

Language Philosophy

Language is fundamental to learning, as it is our major means of thinking and communicating. As such, all teachers at Bladins are language teachers. Our goal is not only to help students to learn languages, but for them to learn about language and through languages. Through language our students acquire the ability to think and learn and thus language learning at Bladins not only refers to the learning of a specific language but it also includes any and all activities related to learning.

For Bladins, multilingualism and the development of critical literacy are considered important factors in fostering international-mindedness through the promotion of cultural identity, intercultural awareness and global citizenship.

Language Profile of Bladins

Bladins International School of Malmö (BISM) is a school whose language of instruction is predominately English. Many of the students at Bladins are exposed to a number of languages. Currently, forty percent of our student body speak three languages, with twenty-seven percent speaking more than three. Bladins has recently undertaken a study to identify the language backgrounds of all students in the MYP and DP; language profiles are available and accessible to teachers to support student learning and language development.

Although, the language of instruction is predominantly in English; Swedish, as a host language, is spoken widely by both teachers and students. Students in all three programmes are required to take English. The incorporation of Swedish is a requirement for all students at Bladins in PYP and MYP, with it being provided as an option at DP. Bladins believes that the inclusion of Swedish provides students with a cultural understanding of their host country and helps to foster a community of international understanding and respect. The languages explicitly taught within the school include English, Swedish, Spanish and French.

Admission Policy

Upon admission to the school, students are required to complete a language profile to identify their language backgrounds. After acceptance to the school all new students to both the MYP and DP are required to take an English and Swedish language proficiency test, based on the WIDA test and European Common Framework.

Mother Tongue or Most Academic Language

A person's mother tongue or most academic language is often important to the person's identity and self-esteem. Bladins believes that maintaining the development of the mother tongue or most academic language is important to all individuals as it accelerates the acquisition of other languages, supports achievement in all subject areas, enhances intercultural understanding and develops international mindedness. Students in both the MYP and DP have the opportunity to study their mother tongue or most academic language.

Within the MYP, a scope and sequence document has been developed (please see scope and sequence documents) to provide students with guidelines for self study. Time is

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allocated to students for their self-study during French or Spanish lessons. No grade is provided to students taking this option however students are expected to develop a portfolio of work which is reviewed 5 times with the subject leader of Language and Literature, tutor and parents.

Within the DP students are offered the school supported self-taught literature programme. Students are supported throughout the programme and receive 45 minutes of instruction per week for this course. During that time, students are given instruction, in English, on skills related to the course which are then practiced within the mother tongue or most academic language. All assessment for the DP mother tongue programme is external and students will only receive a grade upon completion of the Programme.

Students and parents wishing to take either MYP or DP Mother Tongue options are required to sign a contract stating that they understand and agree to the requirements of each programme. Some requirements include having a tutor, providing their own materials and following the respective course at a set/required pace.

Language in the PYP

Language in the MYP

Language and Literature - Swedish and English

All students are required to study Language and Literature. Both Swedish and English are offered as Language and Literature options. Students that are proficient in both English and Swedish may study Language and Literature in both languages.

Language Acquisition - Spanish and French Phases

For Spanish and French the phases are divided by grade level. In MYP 1 students are placed into phase 1 of the programme with the hope that they will progress to phase 2 by the end of MYP 2.

Ideally, students in MYP 3 and 4 should be moving towards phases 3 and 4 with minimal students remaining in phase 1 and 2. Since the school has a high level of movement of students between MYP 4 and 5, students in MYP 5 are placed according to the phases they belong in.

Language Acquisition - English Phases

Students are placed at the beginning of the school year according to the WIDA results and placement tests using the phases as a guideline.

Students placed in phase 1 and 2 are total beginners in the language and the aim to develop the basic communication skills and confidence in the language. Therefore students in phase 1 and 2 have a special schedule which comprises of more English lessons. Students in

English phases 1 and 2 are assessed formally in English Language Acquisition only. For all other subjects, written or oral feedback is provided.

The focus for students in phase 3 and 4 is to develop their application of academic language. Students in this phase are assessed formally against subject specific published criteria; with modifications to the task to scaffold and support student learning.

Students in phase 5 and 6 are moved into Language and Literature classes. Support in the form of check-in meetings with the Language Acquisition and Language and Literature teacher are provided for students who are transitioning between the two subject areas. Language and Literature teachers should also modify the conditions or requirements of any assessment tasks to support phase 5-6 students.

Language Acquisition - Swedish Phases

Swedish Language Acquisition classes are divided into separate phase 1/2 classes and phase 3/4 classes and are also organised by grade level. All students are given 180 minutes of Swedish per week.

As with English Language Acquisition, students in phase 5 and 6 are moved into a Language and Literature class with support.

Placement of students

The Language Acquisition subject group offers a placement test for all new students in each language. This placement test focuses on speaking and listening, reading comprehension and writing.

These placement tests are given at the beginning of each year. Language Acquisition Swedish, Spanish and French have developed a placement test based on the skills students must acquire in each phase as well as the content base on the scope and sequences of this subjects. This placement test is based on the European Common Framework and phases from the Language Acquisition Guide. Language Acquisition English uses the WIDA test for a placement test alongside the description of the phases in the guide.

Discussions regarding student movement between Language Acquisition and Language and Literature takes place twice a year through group department meetings. During these meetings teachers will discuss student work and use this evidence gathered, alongside the description of the phases in the Language Acquisition Guide, to make a judgement about movement between the two subject areas.

Pathways and Progression

Once students are grouped according to their level of fluency, teachers put into practice the scope and sequence documents that have been developed. The scope and sequence documents, created by both Language Acquisition and Language and Literature subject

groups provide students with access to MYP requirements, Approaches to learning (ATL) skill development and support their movement into the Diploma Programme.

It is expected that students will progress through the phases at a suitable pace. If teachers are concerned about the level of progress they need to refer students to the Learning Support Department or Pastoral Care Department.

Language in the DP

Group 1: English Language and Literature and Swedish Literature

Bladins offers two taught group 1 subjects; English Language and Literature and Swedish Literature. As the Diploma Programme grows the possibility of offering English Literature may be implemented by the school.

Within both subjects, the prescribed course requirements, including the PLA and PLT are followed as are the respective guides. Works are studied in their literary and cultural contexts, through close study of individual texts and passages, and by considering a range of critical approaches.

Students have the option of taking both English Language and Literature and Swedish Literature in the DP.

Group 1: School Support Self-Taught Literature

Students in the DP also have the option of taking School Supported Self Taught Literature. The subject leader of Language and Literature oversees the text choices of students to ensure that they follow the requirements of the course, the PLA and PLT. Students are provided with a 45 minute lesson per week in which they receive guidance and support in English.

Students taking this option must ensure that they take an English course, as per the school's requirements. This can be in the form of English Language and Literature or English Language Acquisition.

As mentioned previously, students and their parents, are required to sign a contract regarding accepting requirements of the course, which include hiring a tutor, providing their own materials (novels and texts) and following a set/required pace.

Group 2: Language Acquisition

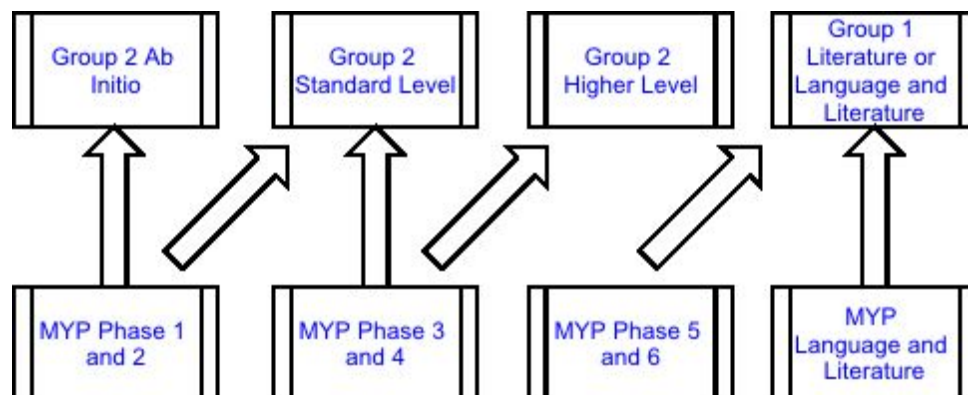
Bladins offers three Language Acquisition courses in the Diploma Programme; English, Swedish and Spanish. English and Swedish are offered at both Higher and Standard Level with Spanish being offered at Ab Initio level. As the programme continues to grow Bladins hopes to offer more options for Language Acquisition, including French as an option as this is not currently offered in the DP.

Placement in Group 1 or Group 2 subjects

Group 1 and 2 teachers in the Diploma Programme work alongside MYP teachers to identify the best suited course for students. DP teachers have also worked with MYP teachers to develop placement tests to ensure that students are correctly entered into the right course for their language ability.

The following diagram shows how Bladins transitions students from MYP to DP. Students identified as phase 1 should continue into an Ab Initio course, with students in phase 2 moving into a standard Level course with support. Students in phase 3 or 4 have the option of studying the respective language at standard or higher level.

Students identified as in either phase 5, 6 or already placed in an a MYP Language and Literature course will be placed into a Group 1 subject; either Literature or Language and Literature.



The Role of the Library in Language Learning

The library plays an integral role in supporting the language development and learning of all students within the school.

The increase and availability of resources has been increased for Swedish, English and mother tongue texts; which provide students with opportunities to read in a variety of languages in both fiction and nonfiction. The library also provides access to academic databases to support access to academic writing in the following languages Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

The librarians have been a key participant in implementing a reading programme, with an overarching theme of international mindedness, this is a school wide programme with the support of a range of PYP, MYP and DP teachers.

The librarians have worked alongside the PYP, MYP, and DP classroom teachers to develop resources to support units of inquiry, global contexts/transdisciplinary themes, genres and text types. Access to teaching materials and unit planners has helped in allowing the

librarians to keep track of reading levels and student interest. The MYP and DP librarian has also been surveying students to gather data about reading interests and reading levels, in order to purchase suitable materials to facilitate language acquisition. This includes purchasing and taking into account the language and special educational needs to support students in becoming literate in multiple ways.

Inclusion and Educational Needs

Bladins recognises that the language development of students is impacted by individual educational needs. When students arrive at Bladins with minimal language proficiency in English, students are assessed and supported through the English Language Acquisition programme. If, as the student progresses, learning challenges are identified or suspected then these should be recorded through the 'Cause for Concern' form and submitted to the Learning Support department.

Individual educational needs such as Dyslexia and Dysgraphia influence the development of all languages for a student; for example writing and reading are challenging, even within the student's mother tongue. Therefore, all teachers should use the prescribed strategies found within the student's IEP to support the language development of these students.

Differentiation strategies such as simplification of language, providing vocabulary lists, allowing translating dictionaries into assessments, writing templates and frames can support both students with special educational needs as well as language development.

Supporting Mother Tongue Outside of Class Time

After school Activities

The school provides opportunities for students to study their mother-tongue in after-school activities. These activities are organised per term (twice a year), are dependant on student numbers and are an additional cost to parents.