

# Lesson Plan

**Course/Group:** B1

**Tutor:** Katy

**Date:**

**Topic:** Talking my language

**Language Focus:** Vocabulary/Reading/Speaking

## Learning Outcomes

- *By the end of the lesson, students will revise the meaning, form and pronunciation of vocabulary related to using foreign languages.*
- *By the end of the lesson, students will have practised and developed their ability to make predictions about a reading text about hyperglots, as well as reading for specific information.*
- *By the end of the lesson, students will be better able to use vocabulary about using foreign languages in the context of discussing their own English language development.*

## Group details:

**Student A** (B1, confident at speaking, struggles with writing) / **Student B** (B1, struggles to sit down for full 90 minute session) / **Student C** (B1, not very confident at speaking, needs processing time) / **Student D** (A2+, works well with Student E, really likes games and competition) / **Student E** (B1, works well with Student D)

Time (mins)	Teacher Activity & Learner Activity
5	T greets ss, completes register, alerts DoS of any absences, hands out textbooks. T shares a picture on <b>P10</b> . T instructs ss to look at <b>Task 1</b> . Ss think independently for 30 seconds and then work in pairs. T monitors. Ss feedback as open-class. T shares any that were unknown (covered in TB). T asks ss to think of more words for 'thank you' in other languages.
5	T gets ss to read through words in box for <b>Task 2</b> and models the answer to the first sentence. Ss then complete individually, then check answers in pairs. T monitors. Feedback focusses on sentences ss had difficulty with.
10	<b>Language clarification</b> Meaning: for language items ss are not confident with, T guides ss to find the meaning within the rest of the marker sentence, e.g. <i>get by - know the basics</i> . T asks further CCQs as necessary. Form: T elicits from ss what language items are, gets them to note down, feedback and check (e.g. <i>fluently - adv, accent - noun</i> ), can also draw attention to collocations ( <i>strong accent</i> ). Pron: T chooses 2 or 3 vocabulary items with pron features worth focussing on (e.g. connected speech - <i>picked it up</i> , potential pron challenge - /j/ /ə/ sounds in <i>accurate</i> ).

	<p>If necessary, T could encourage ss to help in producing a couple of further marker sentences with the more challenging vocabulary items.</p> <p>T then asks ss to say which statements apply to them. Encourage discussion on what constitutes a positive attitude to language learning (e.g. 1, 2,5, 7 and 8 are generally positive)</p>
5	<p>T asks ss to listen and note what points T raises about their language learning experience. T then briefly describes their experience learning a particular language, modelling the use of the TL in context.</p> <p>Ss note points T makes, peer check and then feedback as a class.</p>
15	<p>T shares <b>Task 3</b>, gives ss time to read and think of answers. T puts ss in small groups. Gets ss to discuss questions.</p> <p>If fast finishers, groups can be rotated once questions are covered. T monitors, notes good examples and errors for delayed error correction (DEC) stage.</p>
5	<p>DEC - T gathers content feedback from a couple of ss. Then T writes examples of good language and errors on the board. T praises good examples and then elicits corrections for errors on the board.</p>
5	<p>T asks ss if they know any <i>hyperglots</i> and asks <i>how many languages is it possible to answer? Which languages would be the easiest for you to learn? Which would be the hardest?</i></p> <p>T monitors, asks a few ss to feedback responses.</p>
5	<p>T shares <b>Task 4</b>, gives ss time to read and think of answers. T puts ss in pairs to discuss. T monitors, feedback answers.</p>
10	<p>T asks ss to read the article for <b>Task 5</b>. Ss complete independently. Then compare answers in pairs.</p> <p>T monitors and feedback as a class.</p>
7	<p>T shares <b>Task 6</b>. Ss complete independently. Then compare answers in pairs.</p> <p>T monitors and feedback as a class.</p>
7	<p>T shares <b>Task 7</b>. Ss answer questions in pairs. T encourages ss to note answers. T monitors.</p>
5	<p>DEC - T gathers content feedback from a couple of ss. Then T writes examples of good language and errors on the board. T praises good examples and then elicits corrections for errors on the board.</p>
6	<p>If time, T passes paper round the class and ask ss to write 'top tip' for language learning. At the end of the lesson, pin list of tips to board or wall.</p>

## Homework/Independent Study:

## Achievement of Learning Objectives:

See below for pages referenced in the plan.

# TALKING MY LANGUAGE

## VOCABULARY Talking about languages

1 Work in pairs. How many of the languages in the picture do you recognise?

2 Complete the sentences about using foreign languages with these words and phrases.

accent	express	fluently	picked it up
accurate	get by	mastering	struggled

- I'm not very \_\_\_\_\_, but I can hold a conversation and make myself understood.
- I know the basics – enough to \_\_\_\_\_ when I'm travelling there.
- I really \_\_\_\_\_ with French when I was at school, so I just gave up.
- I get frustrated when I can't \_\_\_\_\_ myself.
- I never went to class. I just \_\_\_\_\_ from talking to people.
- I'm a bit embarrassed to speak sometimes because I know I have a strong \_\_\_\_\_.
- I grew up bilingual so I speak Spanish and Japanese \_\_\_\_\_.
- I'm not interested in \_\_\_\_\_ the language, I just want to be able to read it for my job.

3 Work in groups. Use some of the language from Exercise 2 to discuss these questions.

- What languages have you studied?
- What languages do you know at least a few words in? What can you say?
- How did you learn? Do you use these languages now? How well do you know each one?

## READING

4 You are going to read an article about 'hyperglots' – people who speak many languages. Work in pairs. Look at the photos and the title opposite then discuss how these words and numbers might be connected to the topic.

72	a parrot	translator	10,000
two weeks	globalisation	genes	mistakes

5 Read the article and check your ideas from Exercise 4.

6 According to the article, are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- Mezzofanti spoke 72 languages fluently.
- Some people who heard Mezzofanti speak probably couldn't know if he was fluent.
- There is no proof that Mezzofanti really was multilingual.
- Globalisation will create more hyperglots.
- Hyperglots often possess genetic advantages.
- Hyperglots aim to speak all their languages fluently.



7 Work in pairs. Read the comments that follow the article and discuss these questions.

- Which comments do you agree with and which do you disagree with? Why?
- What did you find most interesting about the article?
- Did you read anything about the habits of hyperglots that could help you study better?

Understanding reading texts and improving your vocabulary involves more than just learning single words. You also need to notice the connected words and grammar.

8 Find these words in the article and notice the connected words and grammar.

far	evidence	growing
allow	terms	opportunities

9 Work in groups. Cover the article and complete the sentences. Then check your ideas.

- 1 But \_\_\_\_\_ far \_\_\_\_\_?
- 2 There \_\_\_\_\_ evidence \_\_\_\_\_ he could use many languages.
- 3 There will \_\_\_\_\_ growing \_\_\_\_\_ in the future.
- 4 Top \_\_\_\_\_ may \_\_\_\_\_ genes \_\_\_\_\_ allow \_\_\_\_\_ get the \_\_\_\_\_ their training.
- 5 They often \_\_\_\_\_ limited \_\_\_\_\_ terms \_\_\_\_\_ individual languages.
- 6 They \_\_\_\_\_ opportunities \_\_\_\_\_ language closer to home.

10 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- Think of two examples where there are growing numbers of something. Why are they growing?
- How is your English in terms of vocabulary, speaking, listening, etc.? What can you do to improve these different aspects?
- What opportunities do you have to practise English?

# THE GOOGLE TRANSLATORS IN HUMAN FORM

## Michael Erard's new book investigates the master linguists or 'hyperglots'

Liam Scanlon

The 18th century Italian priest Cardinal Giuseppe Mezzofanti is a legend among linguists. They say he studied 72 languages, 30 of which he mastered. He spoke another nine fluently, though not perfectly, and could hold a basic conversation in at least eleven more. And all that without leaving Italy! One story suggests he picked up Ukrainian in just two weeks, after meeting a visitor from there.

But how far is this true? Certainly, the figure of 72 is too high and some people perhaps exaggerated how fluent he was. He lived at a time when travel was difficult and learning other languages was still unusual. Therefore, many reports of his abilities come from visitors who were probably struggling to express themselves in Italian. There were also those who, while appreciating his good accent and accurate grammar, described him as merely a parrot who said nothing of interest. However, according to Michael Erard, author of the book *Mezzofanti's Gift*, there is sufficient evidence to believe he could use many languages.

Erard also argues that there are many hyperglots in the world today and that, with globalisation, there will be a growing number in the future. For example, Alexander Argüelles is fluent in around twenty languages and has studied 60. He studies nine hours a day, down from fourteen before he got married! The Hungarian translator Kato Lomb worked with sixteen, and you can watch a YouTube video of Alex Rowling speaking eleven languages at the age of twenty.

A central question of the book is whether hyperglots are born or made. Are their achievements genetic or do hyperglots have secrets that normal language learners can learn from? Erard's conclusions agree with research on highly talented people in other areas such as sport and music. These people generally have advantages they are born with: top athletes may have genes that allow them to get the most from their training; hyperglots seem to possess excellent memories and have brains that are more efficient in processing speech sounds. However, becoming the best also requires a lot of hard work. Some argue that the difference between a top performer and someone who's just 'very good' is that the top performer has practised for 10,000 hours instead of 6,000.

The fact is that most ordinary language learners lack these natural advantages and simply don't have that much time. So is there any hope for us? Erard believes there is and that research on hyperglots can offer some useful lessons. For example, they often have limited ambitions in terms of individual languages: they're happy to get by, or to be only able to read, or not to have a perfect accent. They're practical: if they can't travel, they look for opportunities to use the language closer to home. Some simply imagine conversations in their heads. They also use other techniques like learning words in context. Finally, they're never afraid to make mistakes or appear stupid and so never give up.



Cardinal Giuseppe Mezzofanti



### COMMENTS

- languagelearner:** I've actually read Kato's book about language learning and I think the best advice is to read what you're interested in and read a lot.
- bobjob:** I know it's wrong, but I kind of hate these people! I'm struggling to learn one extra language.
- unconvinced:** How does Alexander Argüelles earn a living? I think you need to be rich to be a hyperglot!
- hughd:** You have to start learning languages when you're young.
- andyw:** When people say they're bad at languages, they just mean they don't want to spend the time required to learn.
- artist:** I can say 'do you work or study' in fifteen languages. Does that make me a hyperglot?
- r\_sewell:** The thing about vocabulary in context is good. I never learn single words. I always learn words in groups.