EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAMME CURRICULUM DEVELOPING FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE FOR LEARNERS AGED 6–13

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1 INTRODUCTION

In line with the Hungarian National Core Curriculum (NCC) and the Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR), public education, and foreign language in particular, is based on the principles of democratic and humanistic values, on the respect for the individual, on cooperation, equal opportunities, solidarity and tolerance. The NCC supports the continuation of national traditions, while focusing on European and humanistic values and on contents which link Hungary to the whole of Europe. The NCC stresses the importance of openness towards other cultures; it thus offers a broad scope for learning about other peoples' traditions, ways of life, cultures and languages. The NCC regards the development of learners' abilities, competences and their personal development as the central issue in pedagogy and thus supports holistic, activity-based education which involves and develops the whole personality.

The NCC lays down the main objectives of foreign language education at primary level (grades 1-6): to arouse learners' interest in foreign language learning, to prepare learners for successful language learning and to enable learners to communicate successfully in various areas of life. There is also an aim to establish and develop the learning strategies needed for autonomous language learning beyond the school system to support life-long learning, to maintain motivation and, gradually, make this an intrinsic motivation. Successful language education can be based on employing up-to-date learning theories and modern approaches to language.

Within a holistic, personality development-centred educational framework, the above objectives support the learners' development into a creative mature personality, capable of self-expression. The holistic approach to language considers language as an organic system and aims to present this system to the learners as a whole, in comprehensible and communicative situations. The learners meet the foreign language, understand and practice it through its spoken form. In the first phase of language learning vocabulary building and spoken interaction play prominent roles.

The teaching materials created for primary level reflect a social-constructivist approach.

This approach combines the constructivism based on the cognitive psychological views of Piaget, Donaldson and Bruckner with the Rogers' humanistic approach to the learning process and also the view of Vygotsky and Feuerstein, who looked upon learning as an interaction based on social relationships. The central hypothesis of the constructivist approach is that the learners bring their existing knowledge, experiences and expectations into any learning context, and they assimilate new knowledge in a unique and special way. Learners thus take an active role in the process of learning by re-shaping meanings and solving problems. Their whole personalities are formed and re-shaped and their general and language competences develop in constant interaction. It is immensely important to keep the holistic approach in mind in the teaching of young learners, in the design and implementation of materials or in the planning and conducting of lessons. The age-specific characteristics of the learners, their interests, their cognitive, emotional and social maturity all need to be considered when deciding resolving methodology issues or when defining the aims of language teaching and learning for young learners.

The programme curriculum describes in detail the general and language development aims of foreign language competence for learners aged 6-13 and the methodology and assessment principles for teaching this age group. It presents and summarizes the teaching materials which have been created in English and German for learners aged 6-10 and 10-13.

2 THE AIMS OF DEVELOPING FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE FOR BEGINNER LEARNRS AGED 6–10

The main objective of foreign language education is the foundation and development of the learners' foreign language communicative competence. For young learners the most important aim is to establish a positive attitude towards and motivation for the foreign language and for language learning itself. It is also important to let the learners meet and acquire effective language learning strategies, which will gradually give way to autonomous learning.

2.1 General development aims

General development aims are understood as aims which are not directly targeted to develop language competences: general development aims involve a wider spectrum of skills, not specific to language learning, such as life skills, learning skills or those linked to self-awareness. Highlighting these general aims emphasizes that language learning is an integral part of a larger, comprehensive educational programme, in the course of which learners are helped to become adults who are aware of themselves and of their environment, who act in a useful way for themselves and for others and who are capable of autonomous development, success and happiness. The following part of the programme curriculum lists the most important general development aims and provides examples of how to integrate these aims into language activities.

Learners should develop an increasingly positive attitude towards language learning and an interest and motivation in the foreign language.

Learners should
– enjoy engaging in classroom activities and meeting authentic children's literature
– take part happily and actively in games in the lesson
– be able to link real-life language input in their environment to what they have learnt in class
– strive to improve their language knowledge outside school

Examples:
Various language learning games and other activities (e.g. Bingo, memory, dominoes, card games, guessing games); physical games; learning stories, songs and rhymes.

Learners should establish and develop their natural interest and desire to learn, instinctive to and typical of this age group

Learners should
– be open to all comprehensible language input and consciously seek out opportunities to meet them
– be able to use successfully their knowledge about the world and competences they have acquired in any area of life
– be able to become more and more aware of the language learning process, recognizing their own roles, strengths, aims, etc.

Examples:
Using their own experience of books, children's magazines, TV, the Internet, videos, DVDs, cinema, travel or any area of life in the process of language learning. Learners contribute to the lessons by making drawings, posters and objects which can be used as teaching materials.

The creativity of the learner in language use and during the activities in the language class should increase.

Learners should
- be able to use their existing knowledge and skills in a novel and creative way
- be able to interpret partially meaningful information while solving problems appropriate for their language level and cognitive skills
- be able to handle the uncertainty of language input in an increasingly self-confident and conscious way, relying on meta-communication (illustrations, teacher's interpretation, mimics, etc.)
- be able to give verbal and non-verbal responses to foreign language stimuli which are appropriate to their cognitive and foreign language level
- be able to incorporate the experiences and skills gained during the language learning process into their general learning with an increasing awareness, and use those in other areas
- be able and ready to use their imagination and their own ideas both in individual and in group work

Examples:
Drawing, colouring, acting out, recognizing and using characteristics in guessing games, picture puzzles, reconstructing worksheets with gapped information in pair work, etc.

Learners should develop an increasing intercultural openness, they should strive to acquire the widest possible knowledge of the target language culture.

Learners should
- gradually become acquainted with the most important and most typical elements and the everyday features of the target language culture
- be able to accept those features of the target language culture which are unusual or new for them
- be able to view their own culture and the target language culture in contrast with each other but without priorities, as equals and be able to link certain elements of these cultures
- gradually acquire a knowledge of the typical customs and traditions (e.g. holidays) and with the typical features of everyday life (e.g. diet, table manners, traffic, getting about)
- be able to enjoy children's literature and children's games from another culture

Examples:
Learning linguistically simple items from children's literature in the target language, (e.g. poems, rhymes, songs, tongue twisters, counting rhymes, games); learning about customs and traditions of the target culture.

Learners should increase their self-awareness, confidence and self esteem.

Learners should
- enjoy the activities engaged in during language lessons
- assess their own work and achievements
- be able to build on their previous learning experiences
- be able to make an effort in performing gradually more challenging tasks

Examples:
Acting out items of children's literature (poem, rhyme, song or story), situations or dialogues; in the closing phase of an activity (e.g. during the presentation phase of a project), reflecting on their experiences appropriately for their age and language level: what was easy, difficult or interesting during the task, what are they proud of, what were they the most successful at.

Learners should develop and increase their cooperative skills.

Learners should
- be able to take part in the various activities in the lesson cooperatively, helping their peers
- be able to play with their peers while observing rules, with minimal teacher intervention or without the teacher
- develop an increased awareness of the fact that during the learning process individual learners can interact not only with the teacher but also with fellow learners, thus learning from one another
- be able to assess their own and their peers' work

Examples:
Playing circle games, board games, traditional children's game;.
creating a story, a song, a rhyme, a tongue-twister or a riddle; making a picture, a poster, a brochure, an advertisement, etc. in a group; planning and rehearsing a performance, making the scenery, etc.

Learners should become acquainted with basic strategies for language learning and communication, and be able to exploit these, with the teacher's support and autonomously.

Learners should
- be able to interpret partially meaningful information in order to engage in a task and be able, with an increasing confidence, to tolerate ambiguity caused by the complexity of the language input
- be able to link what they learn in language lessons and their knowledge about the world, and use these links in other areas of life
- learn to be in control of their language learning process and be aware of their roles, strengths, goals, etc.
- be willing to take opportunities outside the classroom to develop their language skills.
- develop an increased awareness of the fact that during the learning process individual learners can interact not only with the teacher but also with fellow learners, thus learning from one another

Examples:
Using experiences with books, children's magazines, TV, Internet, videos, DVDs, cinema, travel or any area of life during language learning. The learners contribute to the lessons by making drawings, posters and with objects which can be used as teaching materials. Using evaluation and self-evaluation sheets.

2.2 Language development aims

This chapter defines the areas of language development, the high priority competences to be developed for various language levels and offers possible language learning tasks. The programme curriculum is cumulative in nature, thus each level comprises the competences listed at the levels below.

Language development aims to establish and develop communicative language skills in the learners. An important additional aim is that the learners should use the language as a tool, for their own purposes, and apply creatively what they have learnt for their own individual contexts and interests. A specific aim is the discovery of the artistic and intercultural values of authentic children's literature and through this the creative, aesthetic and playful use of the language.

The activities used to realize the language development aims can be productive, receptive, interactive or meditating in nature and can be oral or written tasks (CEFR Chapters 4.34 – 4.3.5).

On the basis of the above, the ranking of the development areas for learners aged 6-10 is as follows:

Developing listening skills
    1. Listening comprehension
Developing speaking skills
    2. Spoken interaction
    3. Spoken production
Developing reading skills
    4. Reading comprehension (not applicable at this level)
Developing writing skills
    5. Written production (not applicable at this level)

The following phases are recommended for the realisation of the development aims:

Phases of development / Language level	A1–
The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language	x
The learner is ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language	x

This recommendation is in line with the minimal language levels as described in the NCC and CEFR. The table below assigns language development goals for the two language levels. The high priority competences are flexibly attached to the recommended activities. The list of language tasks follow the principle of gradual treatment, and are cumulative in nature.

CEFR level: A1– The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language

Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
LISTENING SKILLS **Listening comprehension**	The learner – can follow class management in the foreign language – can recognize familiar words and phrases in a listening text – can construct meaning relying on clues accompanying the input (illustrations, visual stimulus, body language, etc.) – makes an effort to imitate and acquire accurate pronunciation (intonation, stress, etc.) – can indicate the meaning of a text told or read out by the teacher in various ways (e.g. by visuals, movement, sounds effects, music, etc.) – can follow a simple spoken text from various sources (teacher, cassette player, TV, video, computer, etc.) and perform related tasks.	– physical reaction to simple instructions, e.g. movement, drawing manipulating word cards, etc. – following a spoken text in a meaningful and active way, e.g. illustrating a poem or song – physical response to a spoken text, or parts of the text, e.g. movement, mime, holding up pictures or objects, sound effects, etc. – finding information in a spoken text and acting upon it, e.g. colouring, marking the appropriate picture, selecting, ordering, completing a drawing, drawing, etc. – playing language games

		CEFR level: A1– The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language	
Area of development		**High priority competences**	**Recommended language activities**
SPEAKING SKILLS	**Spoken interaction**	The learner – can follow class management in the foreign language – can join in simple playful tasks – can give adequate responses in various verbal and non-verbal classroom situations – can actively and with pleasure take part in children's games requiring interaction – can act out simple dramatized stories or rhymes, e.g. demonstrating feelings, imitating the sound or movement of the characters, etc. – can add body language and mime to a performed rhyme, poem or song – can communicate with non-verbal and limited verbal resources as well as with actions.	– responding to instructions with actions or short, single-word answers – joining in children's games, language games or board games verbally or non-verbally, e.g. Activity, Memory, Simon says, dominoes, card games, Mr Crocodile, Bingo, etc. – performing stories, song and rhymes verbally or non-verbally – taking part in controlled dialogues requiring single-word turns – describing or introducing with simple linguistic resources (short sentence, single word, non-verbal responses) – taking part actively, verbally or through actions, in exploiting children's literature
	Spoken production	The learner – can perform a short, simple memorized text, e.g. rhyme or poem – can produce a simple monologue or dialogue in various ways individually or with peers with the teacher's help – makes an effort to acquire accurate pronunciation (intonation, stress, etc.) – can present his/her own work with simple linguistic resources.	– performing a simple text, e.g. rhyme, song, story, dialogue in various ways, e.g. with puppets, shadow theatre, traditional staging, etc. for an audience – exhibiting the learners' works, e.g. storybook, and presenting these for others verbally

	CEFR level: A1– The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language	
Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
Listening compre-hension	The learner – can follow class management in the foreign language. – makes an effort to imitate and acquire accurate pronunciation (intonation, stress, etc.) – can understand a text appropriate for language level relying on previously acquired knowledge and meaningful clues – use the information from a simple listening text in other activities – can follow a simple spoken text from various sources (teacher, cassette player, video, peers, etc.) and perform related tasks.	– following a spoken text in a meaningful and active way and performing a task related to the information heard, e.g. making drawings, picture cards or word cards; physical movement, imitation, holding up pictures or objects – responding to short, simple questions or instructions verbally or non-verbally – taking an active role in classroom activities
LISTENING SKILLS		

		CEFR level: A1– The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language	
Area of development		**High priority competences**	**Recommended language activities**
SPEAKING SKILLS	**Spoken interaction**	The learner – can actively and with pleasure take part in activities requiring interaction – can act out simple dramatized stories or rhymes – can express language functions with basic verbal and non-verbal resources – can ask simple questions and respond to similar questions when asked in a simple way – can engage in communication connected to simple, routine classroom events – can take part in conversations in familiar topics.	– oining in children's stories, rhymes or songs verbally or non-verbally – describing or introducing with simple linguistic resources (short sentence, single word, non-verbal responses) – answering or responding to simple questions or requests connected to classroom situations with single-word answers or in a non-verbal way – taking an active part in language games, children's games or board games, e.g. riddles, Simon says, situational games, etc.
	Spoken production	The learner – can perform a short, simple memorized text from children's literature – can recite short texts from children's literature after preparation – makes an effort to acquire accurate pronunciation (intonation, stress, etc.) – can give short coherent description of objects, people and events within their immediate environment in a familiar topic – can engage in role plays and other language tasks after appropriate preparation	– performing a piece of children's literature (poem, rhyme, song or story) with e.g. musical accompaniment for an audience (peers, parents or teachers) – acting out a role play after preparing and rehearsing – presenting a product created by self or the group in a short and simple way for an audience, e.g. exhibition, a staged performance, etc.

CEFR level: A1– The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language

Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
READING SKILLS		
Reading Comprehension	The learner – can read and understand a text appropriate for language level, recognize familiar language elements by relying on previously acquired knowledge and meaningful clues – can perform simple tasks connected to a text – can actively join in with a group reading led by the teacher – can follow the written version of a listening text.	– joining in group reading, e.g. recognizing events or characters on the basis of pictures, expressing emotions an opinions, guessing – getting information from a reading text on the basis of certain some criteria, e.g. finding departure times from a timetable, assembling a toy from instructions, etc. – understanding the gist of a text and using the information from it, e.g. reading and finishing a story
Written production	The learner – can copy or write short words accurately while performing a task and fill in a short gapped text – can create simple language tasks or words games for the group using familiar vocabulary – can do a task based on a text exploited in class – can create various simple texts, appropriate for the age group, based on a model, by making changes in the original text – can record in writing familiar spoken text – can take part in language games that require writing at word level – knows the English alphabet – can recognize spelling differences between English and the learner's first language	– making a picture dictionary – collecting vocabulary in writing on topics familiar for the learner – copying and illustrating simple familiar texts – creating variations of a text with the teacher's help, by changing a few words in the original – reconstructing a simple, familiar text (jumbled words, etc.) – making up and solving simple word puzzles (e.g. word search, hangman, crossword) – creating a simple text with the teacher's help based on a model (e.g. making a picture book in pairs or groups, drawing a comic strip and filling in the speech bubbles, making an evaluation sheet with pictures)

3 The aims of developing foreign language competence for beginner learners aged 10-13

The main objective of foreign language education is the foundation and development of the learners' foreign language communicative competence. For young learners the most important aim is to establish a positive attitude and motivation for the foreign language and for language learning itself. It is also important to let the learners meet and acquire effective language learning strategies to give way gradually to autonomous learning.

3.1 General development aims

General development aims are understood as aims which are not directly targeted to develop language competences, but concern a wider spectrum of skills, not specific to language learning, such as life skills, learning skills or those linked to self-awareness. Highlighting these general aims emphasizes that language learning is an integral part of a larger, comprehensive educational programme, in the course of which learners are helped to become adults who are aware of themselves and of their environment, who act in a useful way for themselves and for others and who are capable of autonomous development, success, and happiness. The following part of the programme curriculum lists the most important general development aims and provides examples of how to integrate these aims into language activities.

Learners should develop an increasing positive attitude towards language learning and an interest and motivation in the foreign language.

Learners should
  – enjoy engaging in classroom activities
  – be able to link real-life language input in their environment to what they have learnt in class
  – strive to improve their language knowledge outside school as well
  – enjoy engaging with authentic children's literature
  – be able to approach authentic children's literature autonomously.

Examples:
Conversations at the beginning of the lessons, individual reports on books, cinema films, TV, videos, the Internet, children's magazines, etc.

Learners should preserve and develop their natural interest and desire to learn, which is instinctively typical of this age group

Learners should
  – be open to all comprehensible language input and consciously seek out opportunities to meet them
  – be able to use successfully their knowledge of the world and the competences they have acquired in any area of life and transfer those to an increasing number of areas in their learning
  – be able to handle the language learning process with an increasing awareness and see their roles, strengths, aims, etc.

Examples:
Using books, cinema films TV, the Internet, children's magazines, etc. for language learning.

The creativity of the learner in language use and during the activities in the language class should increase

Learners should
- be able to use their existing knowledge and skills in a novel and creative way
- be able to interpret partially meaningful information while solving problems appropriate for their language level and cognitive skills, and tolerate ambiguity in the foreign language input
- be able to respond, with verbal and non-verbal resources, to the messages directed to them in the foreign language which are appropriate for their language level and cognitive development
- be able to use, gradually and with an increasing awareness, the language learning strategies used in their first language acquisition
- be able to incorporate the experiences and skills gained during the language learning process into their general learning with increasing awareness, and use those in other areas
- be able and ready to use their imagination and their own ideas both in individual and group work
- be able to use various linguistic tools to make their communication and task performance more expressive, colourful and individual

Examples:
Reconstructing gapped texts on worksheets in pairs. Getting information. Making a story on the basis of pictures.

Learners should develop an increasing intercultural openness, they should strive to acquire the widest possible knowledge of the target language culture.

Learners should
- be able to accept the features of the target language culture which unusual or new for them
- be able to enjoy children's' literature form other cultures
- aim to become familiar with the typical customs and traditions (e.g. festivals) and the typical features of everyday life (e.g. diet, table manners, traffic, getting about) of the target language culture
- be able to view their home culture and the target language culture in contrast with each other without priorities, as equals, and be able to link certain elements of these cultures;
- be able to compare the basic features of the native-language culture and the target-language culture.

Examples:
Telling jokes or funny stories typically told in the target language culture.

Learners should increase their self-awareness, confidence and self esteem

Learners should
- be able to perform a piece of children's literature for their own enjoyment or for an audience
- assess their own work and achievements;
- be able to build on their previous learning experiences
- be able to set realistic goals for themselves and make an effort in performing gradually more challenging tasks

Examples:
Acting out items of children's literature (poem, rhyme, song or story). During the presentation phase of a project, the learners reflect on their experiences in a way appropriate for their age and language level: what was easy, difficult or interesting during the task, what are they proud of, what were they the most successful at.

Learners should develop and increase their cooperative skills

Learners should
- be able to take part in the various activities in the lesson cooperatively, helping their peers
- be able to play games with their peers while observing rules, with minimal teacher intervention or without the teacher
- be able to create a group product with peers
- develop an increased awareness of the fact that during the learning process individual learners can interact not only with the teacher but also with fellow learners, thus learning from one another
- develop an increased awareness of their own strengths and choose a task in group- or pairwork activities accordingly
- be able to divide a task into sub tasks and share them with peers when doing the task in a group
- be able to express their opinions, arguing for and against an issue and make an optimal group decision
- be able to notice and correct language errors made my themselves or their peers
- be able to assess their own and their peers' work

Examples:
Creating a story, a song, a rhyme, a tongue-twister, joke or a riddle. Making a poster, a brochure, an advertisement, etc. in a group;
planning and rehearsing a performance, making the scenery, etc.;
playing circle games and traditional children's games.

Learners should become acquainted with basic strategies for language learning and communication, and be able to exploit these, with the teacher's support and autonomously.

Learners should
- be open to all language input that may be relevant for them and should consciously try to get into situations where such input is available
- be able to use their knowledge and skills acquired at other areas of their learning
- develop an increased awareness of the fact that during the learning process individual learners can interact not only with the teacher but also with fellow learners, thus learning from one another
- be able to interpret partially meaningful information in order to engage in a task appropriate for their linguistic and cognitive levels, and be able to tolerate ambiguity caused by the complexity of language input with increasing confidence
- be able to use the language learning strategies employed during the course of their first language acquisition in the context of foreign language learning with an increasing awareness
- be able and ready to use their imagination and their own ideas both in individual and group work
- be able to set realistic goals for themselves and make an effort in performing gradually more challenging tasks

Examples:
Using experiences with books, children's magazines, TV, Internet, videos, DVDs, cinema, travels or in any area of life during language learning. The learners contribute to the lessons by making drawings, posters and with objects which can be used as teaching materials. Using evaluation and self-evaluation sheets.

Learners should gradually become autonomous learners and autonomous personalities

Learners should
- become more and more aware of the learning steps they take
- gradually develop the ability to articulate their own goals
- gradually develop the ability to plan their own work
- be able to obtain the necessary information, tools and materials for performing a task
- be able to choose from various ideas or suggestions the best or the most feasible ones
- be able to carry out the plan they consider best with the help of the obtained information, tools and materials
- be able to evaluate their own work with increasing awareness

Examples:
Making posters in groups. Mapping out the necessary information and tools for performing the task. Researching available books and other publications. Collecting and evaluating useful information, deciding which to use for the poster. Designing the poster, deciding on the layout, on the proportion of the text and the visuals, and finally creating the poster according to their plan.

3.2 Language development aims

The following chapter defines the language development areas and the competences to be developed for each language level, and gives recommendations for possible language activities. The programme curriculum is cumulative in nature, thus each level comprises the competences listed at the levels below.

The overall aim of language development is to form and further develop communicative language competence in the learners. Another important aim is to help them to use the language as a tool, for their own purposes and to apply what they have learnt creatively, according to their own contexts and interests. A further specific aim is to help learners to discover the artistic and intercultural values of children's literature and thus enable them to use the language in a creative, aesthetic and playful way.

The language learning activities employed to realize the aims above can be productive, receptive, interactive and meditative in nature, oral or written. On the basis of the above the order of importance of the development areas for learners aged 6-10 is as follows:

> **Developing listening skills**
> 1. Listening comprehension
> **Developing speaking skills**
> 2. Spoken production
> 3. Spoken interaction
> **Developing reading skills**
> 4. Reading comprehension
> **Developing writing skills**
> 5. Written production

The following phases are recommended for the realisation of the development aims:

Phases of development / Language level	A1–	A1
The learner is ready for introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language	x	
The learner reads and writes in the foreign language		x

This recommendation is in line with the minimal language levels as described in the NCC and CEFR. The table below assigns language development goals for the two language levels. The high priority competences are flexibly attached to the recommended activities. The list of language tasks follow the principle of gradual treatment, and are cumulative in nature.

CEFR level: A1– The learner ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language		
Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
Listening compre-hension	The learner – can follow class management in the foreign language with confidence. – makes an effort to imitate and acquire accurate pronunciation (intonation, stress, etc.) – can understand a text appropriate for this language level, making use of previously acquired knowledge and meaningful clues – use the information from a simple listening text in other activities – can follow a simple spoken text from various sources (teacher, cassette player, video, peers, etc.) and perform related tasks.	– following a spoken text in a meaningful and active way on the basis of previously set criteria – performing certain tasks (e.g. writing an invitation card for a birthday party, making drawings, picture cards or word cards, performing movements, miming, holding up pictures or objects) – responding to short, simple questions or instructions verbally or non-verbally – taking part actively in classroom activities, e.g. language games.
LISTENING SKILLS		

CEFR level: A1– The learner ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language

Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
SPEAKING SKILLS **Spoken interaction**	The learner – can actively and with pleasure take part in activities requiring interaction – can act out simple dramatized stories or rhymes – can express language functions with basic verbal and non-verbal resources – can ask simple questions and respond to similar questions when asked in a simple way – can ask for clarification or explanation when the speakers' message is unclear – can engage in communication connected to simple, routine-like classroom events – can take part in conversations in familiar topics – can engage more and more in discussions in the target language with peers when working on a task in groups.	– joining in children's stories, rhymes or songs verbally or non-verbally – describing or introducing with simple linguistic resources (short sentence, single word, non-verbal responses) – answering or responding to simple questions or requests connected to classroom situations with single-word answers or in a non-verbal way – taking an active part in language games, children's games or board games, e.g. riddles, Simon says, situational games, etc. – communicating in the target language during project work after pair or group preparation, acting out a text the learners produced in the way it was composed or with minor changes (e.g. dialogues).
Spoken production	The learner – can perform a short, simple memorized text from children's literature – can recite short texts from children's literature after preparation – makes an effort to acquire accurate pronunciation (intonation, stress, etc.) – can give short coherent description of objects, people and events within the immediate environment and on a familiar topic – can engage in role plays and other language tasks after appropriate preparation	– performing a text based on children's literature (poem, rhyme, song or story) with e.g. musical accompaniment for an audience (peers, parents or teachers) – acting out a role play after preparing and rehearsing – presenting a product created by self or the group in a short and simple way for an audience, e.g. exhibition, a staged performance, etc.

CEFR level: A1- The learner ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language

Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
Reading compre-hension	The learner - can read and understand a text appropriate for language level, recognize familiar language elements in it, exploiting previously acquired knowledge and meaningful clues - can perform simple tasks connected to a text - can actively join in with a group reading led by the teacher - can follow the written version of a listening text - can notice difference between reading in first language and foreign language The learner - can copy or write short words accurately while performing a task and fill in a short gapped text with a few words - can create simple language tasks or words games for the group using familiar vocabulary - can do a task based on a text exploited in class - can create various simple texts, appropriate for the age group, based on a model, by making changes in the original text - can record in writing familiar spoken text - can take part in language games that require writing - knows the English alphabet - can recognize spelling differences between English and the learner's first language	The learner - joining in group reading (e.g. recognizing events or characters on the basis of pictures, expressing emotions an opinions, guessing) - getting information from a reading text on the basis of certain criteria (e.g. finding departure times from a timetable, assembling a toy from instructions, etc.) - understanding the gist of a text and using the information from it (e.g. reading and finishing a story) - looking at or cross-reading other learners' written work (e.g. project work, compositions, descriptions) - making a picture dictionary - collecting vocabulary in writing on topics familiar for the learner - copying and illustrating simple familiar texts - creating variations of a text with the teacher's help, by changing a few words in the original - reconstructing a simple, familiar text (jumbled words, etc.) - making up and solving simple word puzzles (e.g. word search, hangman, crossword) - creating a simple text with the teacher's help after a model (e.g. making a picture book in pairs or groups, drawing a comic strip and filling in the speech bubbles, making an evaluation sheet with pictures)

READING SKILLS

CEFR level: A1 The learner reads and writes in the foreign language

Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
Listening comprehension	The learner – can follow class management in the foreign language with confidence – can recognize and understand familiar words and phrases in a spoken text – can understand short simple texts (e.g. selections from children's literature) globally and in detail – can solve perform tasks as a tool for comprehension – can make use of their existing competences and knowledge creatively to interpret partially or completely new language input – can give responses to simple spoken discourse, confirm understanding or non-understanding – can follow directions – can follow their peers' project presentations.	– guessing from the title: possible vocabulary, characters, setting, events – performing tasks related to the listening text (e.g. selecting related and unrelated elements, answering controlled comprehension questions) – extracting the gist of the text – scanning for important factual information in simple texts – making an illustration for a text – watching or listening to a project presentation given by peers (e.g. a video)

READING SKILLS

CEFR level: A1 The learner reads and writes in the foreign language

Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
SPEAKING SKILLS		
Spoken interaction	The learner – can take part in simple guided conversations – can exchange simple basic information – can use non-verbal communication devices to support their speech – can ask for clarification or explanation if they do not understand what they are told – can give short, simple instructions – knows the basic terms of politeness and various forms of greeting	– taking part in interaction in pairs after rehearsing – making a short interview – making a short survey on a familiar topic – taking part in conversations at the beginning of a lesson, talking about personal experiences (e.g. "What did you do / read / see at the weekend?") – taking part in a role play – taking part in discussions in project work (e.g. "What do you need?", "How can we make it better?") – taking part in the discussion when evaluating a project ("Whose work did you like best? Why?") – exploiting, dramatizing tales and stories
Spoken production	The learner – can construct a simple spoken text based on a model and with the teacher's help – can present or perform a spoken text in different ways with the teacher's help, individually or in a group – can reproduce and acquire the correct pronunciation, intonation and stress – can give a short account of familiar events or situations – can link words, phrases with simple linguistic means (e.g. and, but, then, etc.)	– introducing self and others – telling jokes or amusing stories typical for the target language culture – presenting a text or authentic text (e.g. short story, joke, poem) in different styles (e.g. with puppets, shadow theatre, etc.) – performing a dramatized text (e.g. based on children's literature) for another class, parents or teachers – reading out and/or telling a simple text, recording it after preparation (e.g. group presentation, creating a radio advertisement, making a voice-over for a film excerpt) – evaluating peers' work – verbalizing appreciation or dissatisfaction – presenting own product with simple linguistic tools after preparation and rehearsal – giving an account of a project for a wider audience (e.g. other classes, teachers)

	CEFR level: A1 The learner reads and writes in the foreign language	
Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
Reading compre-hension	The learner – can read individually for understanding (silent reading) – can make use of existing competences and knowledge creatively to interpret partially or completely new language input – can read a simple authentic text for understanding and form a general idea about it or find relevant information (e.g. simple notices, posters, brochures) – can read out previously studied texts expressively, enjoyably – can understand familiar words, phrases and sentences in a written text – can recognize familiar words, phrases and structures outside the classroom context – can follow the orally presented steps and instructions for a project in a written form as well.	– doing complex tasks following the reading of a text (e.g. summarizing, answering questions, true/false statements, matching or grouping parts of the text or words with pictures, giving a new title to the text) – finding information in the text according to given criteria – making illustrations for the text – performing a mime after the reading – poetry or storytelling competition – finding the main information in a simple text – scanning for important factual information in simple texts

READING SKILLS

	CEFR level: A1 The learner reads and writes in the foreign language	
Area of development	High priority competences	Recommended language activities
Written production	The learner – can autonomously put together a text to learn – can engage in creative writing alone or in a group with the help of the teacher – perform complex tasks (e.g. project work) under teacher supervision – express opinion in writing by answering simple questions, responding to statements, choosing from alternatives – evaluate their own performance in writing by answering simple questions, responding to statements, choosing from alternatives – adapt various texts (e.g. samples from children's literature) in a creative way alone or in a group – fill in a form by putting the relevant data into the appropriate boxes in the form – make a list	– making a written interview – writing the text for the presentation of a project product – writing a report, a short composition – writing a simple text with help, on the basis of a model, e.g. a book review (title, author, characters, setting, etc.), recommending a story, writing a short tale or poem, creating a comic strip, a poster, or a brochure in groups, planning and writing the programme for an imaginary journey, creating advertisements (e.g. for TV, newspapers, notice board or the Internet), writing the missing parts of a story, writing a postcard or a greeting card, etc. – making a storybook in pairs or groups – making an annotated library card – filling in a self-evaluation sheet or learning diary (e.g. I've learnt..., I can..., I know how to..., I can say...) – rewriting a story by changing some aspects (e.g. changing the characters or the setting) – project work (e.g. making a drawing, poster or a series of photos and adding short captions) – preparing a survey – filling in a form – making a vocabulary list in a chosen topic (e.g. my favourite words, difficult words, etc.)
WRITING SKILLS		

4. METHODOLOGY PRINCIPLES

4.1 Activity based approach

Children between the ages of 6 and 13 are active. This springs from their physical need to move about, their curiosity, play and creativity. To create the opportunity for effective experiential learning it is of utmost importance to build on their age-specific characteristics. The materials are based on the social-constructivist learning theory, which considers learning as a dynamic and complex process within a framework composed of the learners, the teacher, the task and the learning context (classroom, school, cultural context). At whatever age learners start on a foreign language, they already have knowledge, various learning experiences, competences and expectations, which they bring to the new learning context. They assimilate the new knowledge into their existing structure of knowledge in a unique and special way and take an active part in the learning process. To maintain their active interest, it is important to help them meet the foreign language in interesting and meaningful contexts, relevant to their own life experiences, and to make sure that they experience foreign language communication through varied, life-like and activity-based tasks. The activities should trigger their intrinsic motivation, and while performing the tasks they can observe the characteristics of the language and try out how to use it in various situations.

4.2 Using authentic materials

In foreign language teaching, special attention should be paid to presenting language as it is naturally used in the target language culture from the very beginning of the learning process. Through this the teacher can exemplify real language use, mediate cultural contents and raise learners' interest in the language and the target language countries. Materials which are not written for language teaching purposes (e.g. newspaper articles, brochures, poster, films) have long been present in foreign language classrooms, but these authentic materials have limitations for their use with learners between the age of 6-13. The materials that can be used successfully with these learners at the beginning of their language studies are genres within children's literature: tales, poems, rhymes, counting rhymes, nonsense rhymes, tongue twisters, riddles, games, songs, fairy tales or puppet theatre stories. During their first language acquisition, learners have met nursery rhymes and familiar genres of children's literature (rhymes, tickling games, bouncing rhymes, clapping games) may evoke strong positive memories in them. Using children's books also offers opportunities. To educate learners to become readers, picture books which seemingly contain little input do play an important role, as do traditional story books or books with stories that are part of the target language culture. In the foreign language classroom, through the work put in by both the teacher and the learners, these play an active role in allowing learners experience the tale, poem or rhyme and performing the related tasks. Learners do not just passively take in the language but make meaning for themselves. It can be generally said that through engagement in children's literature, learners have various opportunities for self-expression, for creative and playful language use. Authentic children's literature thus not only creates an excellent context for natural language acquisition but it also has a remarkable motivating and socializing value.

4.3 Cross-curricular approach

Language learning is a process that affects and shapes the whole personality. This is especially true for children, who go through intensive development at every level of their personalities, in cognitive, physical and emotional aspects as well. The holistic approach takes it into consideration that at lower primary level learning about the world, gaining new knowledge and developing new competences is not broken down into various fields of study, as represented by various school subjects. This view is supported by the cross-curricular approach, which helps learners to maintain the holistic nature of their learning.

Putting a topic area into focus and working around it through various activities, contents of several school subjects can be addressed and competences linked to those school subjects can be developed. Pedagogy that considers various school subjects as a whole creates an excellent opportunity for inviting learners to link elements of their previous knowledge, re-think and review what has already been learnt in other lessons, and thus for deepening their knowledge and giving it more applications. Through this approach learning may become more interesting and more memorable.

Through focus on the holistic approach and personality development motivation can be maintained, curiosity about the world can be triggered, learner autonomy and problem-solving skill can be developed and, above all, school subjects can be linked; the learners' balanced, overall personality development can be supported through foreign language learning.

4.4   Cooperative learning

It is an important principle in the education of the 6-13 age group that language acquisition should happen through activity-based learning. Competence development can be done while engaging in activity-based tasks that require activating competences. Where developing communicative competence is concerned, this also means that learners perform the majority of the tasks in cooperation with others. Consequently, techniques applied in community learning come to the fore and cooperative learning replaces competition. In the lessons learners need to acquire the techniques needed for cooperation so that they are aware how well their groups function, what they can get from their groups, how much they can rely on their own social skills to help their group members and establish a good working relationship within the group. The teacher's role is to select the most appropriate working mode, whether it is cooperative, competitive or individual, for the pedagogical aim of the given task, since ideally all the three pedagogical techniques are present in a classroom. From experience with the three different techniques, the learners can learn how to work with others, how to compete at other times and how to work independently when necessary. While using these materials, the learners have plenty of opportunities to try out and practice all the three working modes, yet, during the materials development project given special attention has been given to include cooperative techniques in the teaching materials.

4.5 Developing learner autonomy

Change is a characteristic feature of the world today. The volume of information is growing exponentially, technology is developing rapidly. Flexibility and ability to adapt to the ever changing conditions are indispensable for the success in study and, later, for success in work. Learners who have the chance to master the techniques of self-regulation and of autonomous learning will be more likely to manage their own learning, become aware of their own needs, to plan their own development in the long run and to adapt themselves to changing conditions. The first step on this road can be taken at the outset of foreign language learning. Introducing various forms of self-assessment helps the learners to better understand the learning process and to recognize that this process does not finish when the lessons do. To put this into practice requires much attention and flexibility on the part of the teacher as well and it calls for modification of traditional teacher roles. It is important that the teacher should focus less on teaching and more on the learning process, should be open to the learners' thoughts and ideas, should accept their opinions, that individual needs should be catered for through alternative tasks and through differentiation and that the teacher and learners should jointly work out the rules for classwork and the criteria for assessment. With all this the teacher also becomes a learner in the classroom and the responsibility of successful learning is shared between the teacher and the learners.

4.6 Differentiation

The necessity for individualization and differentiation comes when learning is viewed as an individual constructive process. The teacher needs to work out the aspects and forms of differentiation through using knowledge of the given group and individual learners. The teacher gradually gives more and more space for the learners to choose from tasks which are at different difficulty levels and/or which require or allow for different types of activity. The learners can perform the tasks in various working modes, depending on what the tasks require (individually, in pairs or in groups) and can work at their own pace. This allows the learners the chance to widen their knowledge and develop their skills and competences in the way most appropriate to their level of knowledge, interests, needs and intelligence.

When planning the aim and the system of differentiation in a class, not only the learners' different levels of knowledge needs to be taken into consideration but also that learners differ from one another in many other aspects and that they all need to be offered an individual way to learn. They can differ, for example, in their sensory orientation, which determines which sensory channel they can use most effectively for learning. Further bases of differentiation may be found according to gender or fields of interest.

4.7 Teacher and learner roles

The new types of working modes in the material involve changes in the traditional teacher and learner roles. The teacher is no longer the only source and mediator of knowledge for the learners but now has the role of an organizer, observer and facilitator. This at the same time means that the learners need to take a more active, more independent and more cooperative role in the learning process. This is why it is important to develop learner autonomy, responsibility and cooperative skills in the programme and to make sure that the learners acquire the appropriate learning strategies, learning methods and language learning skills needed for this increased autonomy and responsibility. Putting these methodology principles into practice determines the relationship between teacher and learner. The teacher's role is to help the learners to acquire knowledge while taking their previous knowledge and learning experiences into account. The learners' creativity can be triggered by involving them in the organization of the learning process when choosing topics or tasks; there is a washback effect on their achievement and development if they are involved in assessment, primarily of their achievements and results. It may be useful to work out classroom rules with the learners and make them explicit. This can lead to mutual trust and to establishing the relaxed environment necessary for successful learning.

4.8 Classroom language

Foreign language learning for learners aged 6-13 can be compared to first language acquisition. The quality and quantity of language input has a decisive role. Since the primary source of this input is the language teacher, it is very important to provide the learners with the richest possible foreign language environment. The teacher should use the target language in everyday classroom interactions, in exploiting the teaching material and in assessment. Whenever possible, new vocabulary items should be explained through the target language, building on the learners; knowledge and creativity. Visual aids, body language, mime, stories, tasks involving drawing and other task types are excellent means to make the situation clear for the learners.

Learners show individual differences in the pace and rhythm of their foreign language development, just as in first language acquisition. At the beginning of their studies many learners are not ready to speak, to initiate a conversation or even to take an active part in one. This phase should be respected at beginner level as the learner's development can be followed through non-verbal and activity-based tasks.

Errors are considered as a natural part of the learning process, as signs indicating the level of the learners' knowledge and skills and determining the following steps to take. Correction of learners' grammatical mistakes is not necessary in cases when the focus of the activity is on communication and fluency. At the beginning of a groups' language studies it is important to establish a classroom climate in which the learners feel secure, where they can bravely and happily experiment with using the language, in which they are not afraid of making mistakes and in which they share their ideas with the others.

5 PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

5.1 Principles

At lower primary level, assessment should be carried out with the primary aim of motivating learners and boosting their confidence. In grades 5-6 an additional aim is to set the direction of further development. Teacher's feedback should be based on positive reinforcement and should assess and develop the learners' whole personalities in a holistic way, enhancing the learners' self-awareness and self-respect. Assessment should take into consideration the learners' attitude to the foreign language and to language learning itself, active involvement in classwork, cooperation with the teacher and peers, intercultural openness; it should be primarily development areas and competences that are assessed and not language contents and knowledge. Assessment should also be sensitive to the different starting levels learners are at the beginning of their studies, their different pace of learning, personalities and social backgrounds. The information gathered by the teacher while assessing the learners' language levels and learning needs should be used for tailoring the learning process to their changing demands.

It is important that assessment should be given during communicative language use. It should be personalized, qualitative and formative. Self-assessment should be a standard part of the procedure, incorporating the learners' opinions about each other's work. Assessment should be transparent, that is, the learners should be clear about when it is going to happen, how and along what criteria. The work of a group should be assessed as a whole and not broken down to its members.

For lower primary learners, assessment can be given not only in the target language but also through the learners' mother tongue or any non-verbal form which is familiar to and comprehensible for the learners. In the upper grades of the 6-13 age group, assessment should be given during communicative language use in the target language in a qualitative and formative way. It should be transparent, the learners should be clear about when it is going to happen, how and along what criteria. Self-assessment should be a standard part of the procedure, incorporating the learners' opinions about each other's work, thus developing learner autonomy. The learners should be able to verbalise what they have learnt, what they or their peers have developed in while exploiting authentic materials. When cooperative work forms are used, the work of a group should be assessed as a whole and not member by member.

5.2 Examples for possible assessment methods

Portfolio
a collection of the learner's work made according to principles negotiated with the whole group. It contains a previously set number of entries of a certain type (e.g. genre) from a specific phase of the learning process and the teacher and the learner have their own responsibilities in compiling the collection. A portfolio can be looked through any time and it gives a picture of the whole of the learning process, thus increasing learner responsibility.

Peer review

Learners evaluate the learning process of a pair or of the group in pairs or groups on the basis of previously set criteria (usually negotiated with the group as a whole). This strengthens responsibility and makes learners aware of the role of specific elements in the learning process. It focuses on the process itself and not the product. Various phases can be reviewed this way: an activity, a lesson or a whole module.

Learner's self-assessment

This assessment technique has the pre-requisite that the learning goals need to be set for individual learners (or, in certain situations, goals for pairs or groups), that these goals need to be fitted to the individual development needs and that the development is measurable.

Learner's assessment of the group

One (and always a different) learner gives an assessment of the group's work on the basis of pre-negotiated criteria. This technique is a good indicator of the success and effectiveness of a lesson. It is important to allow the rest of the group to give their ideas as well.

Small group discussion

This technique includes a discussion between the learners who work as a group on a task. It is especially necessary between phases of a longer project to discuss the results they have reached so far and to define the following steps to take.

Learning diary or a list results with competences gained

The diary has to contain a form which is appropriate for recording the achieved results and for deciding on the following steps to take. A simple form of this is a detailed list of requirements compiled by the teacher at the beginning of the learning process (phase) and the learners can tick an item whenever they have managed to accomplish it.

Examples of possible assessment methods

The following section will give examples for assessment techniques which help to realize the assessment principles above. Many of then realize several principles thus there will be overlaps between them. To avoid repetition, the examples are given only at the most characteristic principle.

Assessment should increase the learners' self-awareness and self-respect

- Following a children's literature portfolio task, learners present their collection for the teacher and their peers. They need to explain what they have attached for which authentic material, which is their favourite and why, etc. Following the learner's self assessment, members of the group and the teacher express their opinions about the content and the layout of the portfolio.
  The portfolio: The learners collect in a box or in a folder all the materials that they have received or created individually or with their peers during the time they worked with authentic material (children's literature), e.g. rhymes, poems, tales and stories, illustrations made for these, pictures, drawings, posters, puppets, masks, materials collected individually as "optional homework".
  The learner receives a "certificate" which states what the learner has learnt, acquired or created.
- The presentation is awarded with applause by the teacher and peers.
- Learners are praised when they solve a problem successfully.
- The teacher collects the linguistically clever solutions that were used in the lesson, writes them on the board and praises the learners.
- The teacher responds to the learner's written work in writing, while giving accurate examples for parts of the language the learner used incorrectly.

Assessment should focus on competences and should be given during communicative language use

- Portfolio: the teacher collects the best samples of a learner's work (e.g. letters, stories, posters, notes and visuals prepared for a presentation, audio or video recordings of role plays, performances or drama, photos, etc. The learner gets a self-assessment sheet to fill in then receives the same sheet filled in by a peer and the teacher. These together can be converted into a grade.
- During a communication task the teachers observes the learner on the basis of previously set/negotiated criteria and records these observations. The observation report is added to the portfolio.
- During project work the teacher collects the learners' work in a folder (e.g. letters, stories, posters, notes and visuals made for a presentation, sound recordings of scenes acted out, videos, photos, etc.) and at the end of the project the group jointly looks though the items. Both teacher and learners express their opinions and assessment of the products.
  Instead of oral assessment, the learners can also fill in an assessment sheet about their work. The same is filled in by peers and teacher; the sheets are then compared with the self-assessment.

Assessment should help the learners to become autonomous
- When filling in a self-assessment sheet, learners discuss in pairs what they have learnt and in what areas they have developed. Afterwards the pair or pairs join in small groups to exchange their views and to plan what steps they need to take for further development. The self-assessment sheet might contain sentence beginnings for the learners to finish, e.g. "I have learnt that…", "I know how to …", "I can now say…", "I'm good at…", "I need to develop in…", "I've managed to…", "I had problems with…".
- The learners play a board game in pairs or small groups which helps self- and peer assessment in that they need to answer questions and do tasks in connection with the covered material (e.g. "move a step forward if you know which story the following character belongs to"; "… if you can guess X from miming").
- After project work the learners are given some time to reflect on their work and record the result.

Assessment should be qualitative and formative
- The teacher gives written feedback on the content of learners' written work (e.g. rewriting a story), while giving correct examples for the language elements where mistakes have been made.
- Learners receive oral and written feedback which focus on their strength and confront them with an amount of problems that they can realistically cope with in the near future.

Assessment should be transparent
- After reading a piece of children's literature the teacher, before giving the teacher's assessment, asks the learners to assess their own work. Self- and teacher assessment should be carried out on the same set of criteria, which should be clear and previously negotiated with the group (e.g. to get a smiley you need to… to deserve a 5 you should…)
- A poster with the assessment criteria is put on the classroom wall at the beginning of the semester, using either pictures/icons or in a worded form.

The work of a group should be assessed as a whole
- When evaluating the work of a group all the members in the group should get the same assessment (formative feedback or grades).
- The members of the group analyse what the members of the group contributed to the result. They write messages to one another about what they expect from their peers when they work as a group the next time.

Self- and peer assessment should be part of the overall assessment policy
- Before assessment by the teacher, learners are asked to assess their own performance. Self- and teacher assessment should be done on the same set of criteria, which should be clear and previously negotiated with the group.
- Learners should get some time after performing a task to reflect on their own work and contribution, and to record their ideas.
- Conference: The teacher and the group look through and assess the products they have created (project products, portfolios, etc.) and vote on the best one. (The teacher has one vote, like every other member of the group.)
- The learners write a learning diary.
- The learners, keep a "book-keeping" record of the learning process with possible headings like "I can do this well", "I need to develop in this", I have succeeded in…", "I have problems with…".

Assessment should be positive, focusing on what the learner can do
- The teacher collects the linguistically adroit solutions that were used in the lesson, writes them on the board and praises the learners.
- Learners are given written feedback after some oral production about what they could manage to do well.

Assessment should be sensitive to the different starting levels of learners
- The teacher uses differentiated assessment techniques in tasks with several solutions.

6　TEACHING MATERIALS

6.1　Types of teaching materials created for beginner learners aged 6-10

The project aims to help the initial stage of learning English and German as a foreign language through three different types of teaching materials, which are intrinsically linked to one another. The elements of beginner language programme are the *Introductory phase, Exploiting a story or topic and the Topics and activities* sections. The teacher's guide and the programme containing the teaching materials are sorted into two age groups, according to the different age- and learning characteristics, skills and competences and experiences gained in the learners' first language. Separate programmes are offered for beginner language learners between the age of 6-8 and 9-10. The programmes are based on methodology principles ensuring success in language learning for the two age groups: they build upon and take into consideration their knowledge, skills and competences and focus on complex language development in line with the holistic approach.

6.1.1　Introductory phase

The Introductory phase provides materials for the first 20 language lessons. It gives the teacher a detailed teacher's guide on how to organize and implement the plans. Its teaching materials are varied and of high quality design; they are motivating for the small child.

The main aims of the Introductory phase:
- to help learners experience communication in a foreign language
- to acquaint learners with class management in a foreign language
- to introduce task types typically used with beginner learners
- to widen learners' vocabulary
- lay the foundations of listening and speaking skills.

The language programme builds on rich language resources and invites the learner to take an active role in the learning process without expecting that they produce the foreign language independently. During the activities, learners usually work in pairs or as a whole group, thus becoming acquainted with various work forms and having their confidence boosted while learning with and from one another. The contents of the Introductory phase are taken from authentic language resources, primarily from children's literature in the target language (e.g. nursery rhymes, counting rhymes, songs and poems). While learners are exploiting this material through various activities, they acquire the basic word stock for a topic and the most important elements of classroom communication.

The first part of the Introductory phase is a map which gives an overview of the 20 lessons. This is followed by a detailed teacher's guide, which provides step by step guidance for the teacher in the organization and implementation of the plan, it provides the language input, including the language used in class management and gives examples of the language the learners are expected to produce. The teaching kit contains teaching aids which help in understanding and exploiting the material, while making it possible for learners to become active participants in the learning process.

In the Introductory phase for the 6-8 age group, the focus is on oral communication. As a natural component of language, the written form of some words or texts (e.g. songs, rhymes) is occasionally given together with related illustrations but the learners do not need to read these. If a learner autonomously makes a link between the sound of a word and the written form, the achievement should naturally be positively reinforced and supported.

In the material for the 9-10 age group, reading and writing in the foreign language appears and the learners are gradually made ready for putting these skills into the service of developing their foreign language competences.

The Introductory phase of the English language programme also contains a Progress Book. The booklet serves as a learning diary for the learners to document their language development and to organize their worksheets.

The elements of the Introductory phase in English and German:

Age group	English	German
Learners aged 6-8	Me and Us	Ich und wir
Learners aged 9-10	Me and You	In der Schule

The Introductory phase is followed by Exploiting a story or a topic.

6.1.1 Exploiting a story or a topic

Each Exploiting a story or a topic section offers a 10-lesson language development programme based on a well known story or a topic. The section directly links with and builds on the achievements and the language input of the Introductory phase. While working with a story or a topic, the lower primary learners are involved in activities which, beyond foreign language development, help in developing their general competences and encourage them to work in cooperation with others. In this stage the teacher can already build on foreign language classroom language and can present most tasks through the foreign language. To boost learners' self-confidence and sense of achievement, and to reinforce their language learning habits, some activities are included in this section which can be found among the activities in the Introductory phase.

The main aims of the Exploiting a story or a topic section:
- to extend the vocabulary and the language input acquired in the Introductory phase
- to reinforce the task types the learners met in the Introductory phase
- to develop vocabulary
- to develop listening skills-to develop speaking skills in a given topic
- to lay the foundations of reading and writing in a foreign language with 9-10 year olds
- to develop cooperation and language learning strategies.

The teaching materials for the Exploiting a story or a topic section include rich target language resources from children's literature, in the form of nursery rhymes, songs and poems. To establish a context for experiential language learning, learners are involved in story telling or role play, which are natural, everyday language situations for a child. The tasks and activities encourage the learners to engage in verbal and non-verbal communication and help to develop spontaneous speech.

The English language programme offers work around a well known story, the German counterpart opens up some favourite topics with lower primary learners. In selecting the stories and the topics, an important aspect was that the first stories and topics that are approached in the foreign language should be familiar to learners. This is essential to boost the learners' confidence and motivation.

The map of the Exploiting a story or a topic section gives the overview and summary of 10 lessons. In the English programme it also gives a topic web, which arranges the main activities for exploiting a story around sup-topics, and gives examples for planning language learning activities to be used with other stories chosen by the teacher. The teacher's guide contains detailed lesson plans, helping the teacher to conduct the lesson in the target language and offers motivating and activity based tasks which are used in various work forms. The teaching kit contains multi-functional teaching aids, which motivate the learners to take an active part in performing tasks.

The Exploiting a story or topic section is closely linked to the Introductory phase and, similarly to that, offers language development programmes separately for the 6-8 and the 9-10 age group. The difference between these programmes lies in the level of language development. In the material for the youngest learners the focus is on oral skills development but some steps are included for the preparation of reading in the foreign language. Besides illustrations that help to understand the texts, learners meet the written form of some words and written texts are also provided. Similarly to first language acquisition, the written form is not excluded from activities but learners are not required to read these texts independently. The aim of providing the written form of the words and of the texts is that the learners should meet the foreign language in its natural context and they should acquire it gradually and at an appropriate pace.

The elements of the Exploiting a story or a topic section in English and German:

Age group	English	German
Learners aged 6-8	The Enormous Turnip	Hände
Learners aged 9-10	The Three Little Pigs	Im Zirkus

The Exploiting a story or a topic section is followed by Topics and activities.

6.1.3 Topics and activities

The next section is Topics and activities. This section links with and builds on the achievements and the language input of the Introductory phase and the Exploiting a story or a topic sections but is structurally different. Here various activities are offered for the two age groups to work around topics which are shared with other curricular areas and which can reasonably motivate young learners. To exploit a topic, activities are offered arranged into sub-topics. Every topic starts with a topic web, which represents the sub-topics and the related activities in a web-type arrangement. Each topic is broken down to generally 4 sub-topics, which contain 4-6 activities. Thus every topic has 15-20 related activities; it provides a rich resource for the teacher to work on cross-curricular issues.

The main aims of the Topics and activities section:
– to offer a resource bank of activity-based and creative tasks for the language lessons
– to develop vocabulary related to a topic area and communication skills in the target language
– to develop spontaneous and natural speech in the foreign language
– to establish cross-curricular links in the language lesson
– to provide a variety of work forms.

The Topics and activities section contains detailed activity descriptions but no lesson plans. It is the teacher's responsibility to plan and prepare the exploitation of the chosen material, and to tailor it to the learners by selecting from the activities listed. Every topic offers a wide choice of activity-based and creative tasks. The time necessary for the individual tasks varies between 10 minutes to tasks taking the whole of a 45 minute lesson. It is left to the language teacher to select the activities for their group of learners and decide in what order these can be best exploited in class. The number of contact hours necessary for the activities attached to a topic should also be planned by the teacher in accordance with the development aims and the learners' interest. The teaching aids are primarily for the teacher's use and they give provide examples or models for developing and creating similar aids.

    The topics contain activities that are built on various levels of language and general competences so that the teacher can choose activities appropriate to the level of the group.

The elements of the Topics and activities section in English and German:

Age	English	German
Learners aged 6-8	Boys and Girls Circles Colours and shapes Forest sCAReD Vegetables Vehicles Water	Farben und Formen Gemüse Wald Verkehrsmittel Karten Mädchen and Jungen
Learners aged 9-10	Books Camp Collections Faces In Space My Birthday	Burgen Geburtstag Indianer Kreise Meine Bücher Wasser

6.14 Using the teaching materials created for beginner learners aged 6-10 in practice

For learners aged 6-10, a complex foreign language programme is offered in English and German which can be used flexibly in the first 3 grades of elementary school. At the beginning of the programme (in 30 lessons) detailed lesson plans are given (see: Introductory phase, Exploiting a story or a topic). This is followed by the Topics and activities section which the teacher can freely use keeping the local curriculum and the needs of the learning group in sight. The order and the time frame of the activities is flexible and there is enough material to build up a course irrespective of the intensity of language learning programmes in the particular school. Working around the topics may easily provide the full material for the curriculum for beginner young learners.

Foreign language	Age	CEFR level	Type of teaching materials	Title of teaching materials (module)
ENGLISH	Learners aged 6-8	A1- (The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language)	**Introductory phase**	Me and Us
			Exploiting a story or a topic	The Enormous Turnip
			Topics and activities	Boys and Girls Circles Colours and shapes Forest sCAReD Vegetables Vehicles Water
	Learners aged 9-10	A1- (The larner is ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language)	**Introductory phase**	Me and You
			Exploiting a story or a topic	The Three Little Pigs
			Topics and activities	Books Camp Collections Faces In Space My Birthday

Foreign language	Age	CEFR level	Type of teaching materials	Title of teaching materials (module)
GERMAN	Learners aged 6-8	A1- (The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language)	**Introductory phase**	Ich und Wir
			Exploiting a story or a topic	Hande
			Topics and activities	Farben und Formen Gemüse Waild Verkehrsmittel Karten Mädchen and Jungen
	Learners aged 9-10	A1- (The larner is ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language)	**Introductory phase**	In der Schule
			Exploiting a story or a topic	Im Zirkus
			Topics and activities	Burgen Geburtstag Meine Bücher Kreise Indianer Wasser

If learners start a foreign language at the age of 9-10, they can progress more rapidly due to their age-specific characteristics, their previous learning experiences at school and the various learning strategies they have acquired. It is possible to start with the Introductory phase for the 9-10 age group then go on with the Exploiting a story or a topic section for years 6-8, where preparing reading and writing in the foreign language is only briefly touched upon; alternatively, language learning can be continued with the Exploiting a story or a topic section for years 9-10, which builds on the gradual introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language. The teacher may choose either route, after the Introductory phase. Exploiting a story or a topic will be the next stage in the course. It is important to note that no matter in which grade learners start learning a foreign language, they need to go through the Introductory phase.

6.2 Types of teaching materials created for beginner learners aged 10-13

The structure of the teaching materials for learners aged 10-13 is very different from that of the language programme for the 6-10 age group. While for the youngest learners at school the language programme extends to all the contact lessons available, for the 10-13 age group supplementary materials are offered for the local curriculum and the standard course book the school has adopted. The aim of the supplementary materials in not to widen the learners' knowledge, to teach or practice new grammatical structures but to use the language the students have learnt in life-like, motivating activities. The developed teaching materials are sorted into three different types: Story-time, Creative communication and Projects in the language lessons.

Within one type of materials (e.g. Story-time) there are several modules, that is, supplementary materials for 5 contact lessons the teacher can choose from. Modules differ in their topics and in their language levels, which are defined according to the CEFR language levels. This makes it possible to arrange a flexible system of supplementary materials, which takes into consideration the learners' age, their interests and the foci of competence development. The supplementary materials do not follow any one published coursebook.

6.2.1 Story-time

The aim of the Story-time strand
Children's literature is an invaluable pedagogical and cultural resource from the point of view of the learners' holistic development. It effectively helps to realize general educational aims and, as authentic language teaching materials, it offers unique opportunities for developing learners' language skills.

The main aim of the Story-time strand is to provide the teacher with as much practical methodology guidance as possible and thus allow the teacher to be able to independently, creatively and self-confidently plan and successfully implement a variety of professionally sound lessons based on authentic materials, whether as part of the regular language courses or as extra-curricular activity (afternoon study groups, language party, language camp). The Story-time strand also aims to acquaint teachers acquainted with works from children's literature in the target language culture (children's songs, nursery rhymes, poems, tales, counting rhymes, traditional children's games and circle dances) which suits the interests and the age-specific characteristics of the given age group.

The most important methodology principles with this age group is the choice of topic appropriate for the learners' age and interests, the establishment of a target language environment, the constant involvement in activities, the usage of various work forms, playfulness and the teacher's encouragement throughout the learning process. The quality and quantity of the input are also important factors. The Story-time strand with its rich children's literature resources is especially suitable for all this. Just as in first language acquisition, learning a foreign language is also preceded by a "quiet period", the length of which may vary from person to person. Due to the nature of the materials, the learners have various opportunities to take part in the learning process non-verbally. Using the foreign language as a tool

instead of learning about its system is a central principle in modern language pedagogy. Tasks and activities built around authentic children's literature are in line with this principle.

The contents of the Story-time strand
The Story-time strand builds on sources from authentic children's literature and provides all the practical methodology background (e.g. class management techniques, development areas, various activities which can be conducted in a variety of work forms, ways of assessment, etc.) which help the teacher to effectively involve learners with different abilities, interests, backgrounds, motivation and different types of intelligences into the process of language learning.

The role of children's literature in language learning
The Story-time strand aims to use as many as possible of the sources of children's literature. It contains texts which come from folk literature without or with very little modification, others which are specifically written for children and some which were originally not written as such but whose adaptations have become part of children's literature. Texts written by children also belong to this category. Genres of children's literature include tales, poems, rhymes, counting rhymes, nonsense rhymes, tongue twisters, riddles, games, songs, fairy tales or puppet theatre stories.

Poems for children play an important role in first language acquisition at a very early age. Various types of children's poems, like tickling games, bouncing rhymes, clapping games, lullabies, become a strong early affective experience for the young with their rich emotional content and their strong roots in the cultural context.

A special note should be made about children's books which can be sorted into two categories according to their appearance, whether they predominantly contain pictures or texts. To educate children to become readers, picture books which seemingly contain little input do play an important role. In the foreign language lesson as the teacher and the learners engage in a shared and interactive reading of stories the learners become active participants in the teaching-learning process and in understanding a story. They are not passive recipients but they make meaning. It can be generally said that in dealing with children's literature, learners have the chance for self-expression, and creative and playful language use. These activities create an excellent context for natural language acquisition and also have an outstanding role in boosting motivation and socializing learners.

6.2.2 Creative communication

The aim of the Creative communication strand
The main aim of the Creative communication strand is to develop the learners' general skills and communicative language competences which enable them to communicate creatively in the target language; these contribute to acquiring a working knowledge of a foreign language in public education.

Another primary focus of the Creative communication strand is to develop learners' communicative competence, more specifically their listening and speaking skills, through activities which are related to the given topic and which are close to the interests and everyday activities of the age group. The familiar contexts and clearly-targeted tasks enable learners to activate their knowledge and confidently express their opinions and feelings. The positive classroom context and playful tasks open up an avenue for creative self-expression.

Besides individual work, the children learn through the classroom activities how to work effectively and creatively, and how to voice their opinions in pairs or in groups, cooperating with their peers. It is hoped that both through individual and cooperative work, learners come upon several learning strategies and through this learn to accept and appreciate their peers' different approach to the tasks. This helps to develop tolerance towards others and towards other cultures.

The contents of the Creative Communication strand
In the Creative communication materials, due to their creative and communicative nature, the focus is laid on receptive oral skills at lower language levels; productive oral and written skills come to the fore later (interaction, speech production, and creative writing).

Selecting the teaching materials, working them out in detail and arranging them for use in class makes it possible to provide individualized learning for the members of the group, to provide for different language levels, to involve the whole of the learners' personalities into the learning process, to rely on their creativity and to develop their competences in many different areas.

The role of creative communication in language teaching
The materials in the Creative communication strand serve as the foundation of a working knowledge of the foreign language. A working knowledge means the type of knowledge which makes it possible for the language user to perform actions in the real world with the help of the language. This type of knowledge is thus manifested in actions, can be developed and can be assessed through language activities. From this it follows that a language programme aimed at providing learners with a working knowledge of a language, enabling action with the help of linguistic means, concentrates on communicative language competences and language activities and not on language systems (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation); its main content is provided by language activities whose purpose is to develop communicative language competences.

In the course of communication, language use is always creative: the speaker chooses and uses elements from the huge linguistic resource according to their own aims, the meaning they wish to put across, the situation and their own personalities. The term 'creative communication' emphasises that the real experienced content is mediated creatively in an individual way. The tasks focus not only on the functional usage of the language but also on its expressive (affective and artistic) aspect.

The programme sets out to develop the learners' communicative language competences through topic based language activities, natural to the given age group. Real communication can happen while learners interpret, carry out and evaluate the tasks;, the basis of this is the classroom communication, created under the teacher's guidance and through the learners' contributions.

When planning activities, it is important to ensure that learners favouring different learning styles should all have an equal opportunity to feel a sense of achievement. The teaching materials use differentiation in the tasks so that e.g. auditory, visual, kinesthetic, printed-text oriented and group oriented learners all have a chance for the sense of success through employing their own strengths. The same is true for the different types of intelligences (linguistic, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and logical mathematical). The teaching materials in the Creative Communication strand aim to contribute to the learners' good working knowledge of a foreign language by offering modern teaching materials together with the teaching procedures, learning strategies and assessment tools to be used with them.

6.2.3 Projects in the language lessons

The aim of the Projects in the language lessons strand
A project is a clearly definable task unit which needs to be accomplished in a given time and with a clear aim through previously negotiated activities. The overall aim of project work in the language classroom is to provide an opportunity for the learners to create a concrete, real product in a context they can interpret, in a linguistic medium embedded in familiar situations and through tasks they can experience (e.g. making and presenting a poster, a puppet show, a survey, making a comic strip, planning a journey, organizing a fashion show). A project carried out successfully gives a sense of success and satisfaction both to teacher and learners; the project product can often be presented to a wider audience (other classes, parents, etc.). This creates a further opportunity for using the language in real situations. Successful communication in situations different from classroom reality marks achieved development for the learner and provides motivation for working ahead. In project work, learners adapt the elements

of the foreign language to their own purposes, arrange and use them; this makes it possible to have a genuine experience in the real purpose of language learning: successful communication.

The project descriptions include the main steps of the project: lead-in by the teacher, input, warming activities, starting the project, defining the aims, grouping, planning in groups, research and materials collection, working in groups for problem solving, brainstorming for alternative solutions, decision making, creating the project product, presenting the product and evaluating the project.

The role of project work in language teaching

Project work is considered important because learners' can take an active part in the process with their whole personalities. Learners make use of their previous knowledge, their skills they have acquired within and outside school, use their creative ideas, imagination and emotions and they are also active physically.

In project work, a variety of work forms comes into play. Learners have the chance for individual work, for working in pairs or groups. This is a major help for them to express their ideas clearly, to listen to and to appreciate the ideas of others, to share responsibilities or to make responsible decisions. While engaged in various tasks, learners have to find their own solutions for various situations and to learn how to get information from various sources.

Activity-based teaching means that the learners take an active role in performing tasks in the lesson. The drive for them usually means producing a specific project product which they themselves regard as interesting. While preparing, performing and presenting the tasks, the learners have innumerable opportunities for using the foreign language in situations they can relate to and which are varied enough to maintain their interest. This means both creating a rich language context and language input and offering the learners a variety of language learning activities. While for the learners it is more important what they create with the help of the foreign language, the teacher should always bear in mind the learning aims, although this is not communicated to the learners all the time.

Every phase of the project activity is characterized by the presence and help of the teacher, both at the level of the groups and at the level of the individual. A teacher familiar with the various forms of providing support for learners, and using these appropriately, can help learners become gradually more independent and aware of strategies and techniques which help acquire new knowledge. The teacher's role can be defined as one maintaining relationships between the participants of the learning process (learners, teaching materials, tasks, teaching aids, etc.) and as one providing help which is adjusted to the level of the learners' level of knowledge and competences.

6.2.4 Using the teaching materials designed for learners aged 10-13

The teaching materials designed for learners aged 10-13 can be used flexibly. The choice of supplementary material is up to the teacher. From the modules for the age group in question, taking language level into account, the teacher can choose which modules from which strand to integrate into the curriculum on the basis of the focus of competence development .The choice of topic will most probably be determined by the learners' interests or by the topics offered by the coursebook. In the long run, and with due supervision, learners can also be invited to help selecting a topic or in the order of activities.

A module can be fitted in with the local language curriculum from various aspects. The module can supplement a topic in the coursebook, introduce or substitute a topic or can simply offer a break in the everyday routine of language learning. The use of the modules is made successful and effective by the aims set previously. The rich variety of the modules makes it possible to spend 50% of language lessons with the focus of competence development with the help of the developed materials.

Foreign language	Age	CEFR level	Type of teaching materials	Title of teaching materials (module)
ENGLISH	**Learners age 10-13**	**A1-** (The learner is ready for the intro-duction of reading and writ-ing in the foreign language)	**Story Time**	Cats, cats, cats The gingerbread man
			Creative communication	This is us Winter Cookies
			Projects in the language lesson	Let's Party – Treasure Hunt Survive! – Creating our own islands Round the world with a cup of tea – 'Nice smell, nice taste!' Ancient Egypt – 'You look great!!'
		A1 (The learner reads and writes in the foreign language)	**Story Time**	Jack and the Beanstalk Snowman Girls in songs The three billy goats gruff Kids and teachers Six Dinner Sid
			Creative communication	My Goldfish is the perfect Pet Books – 'Books are fun Leisure – 'Let's have fun!' AniMania – Animals all around Castles – Discover the world of castles! Clothes from head to Toe
			Projects in the language lesson	Underwater World Seize the day! – Festivals across the World Travelling in time 1 – 'Explore our history!' Travelling in time 2 – 'Travel with us!' Ancient Greece – 'Look at our cartoon!" Action! – Making a film about our school
		A1+	**Story Time**	Sing a Song The Four Musicians
			Creative communication	Dream Land Home Sweet Home
			Projects in the language lesson	China – 'Look into your personality!' Let's roll it together! – Organising a rock festival Along the Danube – Danube Day In the city – Let's design a new shopping centre

Foreign language	Age	CEFR level	Type of teaching materials	Title of teaching materials (module)
GERMAN	**Learners age 10-13**	**A1-** (The learner is ready for the intro-duction of reading and writ-ing in the foreign language)	**Story Time**	Und heute ist Montag Zwanzig Zwerge machen einen Handstand Von Kopf bis Fuss Gesundheits-Abc Es gruselt mir / Katzenschule
			Creative communication	Zauberer Schrappelschrut Farben Walpurgisnacht
			Projects in the language lesson	Unsere Wörter
		A1 (The learner reads and writes in the foreign language)	**Story Time**	Wer hat die Kokosnuss geklaut? Geschichten aus dem Mäuseloch Mamas Hände Lila Kuh & Co. Sagenhaftes Österreich
			Creative communication	Nüsse knacken Wetterfrosch Hallo roter Fuchs Ich Mappe. Das bin ich. Das kann ich. Blättertanz. Die vier Jahreszeiten Streng geheim. – Alte Schriften und geheime Schriften Wasser ist Leben. Vier Elemente Isst du gern Palatschinken? – Rezepte aus Ungarn und dem Ausland Bücher, die wir lesen Mein Sport, dein Sport… – Wir treiben Sport … Aber du bist doch ein Mädchen
			Projects in the language lesson	Märchenwelt – Welt der Phantasie Gemeinsam für die Umwelt Lernwerkstatt Musik-Werkstatt Die Geschichte von den Rosinenbrötchen Steine
		A1+	**Story Time**	Das Pfeifen ja die Spatzen von den Dächern
			Projects in the language lesson	Welche Farbe hat Afrika? Umwelt-Detektive

6.3 Summary of teaching materials created for learners aged 6-13

The English and the German language programme for the 6-13 age has two stages: for the beginner stage (age 6-10) the materials can cover all the lessons available for foreign language learning; for the 10-13 age group they can be used as supplementary materials for the regular course. The division of age groups and language levels, and the types of materials available in each is show in the table below.

Grade 1–6			
Age group	Age 6–8	Age 9–10	Age 10–13
Language level	A1- level – A1+ level		
A1– **The learner is not ready for the introduction of reading and writing in the foreign language**	Introducing English Story- or topic-based materials Topics and activities		
A1– **The learner is ready to start reading and writing in the foreign language**		Introducing English Story- or topic-based materials Topics and activities	Modules: Story-time Creative Communication Projects in the language lesson
A1 **The learner already reads and writes in the foreign language**			Modules: Story-time Creative Communication Projects in the language lesson
A1+			Modules: Story-time Creative Communication Projects in the language lesson

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