

The National Curriculum Standards in Junior High School

Section 9 Foreign Languages

I. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To develop students' competencies that form the communication such as understanding, expressing and communicating simple information and thoughts etc. as outlined below through language activities of listening, reading, speaking and writing in a foreign language while activating the *Approaches*¹ in communication in foreign languages.

- (1) To understand knowledge of the sounds, vocabulary, expressions, grammar and functions of foreign language, acquire these skills which can be utilized in communication when listening, reading, speaking and writing.
- (2) To cultivate the ability to understand simple information and thoughts etc. about everyday and social topics in foreign languages, utilize these to express themselves, and communicate in accordance with the purposes, scenes and situations in which the communication is taking place.
- (3) To deepen the students' understanding of the underlying cultures of foreign languages and fostering an attitude of attempting to proactively communicate in foreign languages while giving consideration to the listeners, readers, speakers and writers.

II. OBJECTIVES AND CONTENTS, ETC. OF EACH LANGUAGE

English

1. Objectives

To develop the competencies specified in I. (1) and (2) in an integrated manner, through instruction that aims for realization of the goals set in the five skill areas of listening, reading, speaking [interaction], speaking [production] and writing specified below, and develop the competencies specified in I. (3) through this process, based on the characteristics of learning English.

(1) Listening

- a. Enable students to pick up necessary information from the context about everyday topics if spoken clearly.
- b. Enable students to grasp an outline of speech about everyday topics if spoken clearly.
- c. Enable students to grasp the key points of brief explanations about social topics if spoken clearly.

¹*Approaches* discipline-based epistemological approaches emphasizing the contextualizing of language

(2) Reading

- a. Enable students to pick up the necessary information from texts about everyday topics, written by using simple words, phrases and sentences.
- b. Enable students to grasp an outline of brief paragraphs on everyday topics, written by using simple words, phrases and sentences.
- c. Enable students to grasp the key points of brief paragraphs on social topics, written by using simple words, phrases and sentences.

(3) Speaking [Interaction]

- a. Enable students to improvise interactions about topics in which they are interested by using simple words, phrases and sentences.
- b. Enable students to talk about everyday topics and answer questions from the person they are communicating with by using simple words, phrases and sentences while organizing facts, their own thoughts and feelings etc.
- c. Enable students to exchange their thoughts, feelings and the reasons for them about information they have heard about or read in relation to social topics by using words, phrases and sentences.

(4) Speaking [Production]

- a. Enable students to speak spontaneously about topics in which they are interested by using simple words, phrases and sentences.
- b. Enable students to speak coherently about everyday topics while organizing facts, their own thoughts and feelings etc. by using simple words, phrases and sentences.
- c. Enable students to talk about their thoughts, feelings and the reasons for them about things they have heard about or read in relation to social topics by using simple words, phrases and sentences.

(5) Writing

- a. Enable students to write accurately about topics in which they are interested by using simple words, phrases and sentences.
- b. Enable students to write coherently about everyday topics while organizing facts, their own thoughts and feelings etc. by using simple words, phrases and sentences.
- c. Enable students to write about their thoughts, feelings and the reasons for them about matters they have heard about or read in relation to social topics by using simple words, phrases and sentences.

2. Contents

[Knowledge and skills]

(1) Items related to the characteristics and rules of English

Give instruction to enable students to acquire skills they will be able to utilize in communication while understanding which of the language materials specified in Elementary School National Curriculum Standards Chapter 2, Section 10 Foreign Languages, II.2 (1) and below are suitable to achieve the goals for each of the five skill areas specified in 1 and effectively link the language materials and language activities, through language activities using English.

a. Sounds

Handling the items specified below.

- (a) Modern standard pronunciation
- (b) Change in sounds of letters due to the connection of one word to another
- (c) Basic stresses in words, phrases and sentences
- (d) Basic intonation in sentences
- (e) Basic pauses in sentences

b. Symbols

Symbols such as exclamation marks, quotation marks, etc.

c. Words, collocations and idiomatic expressions

- (a) About 1,600-1,800 new words, in addition to the words learned at elementary school, are necessary to achieve the goals for each of the five skill areas specified in 1
- (b) Collocations with a high use frequency
- (c) Idiomatic expressions with a high use frequency

d. Sentences, sentence structures and grammar items

Regarding the items specified in National Curriculum Standards for Elementary School Chapter 2, Section 10 Foreign Languages, II. 2 (1) d., utilize them through repeatedly experiencing them in communication in a meaningful context.

(a) Sentences

- a Compound and complex sentences
- b Interrogative sentences that begin with an auxiliary verb (may, will, etc.), include *or* or begin with a question word (which, whose)
- c Basic exclamatory sentences

(b) Sentence structures

a [Subject + verb + complement] with the structure

Subject + verb other than *be* verb + $\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{noun} \\ \text{adjective} \end{array} \right\}$

b [Subject + verb + object] with the structure

(a) Subject + verb + $\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{gerund} \\ \text{to infinitive} \\ \text{how (etc.) to infinitive} \end{array} \right\}$

(b) Subject + verb + $\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{clause beginning with } \textit{that} \\ \text{clause beginning with } \textit{what, etc.} \end{array} \right\}$

c [Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object] with the structure

(a) Subject + verb + indirect object + $\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{noun} \\ \text{pronoun} \end{array} \right\}$

(b) Subject + verb + indirect object + how (etc.) *to* infinitive

(c) Subject + verb + indirect object + $\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{clause starting with } \textit{that} \\ \text{clause starting with } \textit{what, etc.} \end{array} \right\}$

d [Subject + verb + object + complement] with the structure

(a) Subject + verb + object + $\left. \begin{array}{c} \text{noun} \\ \text{adjective} \end{array} \right\}$

(b) Subject + verb + object + bare infinitive

e Other

(a) There + *be* verb + ~

(b) It + *be* verb + ~ (+ for ~) + *to* infinitive

(c) Subject + tell, want, etc. + object + *to* infinitive

(d) Subject + *be* verb + adjective + clause beginning with *that*

(c) Grammar items

a Pronouns

(a) Words that express grammatical person, demonstratives, questions and quantities

(b) Relative pronouns with restrictive use such as the subject pronouns *that*, *which*, and *who* and object pronouns such as *that* and *which*

b Conjunctions

c Auxiliary verbs

d Prepositions

e The tense and aspect of verbs

Present form, past form, present progressive form, past progressive form, present perfect form, present perfect progressive form, and future expressions using auxiliary verbs, etc.

f Comparative expressions using adjectives and adverbs

g *To* infinitives

h Gerunds

i Usage of present participles and past participles as adjectives

j Passive voice

k Basic subjunctive mood sentences

[Abilities to think, make decisions and express oneself]

(2) Items related to forming thoughts while organizing information, expressing oneself and communicating

By setting specific tasks, give instruction to enable students to acquire the following through organizing information and expressing information and forming their own thoughts etc. logically, in accordance with the purposes, scenes and situations in which the communication is taking place.

a. Picking up the necessary information and grasping thoughts about everyday and social topics by listening to and reading English.

b. Selecting and extracting information and expressions obtained by listening to and reading contents in English to order to speak and write utilizing them to express facts, their own thoughts and feelings etc. about everyday topics and social topics

c. To communicate facts, their own thoughts and feelings etc. about everyday topics and social topics by talking and writing in English, and organizing the contents to be communicated.

(3) Items related to language activities and language functions

(i) Items related to language activities

Give instruction about the items specified in (2) by utilizing the items specified in (1), for example, through the following language activities.

a. Those language activities specified in National Curriculum Standards for Elementary School Chapter 2, Section 10 Foreign Languages, II. 2 (3) that are necessary for consolidation of the learning contents at elementary school.

b. Listening

(a) Activities to listen to English spoken in a natural tone about everyday topics and accurately ascertain the intention of the speaker.

(b) Activities to pick up information which is necessary for them in simple announcements, etc. used in shops or on public transportation, etc.

(c) Activities to listen to simple messages about familiar topics such as invitations from friends, etc. to grasp their contents and respond properly.

(d) Activities to listen to conversations and explanations, etc. about everyday social topics such as friends, family and school life, etc., and grasp an outline and key points. Furthermore, activities to give explanations of the contents in English.

c. Reading

(a) Activities to read silently while thinking about the written contents and organization of paragraphs and to read aloud to express their contents.

(b) Activities to pick up information that is necessary for them from advertisements, leaflets, schedules, letters, emails, brief paragraphs, etc. by using simple expressions about everyday topics.

(c) Activities to read brief explanations, essays, stories, etc. about everyday topics written by using simple words, phrases and sentences, and grasping their outlines.

(d) Activities to read explanations, etc. regarding social topics written by using simple words, phrases and sentences and to grasp their key points while also referring to illustrations, photographs, diagrams, etc. Furthermore, activities to state agreement or disagreement and their own thoughts with respect to the contents of the explanations, etc.

d. Speaking [Interactions]

(a) Activities to properly respond on the spot to questions regarding topics in which they are interested from the person they are communicating with

and to continue a back-and-forth conversation through asking relevant questions.

(b) Activities to organize the contents that they are attempting to communicate about everyday topics and communicate verbally with the person they are communicating with while utilizing notes, etc. that they took planned themselves.

(c) Activities to communicate what has been read, their own feelings and thoughts, etc. based on the contents ascertained from topics they have heard about or read in relation to social topics and then properly respond to questions from the person they are communicating with and ask their own questions back.

e. Speaking [Presentation]

(a) Activities to organize their thoughts on the spot about topics in which they are interested and give verbal explanations.

(b) Activities to compile the facts, their own thoughts and feelings etc. about everyday topics and make simple speeches.

(c) Activities to make a verbal summary and talk about their own thoughts and feelings while utilizing notes, etc. they designed themselves based on the contents ascertained from matters which they have heard about or read regard social topics.

f. Writing

(a) Activities to write basic information about themselves such as hobbies, likes and dislikes, etc. by using words, phrases and sentences.

(b) Activities to communicate recent situations, etc. in the form of simple letters and emails.

(c) Activities to write integrated paragraphs giving explanations of occurrences, etc. about everyday topics by using simple words, phrases and sentences.

(d) Activities to write their own thoughts and feelings, the reasons for them, etc. based on the contents ascertained from information which they have heard about or read in relation to social topics.

(ii) Items related to language functions

Pick up language use situations and language functions mainly from the following items when engaging in language activities.

- a. Examples of language use situations
 - (a) Situations related to students' everyday lives
 - Life at home • Learning and activities at school
 - Local events etc.
 - (b) Situations where typical expressions are often used
 - Self-introductions • Shopping • Having meals
 - Asking and giving directions • Traveling
 - Responding on the telephone
 - Interactions in letters and emails etc.
- b. Examples of language functions
 - (a) Facilitating communication
 - Striking up a conversation • Giving agreeable responses
 - Asking someone again • Repeating etc.
 - (b) Communicating feelings
 - Expressing gratitude • Making a complaint
 - Praising • Apologizing • Welcoming etc.
 - (c) Communicating facts and information
 - Explaining • Reporting • Announcing
 - Describing etc.
 - (d) Communicating thoughts and intentions
 - Offering • Promising • Stating opinions
 - Agreeing • Opposing • Accepting • Refusing
 - Supposing etc.
 - (e) Encouraging someone to do something
 - Asking questions • Requesting • Inviting
 - Ordering etc.

3 Syllabus design and lesson delivery

(1) In planning the syllabus, consideration should be given to the following while taking care to ensure connections with the instruction in elementary school and senior high school.

- a. Anticipate the unity of contents and lessons such as units and aim for realization of the proactive, interactive and authentic learning of students toward development of the competencies fostered in those contents and lessons. In working towards these goals, set specific tasks and aim for the enhancement of learning so that students are able to carry out the activities with an awareness of

the communication purposes, scenes and situations while also activating the *Approaches*¹ in communication using foreign languages, and utilize knowledge of English sounds, vocabulary, expressions, grammar in communication in the five skill areas.

- b. Properly set goals for each grade and aim for realization of the objectives of Foreign Languages through the three grades.
 - c. Give instruction as necessary for understanding and practicing the language materials specified in 2 (1) when actually engaging in language activities in English such as exchanging each other's thoughts and feelings etc. Furthermore, give instruction repeatedly and consolidate learning contents such as simple words and phrases and basic expressions handled at elementary school from Grade 3 to Grade 6.
 - d. Lessons, in principle, should be conducted in English in order to enhance opportunities for the students to use English and turn classes into communication situations. In working towards these goals, take care to use English in accordance with the degree of understanding of the students.
 - e. Come up with ways to ensure that the topics in the language activities match the interests of the students, utilize what the students learned in other subjects such as Japanese language, science and music, etc. and ensure links with what students do at school events, etc.
 - f. For students with disabilities etc., come up with instruction contents and instruction methods in accordance with the difficulties that arise in learning activities in a systematic and institutional way.
 - g. English teacher should develop teaching plans and enhance instruction formats, for example, by obtaining the cooperation of native speakers of English and local residents fluent in English, etc. to develop more effective instruction methods.
- (2) Consideration should be given to the following items when teaching the contents specified in 2.
- a. Give instruction with regard to the language materials specified in 2 (1) in stages starting with easy materials and moving on to more difficult ones. Furthermore, while taking into account the developmental stages of the pupils, note the fact that there are items in which instruction should be given to enable students to understand the meanings through listening and reading, and items in which instruction should be given to enable pupils to express themselves by speaking and writing.

- b. Give instruction continuously in the language materials specified in 2 (1) a. through pronunciation practice, etc. while noting the differences with the Japanese language when giving instruction in sounds, and also give instruction using phonetic notation as assistance for the instruction in sounds if necessary. Furthermore, give instruction linking pronunciation to spelling.
- c. Take care regarding giving instruction on cursive while giving consideration not to overburden the students when teaching letters.
- d. Take care regarding the following items when giving instruction on grammar items.
 - (a) Come up with ways to achieve effective instruction such as compiling and organizing the relevant grammar items, etc. in order to enable the students to understand the characteristics of English.
 - (b) Taking into account the fact that grammar underpins communication, make the students strongly aware of the necessity and usefulness of grammar in achieving communication objectives and then utilize that knowledge and repeatedly use it to give instruction effectively linked to language activities such as encouraging the students to notice the regularity and structure, etc. of these grammar items, etc.
 - (c) Give consideration so that instruction does not become centered on issues like explaining grammatical terms or differentiating between usage, ensure that the students actually enable to utilize the terms, and take care regarding the differences from the Japanese language in word order and modification relations, etc.
- e. Become familiar with how to use dictionaries and enable to utilize them.
- f. Come up with learning styles (or activities) such as pair-work, group work, etc. as needed so that students develop the abilities to ask questions to their friends and answer questions from them regarding simple and familiar topics. In working towards these goals, with regard to students who have problems with communicating with other people, come up with instruction contents and instruction methods in accordance with the characteristics of the individual student.
- g. Effectively utilize audio-visual teaching materials, computers, information and communication networks and educational devices, etc., to further increase the interests of the students, to streamline instruction and to further enhance the language activities, in accordance with the competencies that the students are to

acquire, the circumstances of the students, and the contents of the teaching materials, etc.

- h. Enable students to anticipate and reflect on the learning by clearly establishing the purposes, scenes and situations in which the communication is taking place and clearly specifying the competencies that should be developed through the language activities when engaging in the instruction of each unit and in each lesson.

(3) Concerning teaching materials, care should be taken for the following points

- a. Regarding the teaching materials, clearly indicate the relationship between the goals for each of the five skill areas specified in 1 and the contents specified in 2 for each unity of contents and lessons such as units in each of the teaching materials and pick up the topics giving sufficient consideration to language use situations and the language functions, in order to comprehensively develop the competencies for communication, such as listening, reading, speaking [interaction], speaking [production] and writing.
- b. Pick up proper and various topics about everyday life, manners and customs, stories, geography, history, traditional culture and natural science, etc. of the people of the world, mainly people who use English and Japanese people, in accordance with the developmental stages and interests of the students and give consideration to the following perspectives.
 - (a) Teaching material useful for deepening the students' understanding of diverse ways of thinking and developing their rich humanity while cultivating their ability to make fair judgments.
 - (b) Teaching material useful for cultivating students' attitudes towards increasing interest in the culture of Japan and the underlying culture of the English language and attempting to deepen understanding of those cultures.
 - (c) Teaching material useful for increasing their awareness of themselves as members of Japanese society, which is required to deepen international understanding from a broad perspective and to engage with the global community, and cultivating the spirit of international cooperation.

Other foreign languages

Give instruction in other foreign languages in accordance with the objectives regarding English for each of the five skill areas specified in 1, the contents specified in 2, and the syllabus planning and lesson delivery specified in 3.

III. SYLLABUS PLANNING AND LESSON DELIVERY

1. In principle, have students take English in Foreign Languages lessons.
2. Give proper instruction, in accordance with the characteristics of Foreign Languages, regarding the contents specified in Chapter 3 Special Subject Morals Studies, II. while also giving consideration to links with the Morals lessons, etc., based on the objectives of moral education specified in Chapter 1, General Provisions, I. 2 (2).