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# Program Considerations for Programming
## in the International Languages Classroom

Today's students are living in a global community where communication on the international stage is of crucial importance and knowledge of multiple languages is an invaluable asset. Language is a fundamental element of culture and identity. Through studying a language associated with another culture or cultures, students deepen their appreciation and respect of diverse perspectives, and learn to approach and connect with others with open-mindedness, patience, and flexibility (p. 7). Whether for personal fulfillment or career advancement, the study of international languages equips the student with essential 21st century knowledge and skills.

**VISION:** Students of international languages will communicate and interact in the international language with growing confidence in real-life contexts as they develop
> the knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong language learning;
> an awareness of the multicultural and plurilingual nature of the modern world;
>  the perspectives they need to participate fully as citizens of Canada and of the world. (p. 6)

**GOALS:** "All students can be successful language learners" (p.6). Students will strive to
> appreciate and acknowledge the interconnectedness and interdependence of the global community;
> understand the value of language diversity and of learning another language for personal, professional and social reasons;
> develop the skills to engage in lifelong language learning, and cultural exploration for personal growth and for active participation in society. (p. 6)

Taking courses in international languages increases career mobility, since successful participation in the global workforce depends in part on knowledge of world languages and cultures. These courses enable students to develop many skills, abilities, and attitudes that are critical in the workplace – for example, communication and problem-solving skills, adaptability, and the ability to work with others. Students develop their ability to reason, to be flexible in their thinking, and to think critically as well as creatively. They gain experience in using various forms of technology. The knowledge and skills developed in the study of languages can be applied in many other endeavours and in a wide variety of careers. (pp. 7-8)

Such linguistic abilities benefit the individual, but Canadian society also stands to gain from developing a multilingual and culturally sensitive workforce. Students of international languages learn about their own identity, to think critically, to analyse and use information from around the world, to communicate and interact effectively in the language of study and to respect the identities of others and the complex interrelationship among peoples – essential in the Ontario and Canada of today. (p. 7)

**ENDURING IDEAS:** Student learning in the International Languages program can be summarized in five "enduring ideas" which encompass knowledge, competencies, and habits of mind that are developed in the process of language acquisition and that equip students with tools that will enable them to participate effectively in an ever-changing global society. In addition, the curriculum strives to foster an interest in language learning that continues not only throughout a student's time in school but also later in life. (p. 8)

> Critical and Creative Thinking Skills and Metacognition
> Making Real-Life Connections
> Authentic Communication
> Development of Language Learning Strategies
> Development of Intercultural Understanding

## SUPPORTING STUDENTS' WELL-BEING

Promoting students' healthy cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development is critical to their success in school. **Mental health** touches all components of their development.

Use instructional approaches and strategies which contribute to a supportive classroom climate (one that is healthy, caring, safe, inclusive, and accepting), and establish a strong foundation for learning in order to nurture students' strengths and assets. Connect students needing additional support to the appropriate services. Consult the ministry document *Supporting Minds: An Educator's Guide to Promoting Students' Mental Health and Well-being (2013)* for more information. (p. 5)

**The international languages classroom can promote mental health and well-being by fostering improved self-esteem, resiliency and risk-taking within the context of a safe and supportive environment.**

> Modeled and guided instructional approaches provide students with support and scaffolding of new knowledge and concepts across the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
> The normal, daily individual, paired and group presentations and interactions provide students with multiple opportunities to develop increased self-confidence in spontaneous and scripted, formal and informal situations.
> In their quest to understand, students of international languages improve their receptive skills by becoming

more aware of and sensitive to non-verbal cues and cultural nuance.

> Students' efforts to develop and practise their receptive, interactive and production skills in the international language lead them to improve their communicative skills in their first language. They take control of their learning through observation, listening, and rehearsing with others.
> The aim of functional fluency though authentic communication teaches students **resiliency**. Making mistakes is a natural part of the language learning process. Students accept that they can and will make mistakes, and that they can and should see these errors as opportunities to learn rather than as roadblocks. Risk-taking becomes easier and less of an obstacle.

**Language learners are risk-takers – they thrive in an environment where risk-taking is welcomed and errors are viewed as a natural process in language development. (p.8)**

> **INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES**
> **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS**
> **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**
> **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**
> **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**
> **EQUITY & INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**
> **FINANCIAL LITERACY**
> **LITERACY, INQUIRY & NUMERACY**
> **INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

> **ROLE OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY**
> **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**
> **THE ONTARIO SKILLS PASSPORT: ESSENTIAL SKILLS & WORK HABITS**
> **EDUCATION AND CAREER/LIFE PLANNING**
> **COOPERATIVE EDUCATION & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**
> **PATHWAYS & PROGRAMS LEADING TO A SPECIALIST HIGH SKILLS MAJOR**
> **HEALTH & SAFETY**
> **ETHICS**

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PROGRAM PLANNING:

**Consult the Curriculum's Overall and Specific Expectations for each strand. Determine what students will learn, how they will demonstrate their learning and how you will assess and evaluate their learning.** Use a "Backwards Design" model to plan both units of study and individual lessons.

**Identify the relevant Considerations for Program Planning** (pp. 36 - 60). Get to know your students' strengths, areas of need, interests and preferred learning styles. Use this knowledge in combination with the targeted Expectations in order to inform your choice of relevant Considerations to include in your lesson design (eg. **Group students** with similar learning styles / with complementary strengths for projects and shared work. **Offer choice:** an oral activity – skit, presentation, carrousel lesson; an audio activity – listening comprehension or audio creation using technology; a visual activity – concept map, slideshow, gallery walk creation; or a written activity – narrative, response critique or journal. **Develop a pattern of cuing routines:** visual cues, audio prompts and gestures to signal key concepts. Consistent prompts enable students to anticipate key learning moments and actively listen to the lesson.

Clearly identify learning goals. Use student-friendly language to share them with students (eg. "We are learning how to speak with a variety of people, using appropriate formal and informal greetings, levels of politeness and terms of address".) Ensure that students clearly understand what they will be learning, their purpose for learning it and how they will be assessed. Ask students to explain what the goal is and what steps they will take to achieve it in order to ensure their understanding. Have students explain what steps they think will be easiest and hardest for them, and why. Build in opportunities for their metacognitive reflection and self-analysis of knowledge and skills, through questionnaires, self-administered surveys, guiding questions and journal writing. Chunk assignment steps; provide checklists and check-ins to encourage students to stay on track.

**Co-construct Success Criteria** with students in order for them to better identify and understand the assessment "look fors"... eg. For the Learning Goal: "We are learning how to speak with a variety of people, using appropriate formal and informal greetings and terms of address", some success criteria might be:
> I can greet one or more friends or family members casually, using the informal/casual greetings, intonation and gestures – high five, wave, embrace, air kiss, etc.
> I can ask and answer questions; and hold a simple, informal conversation with them using a casual/informal sentence structure and familiar subject/verb forms.

> I can greet one or more adults or strangers politely and formally, using formal salutations, intonation and gestures appropriate to the situation.
> I can ask and answer questions and hold a simple, formal conversation with them, showing respect by using formal subject/verb forms, formally structured sentences and courteous and appropriate gestures – handshake, bow, etc..
> I can write an informal note, email, text, greeting card, etc. using appropriate greetings (vocabulary) and grammatical structures (subject pronouns /verb forms and tenses).

Refer to the explanation of the four **Achievement Chart** categories: *Knowledge and Understanding; Thinking; Communication; and Application* (pp. 30 – 35) (eg. Vocabulary for formal and informal greetings, pronouns, corresponding verb forms and tenses; understanding of when and how to use them appropriately - including a consideration of the intercultural understanding of appropriate non-verbal communication: handshakes, bowing, eye contact, nodding, etc.), and to the 4 **International Languages Strands:** *Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing* (pp. 25-26), to determine the knowledge and skills which you will consider in your assessment criteria. (Prompt students: How do you know that the two speakers know each other well? Why did the character use this particular greeting? Is the individual speaking to one or more than one person? How do you know?)

**Plan assessment and evaluation to provide multiple and varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning.** Balance evaluation activities across the 4 skill areas (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) to address all students' areas of strength and preferred learning styles eg. To evaluate students' comprehension and ability to demonstrate the use of the target language regarding completed actions of the past, the teacher could do the following:

> Assess student **Listening** comprehension by having students listen to a dialogue where characters discuss an event they attended and answer short questions, or summarize what they have heard in their own words.
> Assess **Speaking** by having students recount their activities during a past holiday or weekend.
> Assess **Reading** with higher level thinking questions. Ask students to comment on what has happened and make a prediction based on this content.
> Assess **Writing** through fictitious social media type posts, instructions for a favourite game, news stories etc.
> Wherever possible, assessing and evaluating using real life, relevant context will aid in language acquisition, and interest.

As part of your instructional strategies, use a 3 part lesson design *(Minds On, Action and Consolidation)*. Activate prior knowledge, scaffold instruction, provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills in order to consolidate and reflect on their learning (p. 37).

**Encourage students; to develop Inquiry Skills** through problem-solving of **authentic situations** in the target language: to find information they need to communicate in the target language; to ask questions in and about the target language; to solve situational problems and research relevant information, using a wide range of print and electronic resources (eg. Have students read maps; ask for and follow instructions; order in a restaurant and have to return a dish or explain why their order is wrong; shop for an item for a gift, or return an item that is defective/wrong size; write a letter/email of complaint about a new school rule, policy at their part time job, or city council decision). Teach students to recognize and evaluate bias, to reflect on what they have learned, and to reach an informed conclusion.

**Include the teaching of cognitive, metacognitive, and social /affective Language Learning strategies** in your lesson plans (p.10). Support students' comprehension, retention and application of the international language, and enhance students' learning through cooperative and purposeful interactions in the target language (eg. Introduce, develop and reinforce active classroom vocabulary for routine activities and interactions: greetings and interactions, personal requests – washroom, locker, etc., directions and instructions, and social small talk).

**Develop Oral language skills** through informal talk, purposeful discussion and formal presentations to an audience. (Wherever possible, use open-ended questioning rather than questions generating "yes/no" answers, to naturally propel students into a more extended interaction). Scaffold **Reading and Writing** skills acquisition on a foundation of oral communication (Listening and Speaking skills). Incorporate analytical, critical and metacognitive thinking skills by providing quests, choices and opportunities for problem-solving, asking for opinions, alternatives and creative adaptations that challenge students to transform a given situation into a new one.

**Differentiate Instruction.** Meet the needs of all students, including **students with Special Education needs**. Use *Universal lesson* design. Create a learning environment that is open and accessible to all students, regardless of age, skills, or situation. Instruction based on principles of universal design is flexible and supportive, can be adjusted to meet different student needs, and enables all students to access the curriculum as fully as possible (p. 40). Recognize that *fairness is not sameness*. Provide instructional, environmental and / or assessment accommodations. Modify expectations as required. Create a supportive learning environment by varying lesson styles and methods of evaluation. Give students choice, whenever possible, to address a variety of learning styles. Incorporate appropriate information and communication technologies and assistive technologies to enhance instructional practices and accommodate student needs.

**Equity and Inclusivity.** Establish an inclusive classroom that respects and values diversity. Teach critical thinking and critical literacy to identify, analyze and evaluate discriminatory biases. Promote fairness and self-advocacy. Incorporate appropriate gender, transgender and non-binary vocabulary and references when it is appropriate (eg. When talking / teaching about families, include vocabulary and examples of non-traditional families that reflect the reality of students in your class).

**Literacy and Numeracy.** Teach students to use language and images to think critically, problem solve and express ideas effectively. Teach metacognitive strategies by modeling self-reflection aloud (eg. I used my knowledge of cognates and families of words to identify unknown vocabulary in this paragraph; I watched the speaker's body language and listened to their tone of voice to determine whether they were being sarcastic or sincere). Promote self-efficacy and self-advocacy. Model digital citizenship in order to promote safe and responsible use of the Internet (eg. Introduce students to safe internet sites for research, editing and real life inter-cultural interaction opportunities (Skype, pen pals, bloggers, video-conferencing, etc.).

**Intercultural Understanding.** Encourage *students to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and attributes needed to become active and successful global citizens (pg. 54).* Access technologies to provide authentic, purposeful and relevant resources and activities. Integrate thematic global and intercultural perspectives (ie. environmental stewardship, social justice) to encourage critical thinking.

**Skills development and Career Pathways planning for lifelong learning.** Provide experiential learning opportunities for students to see the relevance of international languages and make connections to the world of work and their postsecondary destinations (ie. through Cooperative education, Specialist High Skills Major programs, exchanges, volunteering). Incorporate the Essential Skills identified in the Ontario Skills Passport into authentic, purposeful tasks. Emphasize the value of international languages as an enjoyable and profitable asset to an individual's Curriculum Vitae, regardless of the student's post-secondary pathways. (p. 36-60)