when they enter the school.

Student developmental language profile:

National Section	International Section
Nursery: Spanish-native speakers mostly Spanish full-immersion One English period per week (vocabulary and commands mostly, aligned to units of inquiry) Teachers include related learning experiences, with the support of the families, if students speak at home a language different from English or Spanish	Nursery: Spanish-native speakers mostly English full-immersion Four Spanish periods per week (aligned to units of inquiry) Teachers include related learning experiences, with the support of the families, if students speak at home a language different from English or Spanish

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National Section	International Section
Language development based on Neurological Development (Neurofunciones)	
Pre-Kinder & Kinder: Spanish-native speakers mostly English full-immersion One Spanish period per week (aligned to units of inquiry)	Pre-Kinder & Kinder: Spanish-native speakers mostly English full-immersion Four Spanish period per week (aligned to units of inquiry) Teachers include related learning experiences, with the support of the families, if students speak at home a language different from English or Spanish
Literacy (Lectoescritura) Kinder: Whole Language-sight words, Phonics-short vowels and main consonants Kinder Spanish: Aligned to letter and sounds studied in English	
Grades 1-2: Spanish-native speakers mostly 3 periods in English, 3 periods in Spanish every day Lines of Inquiry in PYP Units are divided or combined between Spanish and English teams. Planning is done collaboratively. Assessment is done separately, allowing translanguaging - students transferring learning from one language to another in formatives and summatives.	Grades 1-2: Spanish-native speakers mostly 5 periods in English, 1 period in Spanish every day Lines of Inquiry in PYP Units are divided or combined between Spanish and English teams. Planning is done collaboratively. Assessment is done separately, allowing translanguaging - students transferring learning from one language to another in formatives and summatives.
Language development based on Neurological Development (Neurofunciones) and Literacy (Lectoescritura) Grades 1-2: Whole Language-sight words, Phonics- short & long vowels Spanish: Language standards that do not differ between English and Spanish are taught in alignment. Mathematics: Concepts and processes are introduced in Spanish and then reinforced in English (vocabulary and word problems). Concrete concepts, such as Geometry and Measurement might be introduced in English first, depending on calendars.	

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National Section	International Section
<p>Grades 3-6: Spanish-native speakers mostly 3 periods in English, 3 periods in Spanish every day Lines of Inquiry in PYP Units are divided or combined between Spanish and English teams. Planning is done collaboratively. Assessment is done separately, allowing translanguaging - students transferring learning from one language to another in formatives and summatives.</p>	<p>Grades 3-6: Spanish-native speakers mostly 5 periods in English, 1 periods in Spanish every day Lines of Inquiry in PYP Units are divided or combined between Spanish and English teams. Planning is done collaboratively. Assessment is done separately, allowing translanguaging - students transferring learning from one language to another in formatives and summatives.</p>
<p>Grades 3-6: Language Acquisition integrated to Reading Program and PYP Units of Inquiry to the highest extent possible. Spanish: Language standards that do not differ between English and Spanish are taught in alignment. Mathematics: Concepts and processes are introduced in Spanish and then reinforced in English (vocabulary and word problems). Concrete concepts, such as Geometry and Measurement might be introduced in English first, depending on calendars.</p>	
<p>Grades 7-10: Spanish native-speakers mostly. One period of English and one period of Spanish every day. Other subjects are taught in either English or Spanish Interdisciplinary Units are planned in collaboration with other disciplines At the end of Year 10, students write the Personal Project in the language of their choice.</p>	
<p>Grades 11-12 Two Language classes; students are placed in two of the following - one English and one Spanish: Literature Language and Literature One period a day Other subjects are taught in either English or Spanish During Year 11 students write an Extended Essay in the language of their choice</p>	

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Process to identify student language needs:

Students have an LD specialist from Nursery to Grade 12.

Students from Nursery to Kinder have a speech therapist.

Students in Nursery have an Occupational Therapist, who also provides support to specific cases in Preschool and in Grades 1-6.

These teams work collaboratively and closely with the teachers to design and apply accommodations and modifications specific to the profiles of the students in the Program.

For further information, please refer to the [FCAQ Special Needs Policy](#).

5. Further Considerations:

Identification and promotion of other mother tongues and other languages in the community:

We aim to identify and promote other mother tongues and other languages in the FCAQ community. Teachers are encouraged to integrate the student and/or family mother tongues and culture to the inquiry process of the units.

Student Data on Language Learning:

Student data is collected, analyzed and communicated from Nursery to Grade 12.

In Preschool and Primary, teachers collect data from key Common Core Language standards, related to Foundational Skills, Language, and Writing.

Legal requirements from government legislation:

Schools in Ecuador must teach and assess the Local Ministry of Education's Program. Curriculum Coordinators and teachers revise these documents on a regular basis to make sure the Ministry of Education content knowledge and skills are integrated into our IB and Common Core standards.

This Policy should be reviewed every three (3) years, in preparation for the Cognia (old AdvancEd) visit and/or the IB Programmes Evaluation to stay up-to-date with recent research on language acquisition.

Communication:

This Policy must be communicated with the whole teacher community once it is approved by the Board of Trustees. Teachers new to FCAQ need to be familiarized with this and all of the FCAQ Policies during their first year.

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Contributions of school community to this policy:

The present policy was a joint collaboration process among Curriculum Coordinators, IB Program Coordinators, Academic Coordinators and teacher teams.

6. References

Guidelines for developing a School Language Policy. International Baccalaureate Organization. 2008.

IB guide Language and Learning in IB programmes. International Baccalaureate Organization. 2012.

Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2008.

Last updated June, 2019

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