



GRADE 7 TO GRADE 12
GERMAN LANGUAGE AND
CULTURE

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Background

Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP)

As part of the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education, the ministers of education of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan have agreed to collaborate in basic education because of the importance they place on four goals:

- high standards of education
- common educational goals
- removing obstacles to the access of educational opportunities for students, including improving the ease of transfer from jurisdiction to jurisdiction
- optimum use of resources

Under the auspices of WNCP, Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan have benefited from their collaborative efforts in a number of initiatives intended to develop curriculum and implementation support materials for international languages generally and for specific languages. In 2001, with Manitoba as the lead province, an initiative was launched to develop common curriculum frameworks and implementation support documents for German Language and Culture for both four- and six-year senior years programs.

The 2004 WNCP document that resulted from this initiative, *The Common Curriculum Framework for German Language and Culture, Six-Year Junior/Senior High School Program*, was based on three documents:

- *Common Curriculum Framework for International Languages, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (June 2000)*, WCP
- *Program of Studies: German Language and Culture Grade 7 to Grade 9*, Alberta Learning, 2001
- *Program of Studies: German Language and Culture 10-20-30*, Alberta Learning, 2002

This Grade 7 to Grade 12 German Language and Culture: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes is an adaptation of the WNCP *The Common Curriculum Framework for German Language and Culture, Six-Year Junior/Senior High School Program*.

Description of the Document

Grade 7 to Grade 12 German Language and Culture: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes provides teachers with student learning outcomes they can use to develop curricula and implement German language of study courses (also known as core or basic courses). Teachers, educational administrators, parents, and other interested parties will find useful information about what to expect from programming in German language and culture and about effective approaches to German language learning.

This *Framework* provides learning outcomes for students entering a six-year program at Grade 7 and continuing until Grade 12. A *Grade 9 to Grade 12 German Language and Culture: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* is also available.

The two frameworks are intended to be used for “language of study” programming, where the acquisition of second-language and cultural skills is the primary focus. This is distinct from bilingual or immersion programming, in which the language is not only a subject but is also used as the medium of instruction for other school subjects during a significant part of the day.

Rationale for a Curriculum Framework for German Language and Culture

A common German Language and Culture framework of general and specific learning outcomes will help

- to ensure that the curriculum draws on the experience and expertise of teachers in Manitoba and other jurisdictions
- program developers plan a coherent program of studies that moves smoothly from one level to the next, especially at the transition points between early, middle, and senior years
- post-secondary institutions plan international language courses that articulate well with secondary level courses
- post-secondary institutions determine equivalency between different second language courses, for entrance or assessment purposes

- parents and students transferring from one school jurisdiction to another or one province to another
- employers know what to expect from students in terms of language proficiency.*

Rationale for Learning German Language and Culture

German Language in the World

German is one of the top ten languages spoken in the world. Approximately 95-100 million people speak German as their first language. German is the official language of Germany, where it is spoken by approximately 75 million people; Austria, where it is spoken by approximately 7.5 million speakers; and the Principality of Liechtenstein. It is one of the four official languages of Switzerland, and one of the three official languages of Luxembourg and Belgium. In addition, it is an important minority or regional language in many countries in Europe, such as Italy (where it has official recognition), France, Denmark, the Baltic republics, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine. It is also an important regional or minority language outside of Europe. It is spoken in Namibia, which is a former German colony in Africa, and in the Americas. In the U.S., the Amish and some Mennonites speak a dialect of German. *Ethnologue* estimates that there are 28 million second-language speakers of German worldwide. It is one of the twenty official languages of the European Union.

* See Appendix B for definitions of terms.

German was once the lingua franca of central, eastern, and northern Europe. Today, it is the second most studied language in Europe and Asia. In the United States, German is the third most commonly taught language in schools and universities. The popularity of German is supported by the wide availability of German television in Europe.

History of German Immigration to Manitoba

Immigrants from Germany or of German-speaking origin have played an important part in shaping our nation and province. The first historical record of settlers of German-speaking origin was made in 1816-17 when Lord Selkirk dispatched some 100 German-speaking Swiss mercenaries of the de Meuron and the de Watteville regiments to help protect and populate the Red River Settlement. Thousands more new immigrants followed and homesteaded on the Prairies in the late 1800s, and many of them were of German origin. These settlers often came not from Germany itself, but from Russia, the Austro-Hungarian empires, and the Balkan countries, where German colonies had been established in the eighteenth century.

Mennonite immigrants, primarily from the Palatinate (Germany) and from Russia (including the region that is now Ukraine), have been an important part of the German-speaking community in Manitoba since 1874. By 1890, census information indicated that 12,000 Mennonites lived in southern Manitoba along with 6,000 Germans, of whom 1,600 lived in or around Winnipeg.

Today German-speaking immigrants continue to be an important component of new arrivals to Manitoba. Since 2002, Germany has been the second most important source country for new immigrants coming to Manitoba. In 2006, 1,620 immigrants or approximately 16% of immigrants arriving in Manitoba were from Germany, maintaining its status as the second top source country for immigrants to Manitoba.

German Ethnicity and the German Language in Canada

People of German-speaking origin continue to play a significant role in contributing to the diversity that is a characteristic of Canadian and Manitoban society. In the 2006 Census of Canada, 3,179,425 individuals reported having German ethnic origins, either solely or in part. Of these, 216,775 were from Manitoba. In the same 2006 census, 450,570 Canadians (67,030 of whom were living in Manitoba) reported that German was their mother tongue. German was one of the most frequently reported mother-tongue languages among first- and second-generation Canadians from European backgrounds.

Assumptions

The following statements are assumptions that have guided the development of *Grade 7 to Grade 12 German Language and Culture: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes*:

- Language is communication.
- All students can be successful learners of language and culture, although they will learn in a variety of ways and acquire proficiency at varied rates.

- All languages can be taught and learned.
- Learning German as a second language leads to enhanced learning in both the student’s primary language and in related areas of cognitive development and knowledge acquisition. This is true of students who come to the class with some knowledge of German and develop literacy skills in that language. It is also true for students who have no knowledge of German.

Effective Language Learning

The following are some **general principles** of effective language learning that the research on second language learning and acquisition has identified. These principles have guided the development of the conceptual model used in this *Framework*.

Focus on Meaning

Language learning is more effective when classes are structured around meaningful **tasks*** rather than around elements of the German language itself, such as grammatical structures, vocabulary themes, or language functions. The principal focus of classroom activities is on communication in German while learning about a content area (e.g., the geography of the German-speaking world), or while carrying out a project (e.g., creating a family album). Specific language skills are taught when students have noticed that they need specific vocabulary, structures, or functions to

* See Appendix B for definitions of terms.

carry out the task they have chosen to do. When German language learning has a purpose, students are more highly motivated.

Focus on Interaction

Students learn languages more effectively when they have ample opportunity to work in small groups on tasks that they have had a hand in choosing and that require them to negotiate meaning—make themselves understood and work to understand others—with their fellow students. In German Language and Culture classrooms that are structured this way, students have more practice time; they are working on tasks that reflect their interests and are using the language in situations that more closely resemble those outside of school.

Focus on Strategies

Successful German language learners use a number of strategies that help make their learning more effective. These language learning strategies* are often categorized as cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective. Communication or language use strategies* are an important component of communicative competence*. These include strategies used regularly by speakers of any language to enhance communication. They also include repair and compensation strategies, which are particularly important in the early stages of language learning if students are to engage in communicative activities before they have extensive knowledge of the language.

* See Appendix B for definitions of terms.

Not all students acquire these strategies on their own. Most of them will benefit from explicit classroom instruction regarding language learning and language use strategies provided alongside instruction in German itself. Once students are consciously aware of strategies, have practised using them, can select the most effective ones for a particular task, and can see the link between their own actions and their learning, they will be more motivated and more effective language learners.

Building on Prior Knowledge

The constructivist theory of learning suggests that we learn by integrating new information or experiences into what we already know and have experienced. Students do this most effectively through active engagement with tasks that are meaningful to them, in authentic contexts, using actual tools. For this reason, the content and tasks around which lessons and units are structured should be chosen from within the areas of experience of students. For example, if students are involved and interested in a particular sport, a task can be chosen that links with this interest. The learning activities will build on their knowledge and experience while encouraging them to increase their understanding and broaden their horizons.

Students will come to their German language learning experience with different prior knowledge, even if they have similar cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Classroom activities that provide them with choice and flexibility allow students to make meaningful connections and to be actively involved in constructing their own learning.

Transfer

In addition to knowledge about content, students will come to their German Language and Culture class with a large body of useful knowledge about language, even if they have never spoken a word of the language being taught. They can transfer knowledge of their first language and other languages they know or are learning to their learning of German. However, their first language may also be a source of interference initially, as students try to apply generalizations that are valid for their dominant language to the new language they are learning. Students benefit from an awareness of differences as well as similarities in relation to any component of the language: the sound system, grammar structures, vocabulary, **discourse*** features. They may also transfer language learning and language use strategies from one language context to another.

Language Learning and Culture*

Intercultural competence* is an essential element of any language learning endeavour. Knowledge of German-speaking cultures alone is not sufficient. Cultures evolve over time. Minority cultures exist within the dominant culture in any society. If students develop the skills to analyze, understand for themselves, and relate to any culture they may come in contact with, they will be prepared for encounters with cultural practices that have not been dealt with in class.

* See Appendix B for definitions of terms.

The Conceptual Model

The aim of *Grade 7 to Grade 12 German Language and Culture: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* is the development of communicative competence in German.

Four Components

For the purposes of this program of studies, communicative competence is represented by four interrelated and interdependent components.

- **Applications** deal with what the students will be able to do with the language, the functions they will be able to perform, and the contexts in which they will be able to operate.
- **Language Competence** addresses the students' knowledge of the language and their ability to use that knowledge to interpret and produce meaningful texts appropriate to the situation in which they are used.
- **Global Citizenship** aims to develop intercultural competence, with a particular focus on cultures of the German-speaking world.
- **Strategies** help students learn and communicate more effectively and more efficiently.

Each of these components is described more fully at the beginning of the corresponding section of this program of studies.

Modes of Communication

Because of the focus on using language to communicate in specific contexts, with a particular purpose or task in mind, three modes of communication are used to organize some of the specific learning outcomes.

Interaction is most often direct, face-to-face oral communication, but it can take the form of written communication between individuals, using a medium such as email where the exchange of information is fairly immediate. It is characterized principally by the opportunity to actively negotiate meaning, which is helping others understand and working to understand others. Interactive communication generally requires more speed but less accuracy than the other two modes.

Interpretation is receptive communication of oral and written messages in contexts where the listener or reader is not in direct contact with the creator of the message. While there is no opportunity to ask for clarification, there is sometimes the possibility of rereading or listening again, consulting references, or making the meaning clearer in other ways. Reading and listening will sometimes involve **viewing** and interpreting visual elements, such as illustrations in books or moving images in television and film. Interpretation goes beyond a literal comprehension to include an understanding of some of the unspoken or unwritten meaning intended by the speaker or author.

Production is communication of oral and written messages in contexts where the audience is not in personal contact with the speaker or writer, or in situations of one-to-many communication (e.g., a lecture or a performance where there is no opportunity for the listener to interact with the speaker). Oral and written presentations will sometimes be enhanced by **representing** the meaning visually, using pictures, diagrams, models, drama techniques, or other non-verbal forms of communication. Greater knowledge of the language and culture is required to ensure that communication is successful, since the participants cannot directly negotiate meaning.

Areas of Experience

In this *Framework*, the following areas of experience are recommended. Teachers should incorporate other or alternative areas of experience that are of interest to students.

Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
People around me – greetings – personal information – family – people and their characteristics – the human body – clothing Activities (daily, favourite, student, leisure) – celebrations – personal School – in the classroom – time and calendar – weather Introduction to the German-speaking world (geography)	Introduction to fashion (shopping) Activities – in the home – in the community – places and transportation Foods and cuisine – restaurants – market Sports and exercise Friendship Introduction to cultural diversity in the German-speaking world	Travel – vacations – directions Social life Health and safety – physical states – visits to the doctor Occupations and professions

Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Arts and entertainment—music	Fine arts	Literature
Relationships—friends, clubs, activities, sports, hobbies	Legends and myths	— poetry
Celebrations—cultural	Communications, technology, and media	— contemporary German writers
Fashions and fads	— power and impact of media and advertising	Future plans
Driving	Travel	Careers
Fold tales/fables	World/current events	Studying/living abroad
Daily routines	— differences in media coverage of events in different nations	— accommodations—looking for an apartment
		History
		Current issues
		Globalization/globalism

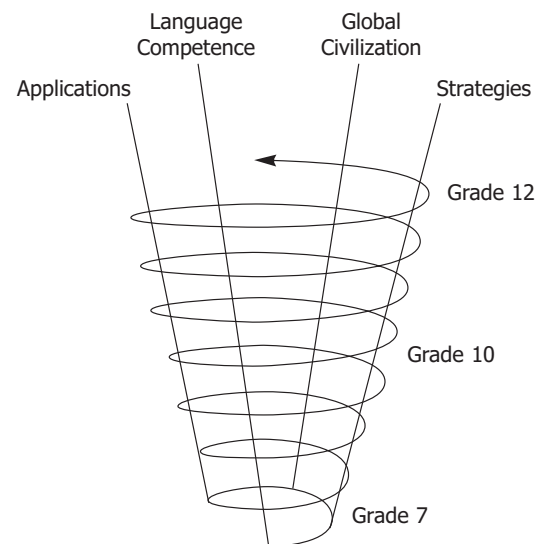
A Spiral Progression

Language learning is integrative, not merely cumulative. Each new element that is added must be integrated into the whole of what has gone before. The model that best represents the students’ language learning progress is an expanding spiral. Their progression is not only vertical (e.g., increased proficiency), but also horizontal (e.g., broader range of applications and experience with more text forms,¹ contexts, and so on). The spiral also represents how language learning activities are best structured. Particular areas of experience, learning strategies, or language functions, for example, are revisited at different points in the program, but

from a different perspective, in broader contexts, or at a slightly higher level of proficiency each time. Learning is extended, reinforced, and broadened with each successive cycle.

Figure 1

A SPIRAL PROGRESSION



Organization of the Program of Studies

General Learning Outcomes

General learning outcomes are broad statements identifying the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to achieve in the course of their language learning experience. The four general learning outcomes serve as the foundation for *Grade 7 to Grade 12 German Language and Culture: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* and are based on the conceptual model outlined above.

Applications

- Students will use German in a variety of **situations** and for a variety of **purposes**.

Language Competence

- Students will use German **effectively** and **competently**.

Global Citizenship

- Students will acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be effective **global citizens**, through the exploration of the cultures of the German-speaking world.

Strategies

- Students will know and use various **strategies** to maximize the **effectiveness** of learning and communication.

The order in which the general learning outcomes are presented in the program of studies does not represent a sequential order, nor does it indicate the relative importance of each component.

Specific Learning Outcomes

Each general learning outcome is further broken down into specific learning outcomes that students are to achieve by the end of each course. The specific learning outcomes are interrelated and interdependent. In most classroom activities, a number of learning outcomes will be dealt with in an integrated manner.

The specific learning outcomes are categorized under cluster headings, which show the scope of each of the four general learning outcomes. These headings are shown as bullets in the chart on page 14.

The specific learning outcomes are further categorized by strands, which show the developmental flow of learning from the beginning to the end of the program. However, specific learning outcomes for a particular grade level will be addressed in that year as well as in successive years. If we understand that language learning progresses in a spiral form, then language acquired in the preceding years will prepare the student for a broadening of applications and language acquisition in the following years.

