

## Why and how we learn foreign languages?

<b>Age recommendation:</b>	12–14 years
<b>Key Stage:</b>	KS3-KS4
<b>Duration:</b>	40 minutes (video 1: 1:57 minutes; video 2: 3:47 minutes; video 3: 2:07 minutes; video 4: 2:53 minutes; video 5: 5:41)
<b>Key words:</b>	Bilingualism, multilingualism, language learning, motivation, relation between languages
<b>Languages:</b>	English, Dutch and Italian
<b>Resources provided:</b>	Five interactive videos on 'Why and how we learn foreign languages'
<b>Other materials:</b>	None

### AIM

The aim of the activity is to introduce pupils to some linguistics concepts and topics:

- **bilingualism** and **multilingualism**;
- the difference between **acquiring**, **learning** and **studying** a language;
- why we learn languages (**motivation**);
- what we learn when we learn a language;
- the **three linguistic competences** that we often rely on in order to communicate in a language.

Overall, the videos should allow them to reflect on how and why we learn foreign languages. This is achieved through a combination of explanations, class discussions supported by the videos and concrete examples. Pupils should be encouraged to recognise how languages can be related and how their existing linguistic abilities can help them to understand and learn other languages.

### PREPARATION

The teacher watches the five videos:

- Video 1: introduction;
- Video 2: bilingualism and multilingualism; acquiring, learning and studying a language;
- Video 3: motivation;
- Video 4: what is there to learn;
- Video 5: the three linguistic competences.

As it will become evident in the videos, all pupils, including monolingual English ones, are encouraged to bring their own experience and reflect on their language awareness in this session.

### ACTIVITY

1. The teacher briefly introduces the session to the class before showing the first introductory video, which gives an overview of the material covered in the session. Throughout the session, the teacher will be able to pause the video when indicated in the video itself to encourage class discussion.

2. The teacher shows the class the second video focusing on the definition of 'bilingualism' and 'multilingualism' and the difference between 'acquiring', 'learning' and 'studying' a language. The teacher can pause the video in order to enable pupils to share with the group which languages they speak or are familiar with and discuss whether they consider themselves bilingual or multilingual (0:36). At the end of the first video, the teacher could also encourage the pupils to reflect on which languages they have 'acquired', 'learned' or 'studied'.
3. The teacher shows the class the third video on motivation. Here pupils will be introduced to the difference between 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' motivation. For more class discussion, the teacher could pause the video early on (00:35) to ask the class possible examples of why we might learn foreign languages, and whether these motivations are intrinsic or extrinsic.
4. The teacher shows the class the fourth video about the processes involved in learning a foreign language. To illustrate these processes, the video includes an interactive activity with examples from Dutch and Italian. To allow the class to complete these (individually or in groups), the teacher can pause the video at 1:23, where pupils are asked to guess the meaning of a Dutch sentence and an Italian sentence.
5. The teacher shows the fifth and last video introducing the three linguistic competences using, once again, examples from Dutch and Italian. In addition to familiarising themselves with what the three competences (systemic, sociolinguistic and strategic) entail, pupils will be able to reflect on what it means to communicate effectively in a language. The teacher can pause the video at 1:44 to allow the class to work on the interactive asking pupils to find similarities and differences between the ways in which we introduce ourselves in English, Dutch and Italian.