Escuela Lomas Altas

Language Policy

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Language Policy

1. **The role of language in Escuela Lomas Altas .-**

Since its foundation Escuela Lomas Altas has been the host of both local and foreign families. The school's philosophy has always been one of fostering general well-being for all the members of its community. The same applies in the way we deal with language.

Our view of the theoretical background of language instruction in our school has evolved. It began as a more traditional approach; it then evolved to become what Cummins[1] referred to as *additive bilingualism, one that* aims to extend students' linguistic repertoires as opposed to *subtractive bilingualism* in which the mother tongue is repressed, ultimately leading to a *balanced multilingualism* in which students have two fully developed languages.

We consider ourselves a bilingual, bicultural school which had as its model a dual language approach[2] that has now become a multilingual approach through English and Spanish within an international programme, multilingualism seen as an emergent paradigm for language and learning through which fluency and identity are acquired.

Our understanding of language learning evolved in favour of our population. A reconfiguration of how we think about languages that takes into account the complex linguistic realities and needs in diverse sociocultural contexts of today's world had to be considered. Muiris O'Laoire and Larissa Aronin[3] have introduced the idea of multilinguality to mean: "an individual store of languages at any level of proficiency, including partial competence and incomplete fluency, as well as metalinguistic awareness, learning strategies and opinions, preferences and passive or active knowledge on languages, language use and language learning/acquisition". They go on to say that "multilinguality is expressed through actions, perceptions, attitudes and abilities" and that it is "not only linguistic facility" but that it "displays itself through physical, cognitive, cultural and social qualities".

This more complete perspective of language has an impact on how multilingualism opens up new ways to consider the complexity of readdressing our language profile, one that includes global awareness and international-mindedness, in this way, viewing language as the interconnecting thread amongst people and cultures.

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[1] IB, 2011, <u>Language and learning in IB programmes</u>, Cardiff:IB.
[2] See Appendix # 1, 2 & 3.
[3] Idem.

English is seen as the main connecting thread of communication, as today's *lingua franca*, the one through which we all communicate. This is why very often English should be part of the developing multilingual profile of every IB student[4].

In the "knowledge" area of the PYP, language is the most significant connecting element across the school's curriculum, both within and outside its transdisciplinary programme of inquiry[5].

Our intention then is to foster the basis of multilingualism as defined by the IB form the very early years.

> *Students learning in a language other than their mother tongue should no longer be framed as a "problem"; a multilingual view recognizes diversity in language profiles as the norm. Whole-school practices that honour this, however, need to be put in place if all students, including those who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue, are to have equal access to the IB programmes[6].*

We do not ban mother tongue in Escuela Lomas Altas and all our students have access to the PYP. We reinforce mother tongue (Spanish for the majority) within the school atmosphere. We believe that the stronger they become in both languages of instruction the more successful they could be in the future. Cummins[7] emphasizes that multilingual education positively strengthens personal identity and self-esteem. It should also be seen as a form of preserving cultural identity in a changing world with increasing mobility. According to the UNESCO[8], multilingual education also improves academic achievement.

2. Outline of the school's language policy.

Escuela Lomas Altas has always been devoted to the learning of the English language. Therefore, since its origin, a strong immersion programme to address this need was developed and is still one of the most outstanding traits of this school.

In order to accomplish this, the school relies on many daily practices and on a methodology that has proven to work throughout the years. These practices include: early immersion, language support and mother tongue support.

As every teacher is a language teacher, all teachers are devoted to the construction of meaning through language in our students. This applies to all

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[4] Idem.
[5] Idem.
[6] Idem. p. 13.
[7] Idem.
[8] Idem.

teachers, including: head teachers, teachers' aides, specialist teachers and administration.

Escuela Lomas Altas has a one-way full immersion programme in English in the preschool and a dual language[9] approach in the Primary in English and Spanish.

A next major step for researchers to take is to produce the next generation of bilingual education researchers who will conduct program evaluation research, to refine what particular forms of dual language programs are most effective. Evolution of the model may lead to even higher achievement[10].

3. The role of teachers in language instruction and second-language teaching.

There are two important aspects to a Vygotskian approach to social interactions (Adamson and Chance 1998)[11].

- First, it is fundamentally cultural. Caregivers (including teachers) will automatically interpret infants' expressions and nascent actions within the meaning system of their own culture.

- Second, it denotes a pattern of developmental change in which a phase of adult support precedes a phase of independent infant accomplishment. After many experiences of supported expression, the child gradually masters an action that is qualified with cultural meaning.

Cummins (2007)[12] proposes that the four dimensions of teaching that are particularly important in ensuring learner participation and promoting engagement are:

- to activate prior understanding and build background knowledge
- to scaffold meaning
- to extend language
- to affirm identity.

Our early childhood years consist of a full immersion programme in English. Dual language instruction begins in First Grade (English & Spanish). We intend to do all the above through proper language instruction throughout all grades.

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[9] See Appendix # 1, 2 & 3.

[10] Halliday, M.A.K., (1993), Towards a Language-Based Theory of Learning, Linguistics and education 5, 93-116, University of Sydney and Macquarie University.

[11] IB, 2011, Thought, word and deed: The roles of cognition, language and culture in teaching and learning in IB World Schools, Cardiff: IB.

[12] Idem

4. Mother tongue language support.

- Guidelines on mother tongue support.

  As the majority of our students are Mexican we rely on external mother tongue support during the early immersion years. Our programme in the pre-school is a one-way immersion programme into English. Spanish and English are optional afterschool classes that are offered 5 days a week for those pre-school students who are interested.

  Spanish is offered starting in First Grade. Teachers´aides are always available with the intention of offering extra support in either one of the languages.

- Opportunities for the active use of the mother tongue.

  As the mother tongue of most of our students is either English or Spanish, sufficient opportunities are given throughout the day to use these two languages.

  We are working on supporting the mother tongue of other languages that are not English or Spanish. We encourage visits and materials (books, pictures or artifacts from other countries).

- Resources the school offers.
  - A group of teachers´aides in the preschool
  - One teachers' aide for each language in First and Second Grade
  - Spanish Immersion throughout the Primary
  - After-school classes in both languages for the Primary and Pre-School
  - Individual after-school tutoring
  - Spanish speaking nannies from Nursery through to Kinder 2
  - Physical Education, Chess and ICT are offered in Spanish.
  - Support inside and outside of the classroom

Teachers' aides in the classroom in preschool, reading specialists in preschool and in First and Second Grade, and individual Spanish Immersion in the primary.

Teacher-student ratio: 270 / 36   - 1:8

A five-year evaluation on immersion programmes showed that students may become socially active to the point of establishing long lasting friendships and also to be proficient in non-language subjects after having gone through this immersion programme[13].

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[13] Craig, B., (1995), Two-way foreign immersion programs: A handbook for parents and teachers, USA: EDRS

5. Relationship with the PYP principles.

As we are an inclusive school (when applicable[14]) regarding prior language skills, we offer students an individual follow-up of their particular learning needs. The Escuela Lomas Altas staff is devoted to the modeling of the learner profile and the attitudes. International mindedness has always been part of what we believe, therefore respect for differences and the promotion of global perspectives is always encouraged.

Another language is quite simply and profoundly one of the best ways of learning to recognise the world and to see how others and otherness inhabit it. It is an education in difference as a pathway to understanding how to contribute to [...] global citizenship. (Worton, quoted in Reisz 2010: 39) [15]

Our pedagogical approach to language learning includes:[16]:
- open-mindedness and inclusion
- respect to learner's identity and autonomy
- promotes critical thinking
- languages around the school are used freely, proper use of both is fostered.
- Children having a different mother tongue to that of our languages of instruction are reinforced through personal literature and their parents.

6. Role of the library in language learning.

In our libraries, differentiated individualized reading sessions occur on a weekly basis. Reading is fostered in both languages as a parallel programme in which the pleasure of reading and a reading culture are the goals.

Our libraries promote inquiry as they are seen as our resource media centres.

7. Beliefs and values on language teaching and learning

- Learning is more effective when it is fun.

Children who are captivated by a body of knowledge will find its assimilation stimulating and will rise to the challenge of its acquisition. We involve the students in interactive activities where they have many opportunities to use the language

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[14] See Learning diversity - Special needs policy
[15] IB, 2011, <u>Language and learning in IB programmes</u>, Cardiff:IB.
[16] Idem.

such as personal interviews, visits to different grades, oral group presentations to parents and the rest of the school community.

A highly-personalized and individualized approach will reap great educational rewards.

Escuela Lomas Altas' commitment to this principle is amply exemplified by the simple fact that we have refused to expand, despite outside pressures to do so. We feel that bigger is not better because it only stands to reason that the larger the institution the more impersonal it becomes. Since the children under our care are in preschool and elementary, their most formative years, the all-important focus of individualization cannot be overemphasized. We refuse to compromise on this ideal and truly believe it's the factor that most distinguishes us from other schools.

- A strong home-school connection needs to be established and nurtured for the overall wellbeing of the child in all aspects of her/his development.

This belief goes hand-in-hand with our school-wide policy of individualized education. Parental involvement is not only essential but enriching to the child's learning atmosphere and experiences. We realize the challenge this represents in today's world where sometimes both parents work and demands on time and energy have to be balanced. We, as a school, try to compensate for this by attempting to be as flexible and innovative as we can to assure that parents experience their integral role in their child's educational development.

8. Practices of the language policy.

This Language Policy was first created by the school's PLT (Pedagogical Leadership Team), and was readdressed after CASIE's Global Language Convention and after the Evaluation Visit report. It was then readdressed by the whole school in April 2013[17].

All the school's practices are based on a student-centered approach, based on constructivism. We also rely on one-to-one instruction throughout the different disciplines.

Because of the PYP, more structure has been given to our curriculum and all its aspects.

During our second evaluation year, the language policy was readdressed by the language committee and was taken forward in order to have a more complete perspective of the use of language and of language learning in our community.

The new findings and conclusions are already part of this document.

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[17] See Appendix # 2 & 3.

9. Transdisciplinary nature of language learning.

As all teachers are language teachers, language throughout the school is taught by everyone involved with our students[18]. It is explained that this form of education "influences the school experience of all participants."[19] Through the programme of inquiry, this transdisciplinarity appears in a more formal manner. English and Spanish come together for the teaching and learning in the Units of inquiry. Therefore a particular focus on the transdisciplinary nature of language learning is addressed.

Transitivity was developed as the concept of transitive or intransitive verb (Halliday,1976:159) whether the verb takes an object or not, but in SFL (systematic functional linguistics) it functions to link grammar to the meta functions; however, in Halliday's terms, transitivity as a major component in experiential function of the clause deals with the "transmission of ideas "representing 'processes' or 'experiences': actions, events, processes of consciousness and relations" (1985:53)[20]

Translanguaging[21] and transitivity[22] take place within units; children are given freedom of choice of language when it comes to inquiring.

10. Inquiry-based authentic language learning.

Inquiry is used throughout the years for the students to become more involved in language learning. This includes the toddlers. We lead them to their own language discoveries in order to engage them in their own language learning process.

According to Halliday, language development is learning how to mean; and because human beings are quintessentially creatures who mean (i.e., who engage in semiotic processes, with natural language as prototypical), all human learning is essentially semiotic in nature: a threefold perspective of "learning language, learning through language, learning about language." We should then recognize not only a developmental continuity right through from birth to adult life, with language in home, neighbourhood, primary school, secondary school, and place of work, but also a structural continuity running through all components and processes of learning. The expression "learning through language" was designed to bring out this structural continuity and to locate it with respect to those contexts where the learning is actually focused on language (cf. Christie, 1989; Cloran, 1989; Rothery, 1989).

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[18] Collier, Virginia P. and Thomas, Wayne P. <u>The Astounding Effectiveness of Dual Language for All</u> George Mason University p.11

[19] Idem.

[20] Idem.

[21] García, O. 2009.

[22] Op. Cit.

It should be possible to capture these two continuities in a theory of learning by seeing learning itself as a semiotic process: learning is learning to mean, and to expand one's meaning potential[23].

This is the way we connect language learning and inquiry.

11.   Communication strands.
(Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Presenting and Viewing (media literacy).

All communication strands begin to be taught and modeled as children move throughout the different grade levels. Listening and speaking begin in Nursery. Formal reading and writing instruction begins in Kinder III (five-year olds). Strands related to ICT begin formally in Kinder III.

There are four components in the semantics of every language: experiential, interpersonal, logical, textual.[24]

We develop and inter-relate the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing[25][26].

12.   Quality of language provision.

The school is highly committed to the level of English taught at Escuela Lomas Altas. Qualified Native-speakers are hired for proper language instruction in both languages.

13.   Detecting/Identifying language needs.

Head Teachers address specific language needs within the classroom situation. If extra support and formal assessment are required, the School Psychologist will intervene offering inside or outside support. We have a language specialist on site who works individually with those who require it.

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[23] Halliday, M.A.K., (1993), Towards a Language-Based Theory of Learning, Linguistics and education 5, 93-116, University of Sydney and Macquarie University.

[24] Halliday, M.A.K., Hasan, R., 1985, Language, context, and text: aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[25] See Appendix # 2.

[26] Halliday argues: "Discourse is a multidimensional process and text as its product not only embodies the same kind of polyphonic structuring as is found in grammar, (in the structure of the clause, as message, exchanges and representation), but also since it is functioning at a higher level of the code. Discourse analysis is concerned with lexico-grammatical analysis of the language in the social, physical, cognitive, cultural, interpersonal and situational context.

14.   Planning, teaching and assessing of language.

a. Escuela Lomas Altas has two languages of instruction, both of which appear in our Scope and Sequence documents. We teach the language through the language. The programme of inquiry is the backbone of our inquiry and is concept-based. Therefore, in the Planners, evidence of the planning, teaching and assessment are available.

b. English language instruction and Spanish language instruction are also planned, taught and assessed outside the programme of inquiry. This includes Grammar, Spelling, Reading and Writing in both languages for the primary.

15.   Language of instruction support.

The school relies on its teachers' aides in order to offer extra individualized approach to its students. This happens both inside and outside the classroom. A specialist teacher in the Primary gives support to those students who require extra help in either English or Spanish. If more support is required, after-school tutoring is recommended.

16.   Integration of language and the programme of inquiry.

As we became a PYP school, inquiry began to play a central role. Originally, inquiry was used more for Science and Social Studies purposes. As our understanding of the PYP became stronger, inquiry began to be used for the learning of Language and Mathematics. This is all done through the school's programme of inquiry or in discipline-based units. Inquiry is also used throughout the years for the students to become more involved in language learning. This includes the toddlers.

17.   Language support in the programme of inquiry.

As the programme of inquiry takes over the taught disciplines, the same language support system is offered inside and outside the programme itself.

18.   Language learning support within the classroom (Differentiation and inclusion)

Several years ago, the entire staff took a course on Differentiation. As we pride ourselves of always keeping up to date with the latest educational research, many of our staff members are presently taking a course on differentiation for gifted students. We have accomplished better understanding of this approach and applied it to our teaching, but it continues to be a challenge. There are many teachers' books available for consultation on the

subject. The goal is to offer as much differentiation as possible within the classroom situation[27].

19.   Catering to all languages (classroom and libraries).

Spanish and English are well supported throughout the school both with staff members as well as with other resources. More support needs to be offered through resources to other languages used other than English and Spanish. An effort to ask for donations of resources in other languages is part of our action plan.

20. Parents' involvement in language development (reading schemes).

As part of our reading scheme, parents are involved in the daily reading practices of their children. Some family members volunteer support within the school, but all parents are expected to support their children outside of school on a regular basis. Suggestions are also made to parents in relation to other resources such as books or software in order to support those who need it.
Parents of children with a different mother tongue than our languages of instruction are encouraged to support the reading process.

21. Professional development for best language-teaching practices.

In-school training as well as professional training in other institutions is constantly being offered to the staff such as Jolly Phonics, I.B. workshops, language proficiency, etc. (50% of the fee of courses that get approval are financed by the school).

22. Resources for language learning.

The school relies on textbooks, workbooks, media/ICT resources, and staff members with a variety of qualifications to promote language learning.

23.   Expectations of proficiency levels.

In English, the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test is administered to our students from grades KIII through Sixth. In Spanish, every two months, the SEP requires an evaluation on reading speed and comprehension. The grade equivalents obtained through these tests are used to assess students´achievement as well as teachers' performance throughout the years.

24. Criteria to assess language learning.

Internally, language learning is assessed individually in three grading periods in English and Spanish. For the SEP, Spanish is evaluated in five grading periods. Different tools and strategies are used at each grade level which depend on the requirements for that grade. Some are included as part of the Units of Inquiry and

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[27] See Learning diversity - Special needs policy

others are related only to a particular discipline. These tools are created by the teachers or by the students. They can be used for different types of assessment (self, peer, etc.).

Evidence of this development is demonstrated in the student´s portfolio. The use of benchmarks is continuously promoted throughout the school.

Feedback about language development for parents and students takes place once a year. Students are constantly being informed of their progress and areas for improvement.

25. Information and advice for parents.

Information and advice for parents is offered at the meetings at the beginning of the year. If some specific need is detected or recommended, an appointment with parents is made where strategies and resources are suggested. This applies for reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

Parents have access to the ICT room and library's database via our website for support.

26.   Roles and responsibilities.

All teachers are language teachers; the main responsibility of language instruction lies with the Head Teachers. All staff members can detect and inform about learning needs. It is a shared responsibility.

27.   Commitment to the IB's programme standards and practices.

It is through the IBO´s standards and practices that the heads of department, IB coordinator and principal do internal assessments as a way of maintaining educational excellence and improving our daily practices.

28.   How to implement the language policy effectively – resources and knowledge.

Staff members have begun to observe each other in their own classrooms where they can share different language practices. Based on that, those who have different approaches and knowledge can be spread to the wider community.

- They name three necessary characteristics of effective TWI programs: 1) a pedagogically-sound model of instruction that fits the demographic realities and resources of the school community; 2) fidelity to the model in all aspects of implementation; and 3) a timely and appropriate means of addressing any incongruity between the model, school/community needs, and systems of implementation. The authors use the interrelationship of three factors to establish congruence between a theoretical model and classroom practice— the model, teacher beliefs, and classroom language use—in evaluating program quality[28]

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[28] Allan., M. Howard, E., Sugarman, J., Christian, D. (2003), Trends in two-way immersion education – a review of the research, USA: Center for Applied Linguistics.

• The psychologist Vygotsky (1978) describes a *zone of proximal development* (ZPD) within which new learning can take place if there is support. The ZPD lies beyond the zone of prior knowing, which is where a learner can work independently without support. Anything outside the ZPD is not yet able to be learned[29].

29.   Classroom libraries, school libraries and the media center.
It is the responsibility of the Head Teachers to organize their classroom libraries. The use and organization of the library is the responsibility of the librarians and the use and organization of the media center is the responsibility of the ICT Teacher.

30.   Communication of the language policy.

The PLT has ongoing revision sessions and these agreements are shared with the rest of the staff during whole staff meetings. This is in order to continue with improvements and also as a way to have everyone's input in the policy.

31.   Implementation, understanding and support of the language policy throughout the school's community.

Since the Language Policy is a clear reflection of school practices, it is of common knowledge that suggestions are always welcome. This policy is a true reflection of our school's philosophy.

32.   Assessment and records of the language policy's practice and progress.

Revisions of the policy (When, How & Who)
a) May 2008 – PLT Revision
(after participation in CASIE's Global Language Convention [30])
b) October 2008 – Whole staff meeting – Revision
c) February 2009 – Revision of Action Plan
d) October 2012 - Revision of whole document by Language Committee
e) January 2013 - Language Policy Committee
f) May 2013 – continuous ongoing interventions and revisions of the Language Committee

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[29] IB, 2008, Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, Cardiff: IB.
[30] See Appendix # 2 & 3.

33. Cross-reference between language policy and other school policies.

All policies are constantly revised by the whole staff.
After Evaluation Visits, all policies are revised by the whole staff during meetings in order to readdress the Standards and Practices of the programme and in order to make any necessary changes and required updates.

34. Language profile.

We seek to develop the following in our students:
➢ Translanguaging is the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential.

➢ It is an approach to bilingualism that is centered, not on languages as has often been the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable in order to make sense of their multilingual worlds.

➢ The main advantage of building on translanguaging to educate all children bilingually has to do with its potential as the building block of all bilingualism. It is impossible to live in bilingual communities and communicate among multilinguals without translanguage.

➢ "Hybrid-language use – a systematic strategic, affiliative and sense-making process (Gutiérrez et al).

Due to the size of the school and due to the constant use of a one-to-one approach we are able to inform the teachers of the language needs of their students at the beginning of the year.
Special cases (children who go to language therapy or who have been observed as exhibiting difficulty) should be documented formally and informed to teachers as they pass from one grade to another.

➢ **Student outcome language profile**: A knowledgeable multilingual student, aware of his/her own learning process with a globalized view of the world and strong values contributing towards a better world.

35. Formative and summative assessments in language.

Formative assessment is an ongoing practice in the school that is communicated to the parents. Summative assessment in language is addressed in many ways in the classroom (oral presentations, reading practices, music class, etc).

36.   SEP language assessments

National testing requirements take place every year (*ENLACE*). This testing includes assessment of Mathematics and Language in Spanish. Results are shared nationwide through the SEP's website. Escuela Lomas Altas has scored well in these assessments.

37.   Handwriting and Spelling policies

The school teaches cursive[31] in all years but printing is acceptable in special circumstances in the older years. In the primary school, spelling quizzes are given every week and dictation is given regularly to the grades that are ready for it. Spelling and dictation are corrected on a differentiated basis.

38.   Current practices

Students entering first grade have had five years of total immersion in English during preschool. In general, their level of receptive English (auditory comprehension) is quite high whereas levels of productive language (fluency and confidence in spoken English) vary. This is the natural process of language acquisition. In a child, the process is accelerated and, during the purely receptive stage, she/he is making patterns, ordering, retaining – in short, paving the way toward verbal expression. The child who tends to be more of a risk-taker will have the confidence to speak the language regardless of mistakes while the more introverted student will wait until she/he feels his/her utterances are more accurate.

The three metafunctions of language act simultaneously and systematically not distinctly or independently in a text; in other words, mood (interpersonal), transitivity (ideational), and theme (textual) function interdependently in the language system[32].

In either case, both alphabetic and phonetic awareness are in place and the reading and writing process are usually underway. Throughout the primary years, the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are balanced. This balanced focus of language acquisition and production has been stressed throughout the preschool years and comes to a balance in the primary years.

First grade marks the child's initiation to our bilingual system in the Primary School where they will spend half their day in Spanish class. We are fully aware that this transition can be drastic for some students and make every attempt to ease the process by making it fun, challenging and positively reinforcing. Through the intensive and consistent aid of bilingual language specialists for

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[31] See Appendix # 4

[32] Haratyan, F., (2011), Halliday's SFL and Social Meaning, 2nd International Conference on Humanities, Historical and Social Sciences IPEDR vol.17   IACSIT Press, Singapore

non-native speakers in the classroom and the enthusiastic cooperation of their peers, it is truly gratifying to see how quickly children feel at home in these new surroundings as is confirmed in the article by Collier & Thomas "Teachers express excitement with the dual language model[33]."[34] Both English and Spanish teachers have at their disposal an enormous repertoire of didactic materials and methodologies to ensure the experiences are fun and rewarding.

In addition to language in the literacy context, the students will engage the language in the subject areas of math and natural and social sciences (in both English and Spanish). Other classes included in the curriculum are computer, art, drama, art in action, gym and music. From 5 to 12 years of age they have half an hour of chess per week.

As the years progress, the children build on their confidence and our sixth graders leave equipped with fluency and competence in both English and Spanish and are prepared to continue their studies in the junior high school of their choice. "We may be astounded at dual language's impact on our own lives as educators and researchers, since we are all, together, lifelong learners."[35]

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[33] Collier, Virginia P. and Thomas, Wayne P. The Astounding Effectiveness of Dual Language for All. George Mason University p. 11

[34] Longitudinal research findings from one-way and two-way dual language enrichment models of schooling demonstrate the substantial power of this program for enhancing student outcomes and fully closing the achievement gap in second language

[35]Idem.

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APPENDIX # 1.

IBA Conference – San Antonio 2011

Inmersión a la lengua y educación dual de la lengua: una perspectiva internacional en América Latina

Inmersión a la lengua y educación dual de la lengua:

una perspectiva internacional en América Latina

Isela Consuegra – Principal – Escuela Lomas Altas – Mexico City

Aldo Anzures – PYP Coordinator – Escuela Lomas Altas – Mexico City

Construyendo un LENGUAJE en común

🔍 Perspectiva sociocultural: la lengua como artefacto cultural y como resultado de la colaboración

🔍 La lengua en la educación

Aprendizaje [es]… la adquisición y la transformación de teorías conceptuales y se transmite a través de patrones de discurso utilizados por comunidades particulares de razonamiento (Resnick, Pontecorvo, Saljö, 1997)

🔍 Inmersión a la lengua y educación dual de la lengua vista con los lentes conceptuales del PEP

Forma

¿Qué es? ¿Cómo es?

- Educación bilingüe

- Inmersión a la lengua

- Educación dual de la lengua/ inmersión dual de la lengua

- Escuela Lomas Altas

Función

¿Para qué sirve hablar dos o más idiomas?
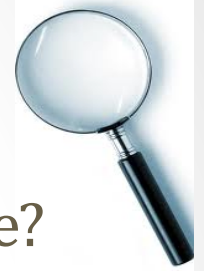
Perspectiva latinoamericana

La educación bilingüe provee los medios para hacer de la educación un marco de equidad y aprendizaje significativo, así como una educación que brinda tolerancia hacia otros grupos lingüísticos y culturales, desarrollando la apreciación por la diversidad y las similitudes humanas (García, 2008).

Elementos esenciales

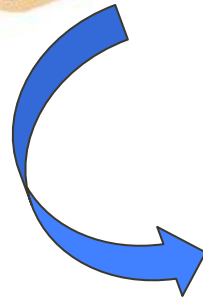## Mentalidad internacional

Causa

¿Por qué sirve?
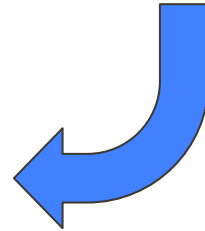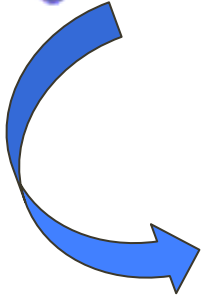
Receta Lomas Altas

Qué queremos que aprendan

Que queremos que aprendan

Filosofía del colegio

Valores y creencias

Atmósfera familiar

Dos lenguas de instrucción

Mentalidad Internacional

Qué queremos que aprendan

Cómo vamos a enseñar/aprender

Aprendizaje de la lengua y a través de la lengua

Instrucción especializada de la lengua

Interacción y Socilaización

Communicación / TIC's

Trabajo Colaborativo

Qué queremos que aprendan

Cómo sabremos que lo hemos logrado

Perfil del alumno

Acción

Promoción y logros del alumno

Evaluación Integral

Translingüismo

Todo esto dentro y a través del PEP

Perfil de la Comunidad

Elementos Esenciales

Currículo

PEP

Qué queremos que nuestros alumnos aprendan

Un alumno bilingüe, informado e instruido; consciente de sus propios procesos de aprendizaje, con una perspeciva globaliza y mentalidad internacional; con los valores y atributos para contribuir en la transformación hacia un mundo mejor.

Cómo sabremos que lo hemos logrado

Cómo vamos a enseñar/aprender
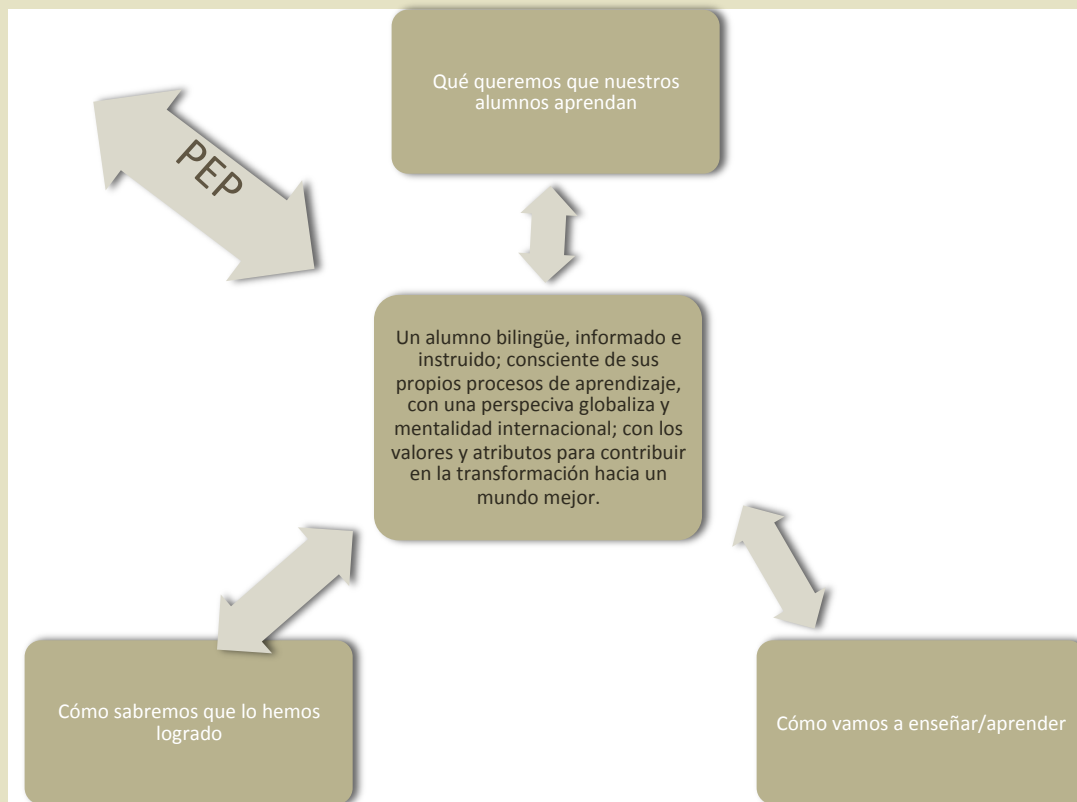
Transdisciplinariedad

Constructivismo

Indagación

Cambio

La lengua no es estática, cambia constantemente (IBO,2009)

Prácticas escolares

....educación como capital

(Pierre Bourdieu 1991 en García 2008)

Conexión

Aprender la lengua, aprender sobre la lengua, aprender a través de la lengua

Transdisciplinariedad

Perspectiva

- ¿Bilingüismo = mentalidad internacional?

- Indagación en lengua materna vs. indagación en una segunda lengua de instrucción

Responsabilidad

- ¿Cuál es nuestra responsabilidad como escuelas y educadores ante este tipo de modelos?

- Políticas

- Pentada de Burke (1969, en Wertsch, 1999)

[acción, propósitos, agente, instrumentos y escena]

Reflexión

- ¿Hasta cuando es bueno estirar un modelo de inmersión?

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APPENDIX # 2.

GLOBAL LANGUAGE CONVENTION

Center for the Advancement and Study of International Education

Atlanta, Georgia
April 2008

Language immersion and dual language education from Nursery to 6th grade: an international perspective in Latin America.

"Our children do not learn the language, they live it".
Arleen Foster, Pre-school Coordinator

For almost thirty-one years Escuela Lomas Altas has been the home of many students both from local as well as international families. The school's philosophy was designed with the purpose of addressing each of our student's needs, both educationally as well as personally. The use of language has been our excuse. The main goal is to achieve enduring understandings while they acquire both languages (Learn through the language vs. learn the language). We have relied ever since on specific and modern methodologies that contribute to the construction of the ethos required by our curriculum.

English and Spanish become the form of communication within our school community. The fluency and the cadence in the use of both languages are reflections of their skill. What begins as the language through which students exercise and acquire skills in the pre-school, at the end of Primary becomes an entire form of communication and a way of life. We are sure that the impact that dual language education has on our students is an experience that changes their lives in a very positive way.

With this presentation we will try to illustrate our school's language immersion program. This will be done through a simulated journey of what Lomas Altas students experience as they go through the process of becoming dual language experts. First we will show the beginning of the process in our pre-school where language instruction is only given in English, and then we will continue with our First Graders, the grade in which they formally begin dual language instruction. This model continues throughout the primary years culminating in Sixth Grade, the grade in which our students are able to address their educational needs in both languages indistinctly. We will rely on work samples, videos, photographs, texts and explanations of our teachers' and school's experience.

➢ The ingredients to the "Lomas Altas Recipe":

- **Early Immersion:** *Due to the importance of language learning during the early years, Escuela Lomas Altas encourages the development of social and academic skills in a full English immersion program.*
    - Music & Rhythm
    - Beginnings of social interaction
    - Teachers with a variety of strengths
    - Actions carrying out our beliefs
    - Pictures, songs and rhymes
    - Daily instructions
    - Story time

- **Language Instruction in the early years:** *Since language acquisition plays a central role in our curriculum, we devote time and offer experiences that enrich our students' learning skills.*

    English speaking teachers and aides have active communication with students throughout the school day so that they hear English as much as possible. A strong pre-reading and emergent reading scheme allows our students to be in one-on-one contact with aides or parent volunteers almost every day to reinforce vocabulary and comprehension.

    - Personalized approach
    - Family atmosphere
    - Social interaction within the classroom
    - Re-telling and predictions of stories both listened to and read
    - Verbal interaction, teachers and peers
    - Language association
    - Spoken vocabulary

- **Teaching/Learning through the Language:** *In Escuela Lomas Altas the goal is not only to learn the languages, it is also to learn through both languages and develop in-depth inquiry skills.*
    - Literacy: From Phonics to Whole Language
    - Writing
    - Community of inquirers
    - Reading scheme
    - Vocabulary
    - Dual language environment

- **Student-Centered Approach:** *Throughout the years we have relied on a personalized approach. This is a benefit our school offers to our learning community enhancing our knowledge of each student and being able to detect specific needs and offer solutions.*
  - Individual support
  - Parent participation
  - Observation
  - Social construction of learning

- **Spontaneity and Inquiry:** *Our school provides the resources and experiences necessary for our students' learning needs, the ultimate goal: learning how to learn. Children are encouraged to voice their personal doubts and background knowledge as they arise.*
  - Library and ICT center
  - Teamwork in classrooms
  - Sharing time

- **PYP:** *Through the PYP, Escuela Lomas Altas has found a way of structuring and guiding our interests into a globalized approach to education. It is also an opportunity to achieve academic excellence.*
  - Learner Profile
  - Attitudes
  - Curriculum
  - Programme of Inquiry
  - Assessment

- **Communication strands:** *A student in Escuela Lomas Altas is able to communicate fluently in both languages. Research skills are promoted in both languages and through several resources (ICT, newspapers, reference books, etc.).*
  - Listening
  - Speaking
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Presenting
  - Viewing (media literacy)
  - Comprehension
  - Peer reviewing

- **International Mindedness:** *A globalized view of the world and the benefits of this approach is what we aim for in Escuela Lomas Altas. Our learning community includes people from around the world with different beliefs and cultures. This gives our students a richer appreciation of our similarities and differences around the world.*
  - Staff
  - Students
  - School Atmosphere

- **Language Proficiency:** *Formal instruction in both languages begins in lower primary where we firmly reinforce the use of verbal skills both orally as well as in writing. Reading is also strongly promoted beginning in preschool and throughout the primary in both languages.*

  - Verbal and written language
  - Grammar and spelling
  - Mathematics
  - Language through literature
  - Classes with specialists

- **Language Support:** *We have an approximately 1:8 teacher-student ratio. The idea is always to offer support to our students in their specific learning needs. Teachers' aides and specialists are an important part of our school's support system. They support language instruction in both languages as well as for specific learning needs (i.e. writing, fine and gross motor skills, reading, language acquisition, etc.).*

  - English immersion program
  - Spanish immersion program
  - Detecting/Identifying language needs

- **School's Methodology:** *Our curriculum relies on Constructivism, inquiry and concept-based learning all through collaborative teamwork.*

  - Collaborative environment
  - Dual language approach
  - Constructivism
  - Concept-based learning in a dual language approach

- **Final outcome:** *A knowledgeable dual language student, aware of his/her own learning process with a globalized view of the world and strong values contributes towards a better world.*

APPENDIX # 3.

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APPENDIX # 4.

Our Alphabet

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee

Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj

Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo

Pp Rr Ss Tt

Uu Vv Ww Xx

Yy Zz