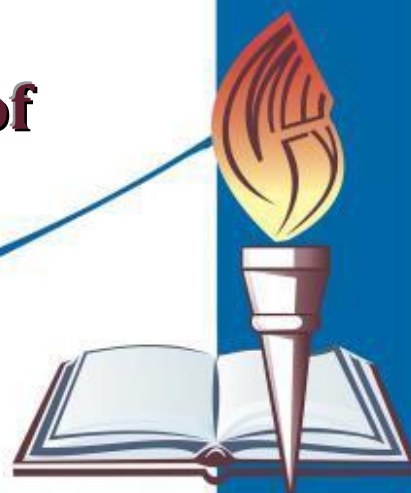




**International School of
Herzen University**



ISHU

Language policy

**Saint-Petersburg
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*To educate a child
perfectly requires
profounder thought,
greater wisdom, than to
govern a state.*

William Ellery Channing

General

The ISHU *Language Policy* is an integral part of the educational process in the MYP International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme.

It is consistent with the ISHU *Mission*, the IB *Mission* and other policies, such as the *Assessment Policy*, the *Academic Honesty Policy*, and the *Special Educational Needs Policy*.

The purpose of this *Language Policy* is to promote creative linguistic identity by developing language, speech, communicative and cultural linguistic competencies.

The Policy is based on the **communicative activity approach** and the **student-centred approach** to teaching the majority of disciplines.

We assume that learning outcomes should contribute to development of the following students' personal qualities:

- desire for knowledge and self-development;
- focus on success;
- tolerant and democratic thinking;
- ability to be conversant in different communication and behavioural models, including cross-cultural communication.

The main thrust of the ISHU Language Policy is to create a **multilingual environment**. The School's languages of instruction are Russian (which is the native language of the majority of students) and English. School subjects are taught in both languages, with English being used to teach international students. In addition, students can learn French, German and Spanish.

As part of the School's language policy, **the multilingual competence** involves students' developing skills to deal with different cross-cultural communication situations and act appropriately in a changing environment. In addition, immersing in the multilingual environment enriches students' vocabulary, develops their moral and aesthetical potential, and significantly expands their understanding of the world. Learning several foreign languages contributes to building *a multilingual educational space* which acts as an open system for transmitting, accumulating and synthesizing positive experience and knowledge.

The multilingual approach to teaching languages is understood as cross-language integration aimed at creating multilingual individuals by developing their multilingual worldview and then transferring verbal intellectual skills to the interdisciplinary level to lay a foundation for building a coherent worldview. The ISHU is actively using **teaching techniques**, such as gaming, developing critical thinking, positive mistake making, creating problem situations, workshops, and presentation of ideas, as well as dialogic teaching strategies and reflection promoting techniques, thereby contributing to the dissemination of the key ideas of multilingual education.

ISHU teachers seek to:

- enable students to develop and use their linguistic skills in various contexts;
- enable students to learn diverse communication and behavioural models actively used in contemporary speech practices;
- encourage students to study language as a tool for understanding different cross-cultural points of view and to learn and use language in an efficient, accurate and confident fashion;
- encourage students to learn from texts of different forms, genres, styles and applications, taking note of the moral and cultural potential of a literary text;
- assist students in understanding subject-specific lexis and terms used in different disciplines.

By consistently implementing and maintaining the ISHU Language Policy, we will **contribute** to students' socialization, helping them:

- learn about mores and values of their national and international cultures and the socio-cultural level of mankind;
- develop openness to cross-cultural communication and be tolerant to other cultures;
- be tolerant to other small social groups;
- become able to clearly define their attitude towards events and phenomena, articulate their views, and substantiate their opinions;
- become able to actively interact with people from different cultures, while maintaining their own linguistic and cultural identity.

The authors of the **Language Policy** believe that discovering the world and developing as a personality should involve student's learning both native and foreign languages and developing their linguistic identity, as the style of thinking and the conceptual and linguistic worldview are interrelated and interdependent.

The ISHU's IB MYP Language Policy has been developed by the Language Policy Committee led by the MYP Coordinator and comprised of Language and Literature and Language Acquisition subject group leaders as well as representatives of each subject group, a representative of parents and an IT specialist.

The draft of the *Policy* was discussed with ISHU's teachers and staff, and this version was drawn up by the Language Policy Committee.

The Language Policy is to be revised annually to optimize the educational process and incorporate any developments in IB and ISHU teaching practices.

The ISHU Regulation on Language Policy shall apply to all participants of the educational process of the School, including its administration, teachers, students and their parents (legal representatives).

Practical Goals and Principles

The general provisions and goals of the IB MYP Programme shall be implemented by ISHU teachers in their day-to-day educational activities, thereby contributing to students' developing:

- ***Linguistic competence*** which involves mastering a certain amount of formal knowledge and related skills in different linguistic aspects, such as vocabulary, phonetics and grammar.
- ***Sociolinguistic competence*** defined as the ability to choose, use and transform linguistic forms according to the context.
- ***Strategic and discourse competencies*** which involve the development of certain skills, such as being able to arrange speech, make logical, consistent and convincing statements, set and achieve tasks.
- ***Socio-cultural competence*** defined as the ability to engage in dialogue between individuals and cultures, the willingness and ability to live and interact in the contemporary multicultural world.
- ***Social competence*** defined as the willingness and desire to interact with others, confidence in self, and the ability to be empathic and cope with the situation.
- ***Information competence*** defined as the unity of willingness and need to work with modern sources of information.
- ***General education competence*** seen as the willingness to develop and pursue lifelong education.

The student-centred approach, with the learner and development of their abilities, talents and aptitudes being the centre of the educational process, is the fundamental approach taken by the School. It is immediately associated with the learning principles pursued by the ISHU.

These include the following:

- Transparency of courses, programmes and assessment criteria, compliance with which is monitored by international examinations — all in line with international standards;
- interdisciplinary integration involving cooperation between teachers of all educational courses aiming to enhance retention of the learning material and facilitate its presentation;
- an individual approach to each student, subject to their age-related, psychological, social and physiological characteristics.

ISHU Languages and a decision on a particular language learning route for an IB MYP student

A. ISHU Languages

Approximately 90% of our students have Russian as their native language. International students come from different countries (Japan, Korea, China, Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, USA, Ireland, etc.). The composition of international students is variable, as their families often stay in Russia for 1 to 3 years. In the academic year of 2016/2017, ISHU has 170 students (aged from 5 to 17 years), of whom 19 are international students.

There are two groups of international students:

- **students aiming to switch to studying in Russian over time;**
- **students mainly studying in English.**

The latter are going to leave Russia to continue their education in English or will continue their studies in Russia in both Russian and English.

The ISHU teachers and administrators are Russian language speakers, and the ISHU official documentation is mainly written in Russian. Both Russian and English are used for IB MYP documentation and communication by IB MYP teachers.

All students of Grades 1 to 11 must learn English. The IB MYP in ISHU (Grades 5-9) is delivered in two languages, Russian and English.

While English and Russian are the ISHU's main languages, we encourage the use of other languages as appropriate.

B. A Decision on a Particular Language Learning Path for an IB MYP Student

In accordance with the ISHU Admission Policy, all candidates for the MYP International Baccalaureate Programme (Grades 5 to 9) should pass an interview, which includes tests in languages (being) learned. Tests in English and Russian (which are the languages of instruction in ISHU MYP) are compulsory.

Candidates with some knowledge of French, Spanish or German (the languages taught in the School's IB MYP Programme) will be asked to take a test to assess their language proficiency.

Based on the test and subject to the family's plans and preferences, an individual language learning path will be determined for each student on the IB MYP Programme. The student groups (Language and Literature and Language Acquisition subjects) are formed basing on students' language proficiency, and thus may be different from classes for other subjects (within the year level).

Training Programmes

A. Education

We recognize that all of our teachers are teachers of language. They are responsible for supporting students in learning IB MYP subjects and for the development of students' communication skills while teaching their subjects.

The School's IB MYP Programme is based on the following pedagogical principles:

- deliver Language and Literature, and Language Acquisition programmes in several languages;
- integrate language learning with learning other IB MYP subjects;
- integrate language learning with interdisciplinary learning;
- set multifaceted research problems related to global IB MYP contexts;
- understand the IB MYP topics in a goal-oriented and integrated manner;
- assess knowledge basing on the IB MYP objectives and criteria;
- provide feedback to support teaching and learning.

B. Language Learning in the IB MYP

Language learning occurs in every classroom and in every subject group in the MYP because we recognize that language stands at the center of the many interdependent cognitive, affective, and social factors that shape learning.

Because of this reality, teachers attend to the various language needs of their learners.

For those whose mother tongue is different from the language of instruction (English / Russian), students may receive classroom support through one or more of the following examples where appropriate from this *non-exclusive* list, depending on the context:

- use of visuals;
- peer support for speaking mother tongue;
- access to readings in advance;
- access to graphic organizers;
- adapted tasks so as to make tasks less dependent on large amounts of writing when writing is not the objective;
- checks for understanding in ways that require students to respond with more than a yes, or smile and nod because we know that many cultures view this as being polite and respectful despite the respondent's actual lack of understanding;

- additional time to complete a task;
- where the assessment is not specific to the language, students may use language aids like dictionaries or translators;
- descriptive body language alongside verbal explanations;
- tasks designed to empower peers in offering one another feedback;
- tasks designed to discourage the reliance on a digital translation software or program;
- activation of “students’ prior understanding, using the mother tongue and
- other languages when appropriate”;
- consideration of “time and strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge when planning a unit of work or lesson”;
- demonstrations of the learning objective or task;
- learning structures designed to enable students to work in small, collaborative groups.

Most of the differentiation strategies listed above will also benefit many other learners – even those whose mother tongue is the same as the language of instruction (English / Russian). This dynamic is especially true when learners of all backgrounds approach discipline-specific terminology. Likewise, communication is a criterion in each subject group of the MYP.

C. ISHU IB MYP Linguistic Class Programme

The Linguistic Class programme is developed for English language learners who plan to master the English language for academic purposes. The Linguistic Class programme includes teaching and learning certain subjects in English as language of instruction. By MYP Year 5 (**Grade 9**), Linguistic Class students should be able to complete their Personal Project in English as well as take their MYP electronic on-screen examinations, which are necessary for obtaining the MYP Certificate.

To be able to enter **Grade 5** of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (linguistic class), students must have international examination certificate in English (A2 level) according to Common European Framework of Reference scale (CEFR) - the Key for Schools exam (Cambridge English Language Assessment) or Flyers (Young Learners Exams). Upon completion of the International Baccalaureate Programme (**Grade 9**), students will have achieved B2 level according to CEFR scale and should pass the First for Schools level (Cambridge English Language Assessment) or higher.

The chart of expected levels of English Language proficiency for the Linguistic Class programme and corresponding Cambridge English Language Assessment exams is provided in the Annex A.

Language and Literature. Native

Language

Language and Literature is a compulsory subject for all students on the IB MYP Programme. This covers learning Russian (the first language for the majority of students) and / or English (the other language of instruction in the Programme).

We believe that the development of the students' native language skills can facilitate their learning of English and/or Russian, raise their self-esteem, improve and maintain attainment in all subject areas, and enhance cross-cultural understanding and international approach.

B. English

The subject English Language and Literature is designed for the following categories of students:

- students with English as a mother tongue;
- bilingual students who use English as one of the languages for everyday communication;
- non-native English students with B2 and higher level of English, choosing the subject English Language and Literature with the possibility to transfer to the Programme provided the following conditions are met simultaneously:
 - a. the student has at least B2 proficiency of English (CEFR) which is proved by the Certificate of the corresponding Cambridge English Language Assessment exam
 - b. the student is studying at least one more Foreign Language within subject group "Language Acquisition"
- students who have not got sufficient level of English or Russian (languages of instruction in the programme Language and Literature in ISHU) if ISHU cannot deliver Language and Literature courses for this category of students within the IB MYP programme.

Training and progress assessment are carried out according to the IB MYP Language and Literature Guide, thus enabling students to get ready for the IB MYP e-exam in MYP Year 5 (Grade 9).

C. Russian

The Russian Language and Literature subject is designed for the following categories of students:

- students with Russian as a mother tongue;
- bilingual students who use Russian as one of the languages for everyday communication;
- international, non-native Russian students with B2 and higher level of Russian.

Russian-speaking students learn Russian Language and Literature throughout their study at the ISHU, as part of Language and Literature subject group of the IB MYP Programme.

As part of the Russian Language Programme, students have to pass the Basic State Examination (BSE) on the subject as a prerequisite for obtaining a general education certificate in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standards of the Russian Federation.

As a licensed and accredited educational institution, the ISHU provides support in preparation for the examination to students with any level of proficiency in Russian as the first language.

The number of hours and the learning content for Russian Language and Literature are determined by Head of the Russian Language Acquisition department and IB MYP Coordinator depending on whether Russian is the first language for a student or, if not, on their level of Russian proficiency.

D. Other native languages

The term “native language” may refer both to the language that a student first learned when he/she was born or to a language he/she speaks at the level of a native speaker. For the purposes of the IB MYP Programme, the term “native language” includes both definitions and refers to the language used by the student at home and/or outside the school.

If the student’s native language is not one of the ISHU’s languages of instruction, the school acts as follows:

- the MYP Coordinator and the Language Acquisition subject group leader contact the student’s family to collect information about the native language learning history
- the school administration employs a student’s native language teacher (e.g., a Lithuanian language teacher, a Polish language teacher, a Czech language teacher, etc. have been found by the ISHU at different periods of time) and the MYP Coordinator and the language teacher create the MYP unit planners for the native Language and Literature for this student
- if, for any reason, it is impossible to hire a student’s native language teacher, the ISHU discusses it with the student’s family and the native language is supported within the family (e.g., by regular classes with a parent).

This will help students to develop native language skills, enhance their cognitive skills, and maintain the understanding of their native culture.

Learning Programme of Main Languages (Russian and English) as

Foreign Languages

A. English as a Second Language (Language Acquisition subject group)

Training groups are set up according to students' age and English proficiency level; in other words, there are students of the same age and phase within one Language Acquisition group (these groups do not have to be the same as classes within the year level).

A programme is developed for each group according to the students' individual characteristics, as well as MYP objectives for Language Acquisition subject group.

Transition to the next phase of the Language Acquisition subject group is based on at least one of the following:

- students' performance in summative assessments within MYP units of the current phase, school mock exams, etc.
- external monitoring results (annual Olympiads and state diagnostic tests)
- official Cambridge English Language Assessment results (May / June session)

The Language Acquisition subject group makes a collaborative decision on the next academic year's plan for a group / student (transition to the next phase / staying in the same phase); the decision is made in May / June.

Students can take an international examination in English (Cambridge English Language Assessment), as the ISHU is certified as a Cambridge English Language Assessment preparation centre.

Students of Grade 9 who choose English as one of the optional subjects for BSE (Basic State Examination) are provided with support in preparation for the examination.

B. Russian as a Second Language (Russian Language Acquisition group)

Russian as a Second Language is studied by international students (with the exception of bilingual students who use Russian for everyday communication) as part of the IB MYP Programme.

This course aims to develop students' communicative competence based on linguistic and speech competences, i.e. the ability to solve vital extra-linguistic problems using a foreign language.

A decision on whether students need to study Russian Language Acquisition and on the number of hours allocated to the course per week is made depending on their age and proficiency (phase) in Russian.

According to the Admission Policy, international students are placed in a group according to their age and phase in the Russian language. The test used in the admission process is based on the Russian Federation requirements to proficiency in Russian as Foreign Language.

Proficiency levels in Russian as Foreign Language

<i>RF recognized proficiency level in RFL</i>	<i>CEFR level</i>	<i>MYP phase taught in the school</i>
Elementary (additional)	A1	Phase 1
Basic	A2	Phase 2
First	B1	Phase 3
Second	B2	
Third	C1	

The school provides MYP courses of Russian Language Acquisition across three phases (see the table). At the end of the MYP course of a phase, students do school tests to justify they are ready for transition to the next phase; they are also recommended to do the RF test of Russian as Foreign language to justify their proficiency in Russian officially.

Twice a year, students of Russian Language Acquisition complete a test based on which the Russian Language and Literature Department and IB MYP Coordinator decide whether the students can be moved to groups of Russian Language and Literature and subsequently take an exam in BSE format in MYP Year 5 (Grade 9).

Additional Foreign Languages Learning

All ISHU students must learn a third language throughout the IB MYP Programme.

All ISHU students must learn a third language throughout the IB MYP Programme.

The School offers programmes in French, Spanish and German.

Students whose native language is other than English or Russian can learn their native language as a third language in the IB MYP Programme.

Students are allocated to groups of different proficiency levels (MYP Language Acquisition phases) based on an entry test according to the ISHU Admission Policy.

Training groups are set up according to students' age and their language proficiency level; in other words, there are students of the same age and phase within one Language Acquisition group (these groups do not have to be the same as classes within the year level).

A programme is developed for each group according to the students' individual characteristics, as well as MYP objectives for Language Acquisition subject group.

For the mainstream students, the programme of one phase in Language Acquisition is developed for two MYP years (see the table).

<i>Grade / MYP Year</i>	<i>CEFR level</i>	<i>MYP phase taught in the school</i>
5 / 1	A 1.1	Phase 1
6 / 2	A1.2	Phase 1
7 / 3	A2.1	Phase 2
8 / 4	A2.2	Phase 2
9 / 5	B1.1	Phase 3

Students are transferred to the next phase after they have justified their level of proficiency in school exams. Students are also recommended to take international exams: DELE in Spanish, DELF in French and Goethe-Institut in German.

The Language Acquisition subject group makes a collaborative decision on the next academic year's plan for a group / student (transition to the next phase / staying in the same phase); the decision is made in May / June.

Information Support in Learning Languages

Information competence is a necessary component for learning languages. ISHU students develop their information competence when studying all Subject groups by searching, processing and critically evaluating information sources necessary for research.

The Information Resource Centre based in the ISHU Library provides support to teachers and students in their preparation for classes and self-directed work on projects. The ISHU librarians regularly update students on new educational, fiction and non-fiction books and current cultural events as well as teach them the foundation of research and proper source citing according to the ISHU Academic Honesty Policy.

Annex A.

Assessment of English proficiency for IB MYP admission purposes and allocation of students to English learning programmes

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Language proficiency level</i>
5	A2+ / B1 (preparation for PET)
6	B1 / B1+(PET / pre-FCE)
7	B1+ / B2 (preparation for FCE)
8	B2 (FCE)
9	B2+ or English language and literature (based on teacher's recommendation and the student's targets)

Annex B.

Foreign language proficiency levels according to Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)

A – Basic User

A 1.1

Students can understand and use words and expressions related to everyday life (simple questions and answers, instructions and predictable directions) at a very slow rate if accompanied by drawings, writings or gestures.

Students can complete a personal information form (surname, first name, nationality, age, date and place of birth, etc.). Students can write short, simple messages.

A-1 (Survival)

Students can understand and use familiar phrases and expressions necessary for particular speaking tasks. Students can introduce him/herself and others, ask/answer questions about where they live, people they know, what they study, etc. Students can participate in a simple conversation provided the other person speaks slowly and clearly and provides help.

A-2 (Pre-threshold)

Students can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to the main spheres of life (such as personal and family information, work, shopping, employment, etc.). Students can perform tasks involving a simple exchange of information on familiar or routine matters (training, everyday needs and immediate environment).

B – Independent User

B-1 (Threshold)

Students can understand familiar ideas in clear statements on different topics related to work, studies, free time, etc. when spoken by native speakers at an average rate. Students can communicate in most situations that arise while travelling in a country where the language is spoken. Students can produce a connected message on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Students can describe different events, dreams, experiences and briefly give reasons and explanations for his/her opinions and future plans.

B-2 (Upper intermediate threshold)

Students can understand the content of texts on different topics, including discussions in his/her field of specialization. Students can speak quite fluently

and spontaneously at an average speaking rate of native speakers, enabling communication with native speakers without difficulty for either party. Students can produce clear, detailed messages on different topics and give his/her viewpoint on a problem, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of various opinions.

C – Fluent User

C-1 (Proficiency)

Students can understand the content of long texts on different topics and recognise their implicit meaning. Students can speak spontaneously at the speaking rate of native speakers without difficulty in selecting linguistic means. Students can use language flexibly and effectively for communication during scientific and professional activities. Students can produce clear, detailed and well-structured messages on any topic, demonstrating controlled use of text organization patterns and connectors.

C-2 (Mastery)

Students can understand oral or written messages of any content. Students can identify and summarize facts and arguments from different spoken and written sources in a coherent spoken or written text. Students can speak spontaneously, fluently and very precisely on any complex topics, highlighting shades of meaning in different communicative situations.

References and Resources

- *MYP: From principles into practice* (2014)
- *Language and learning in the IB programmes* (2012)
- *Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy* (2012)
- *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes* (2008)
- Standard B1: Language Policy
https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/server2/rest/app/tsm.xql?doc=m_0_mypxx_tsm_1609_1_e&part=3&chapter=3



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