

1G: A timeline of my languages (TEACHER NOTES)

In this activity, students will...

- Identify the presence and uses of various languages in their daily lives.
- Become awareness about the own multilingualism and the multilingualism of others.
- Become aware about the role different languages plays in our lives, even if we consider ourselves monolinguals.
- Reflect on the different values and emotions that everyone connects to the different languages in their lives, depending on the individual circumstances and personal views.

Time estimate

How to use these materials

45 minutes

STAGE 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that we are all exposed to different languages and surrounded by, even if sometimes we are not aware of it. • Explain that the idea that only those who have full command of two or more languages can be called a bilingual and multilingual is totally outdated. Nowadays, many linguists see bilingualism and multilingualism as a process which might change over time. Under this broader understanding of bilingualism or multilingualism even beginner learners of a foreign language can be considered to be bilinguals or multilinguals to a certain extent. • Explain that the ideas, emotions and connotations that we attach to the different languages depend on our own experiences and views. A language that I might connect to being on vacation might represent for somebody else the family language, not necessarily related to beach and sun. • Tell your students that today everyone is going to draw their very own language timeline, where they will add all the languages they have come into contact with through their lives, even if they cannot speak them very well. They can also add the languages they would like to learn in the future. Tell them that they will also have to attach an emoticon to the different languages, according to the feelings, ideas and emotions that they personally connect to every language, and write down a brief explanation of why they chose the different emoticons for each language. • Share the worksheet with your students and show them your own language timeline and explain to them why did you choose the different emoticons. Alternatively, you can show them the example provided. 	10'
STAGE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the worksheet and the list of emoticons with your students and allow them to draw their language timeline. 	15'
STAGE 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option A: Volunteers share their language timelines with the class and explain the meaning the different languages have for them. • Option B: Students work in pairs or small groups and explain to each other their language timelines. • Option C: All language timelines are displayed in the classroom and the students have the opportunity to look at each of them. 	20'

Prep time suggestions

- You can make your own timeline to show your students, which might boost a feeling of trust and sharing. Or if you don't have time for that, you can also show the example provided below.
- Print different emoticons for your students to stick to their timelines and make sure they have scissors and glue at their disposal.
- Read Chapter I of the Handbook *Inclusion, Diversity and Communication Across Cultures* available online (url: XXX), especially section 3.2, for some extra background information on the topic of individual multilingualism.

- For a similar activity following a different, more creative approach, look activity A in Chapter I.

A timeline of my languages

Activity developed by Lilli Düwel, Vivienne Palachowski, Eva Rodríguez Suarez and Marie Schulz



A timeline of my languages and emotions

Languages are all around us even before we are born. You are about to draw your very own timeline of your languages and the emotions that you connect with them. In order to do so, take the example above to get inspired and think about the following questions:

- Think about the languages you can speak to a lesser or greater extent and about the languages you have learned or been in contact to through the years.
- Think about when and where did you learn those languages. Maybe as a baby or when you were a small child, in your adolescence, at the school, at home, etc.
- In this timeline there is also space for the future! You can also think about which languages you would like to learn in the future and add them to your timeline.
- It's alright if you cannot perfectly express yourself in the languages you know, even if you have a low level on the language, or if you just can understand it but no speak it so well, your timeline has room for them all!
- If you have learned more than a language at a time during the same period of time you can add them too. There are no limits!

Once you have finished with your timeline assign an emoticon to each of the languages to express the ideas and emotions you connect with each language. Try to briefly explain why you have chosen a particular emoticon for each language.

The languages you can speak or you have learned over the years don't necessarily have to coincide with the languages of your classmates, nor the emotions you connect with them.

"Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else." Margaret Mead

EXAMPLE



- **Brain:** German is my mother tongue and also the language I think in.
- **World:** English is the first foreign language I learned, and it represents for me an international language, especially useful for traveling.
- **Clock (with an arrow pointing backwards):** Latin is a language I learned in the school and, for me, it represents the past and history.
- **Heart:** Spanish is another foreign language I learned during my adolescence and the heart represents the love I have for this language, my passion!
- **Palm trees and sun:** Turkish represents the language I use when I go on holidays.

EMOTICONS

