



Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**

Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide

Practice example

Student tasks



UniSA

Research Centre for
**Languages
and Cultures**

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in the publication do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

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Introduction to examples

Collected here are examples of teachers' work. These are drawn from teacher practice and are included here to exemplify aspects of teaching, learning and assessing languages, as discussed in the *Guide*. Teachers were invited to share their planning and programming documents and members of the project team worked with them to further develop aspects of their work.

Programs

The collection of programs includes primary, middle and senior secondary long and short-term programs. These contain annotations designed to point out specific points of interest for you to consider in your reading of them. At the end of each program you will find a commentary that describes how the program exemplifies selected sections of the *Guide*.

A selection of teachers' work

This is a selection of programs and parts of programs, plans for classroom teaching, planned assessment tasks, descriptions of the teaching and learning contexts, investigations and evaluations of practice, and reflections on current practices. It shows teachers engaged in professional thinking, planning, reassessing, and evaluating what they teach, how they teach and who they teach.

About the examples

- These examples of teachers' planning, practice and reflection are provided for you to examine, consider and perhaps use in expanding your own understanding of language teaching and learning. We know that teachers learn best from other teachers and so we encourage you to look across the set of examples in all languages rather than just the language(s) you teach.
- The examples of teachers' work included here belong to individual teachers and are taught in a particular context which means that you will not find models that you can instantly adopt and teach. Rather, you will find ideas about teaching and learning that you can use by adapting and reworking them to produce programs, classroom teaching, learning and assessment practices that you can use in your own context.
- The examples of teachers' work are not included here because they constitute 'best practice' or are exemplars of definitive programs for languages teaching and learning. You will find some outstanding approaches to planning and teaching that advance our understanding of how to make languages teaching and learning a rich and effective learning experience for students. You will also find teachers' honest reflections and evaluations of their pedagogies, questioning what they do and rethinking what they will do.
- The examples of teachers' work may include some pedagogies of which you may be critical. However, you will also find professional educators striving to make sense of their work with students, language teaching and language learning.

Example	Student tasks
Language	Italian
Level	Senior school
Teacher	Nives Mercurio (SA) The following example shows a series of individual and group tasks, for formative and summative assessment, based on an excerpt from the play script 'Accidental death of an anarchist' by Dario Fo.

<p>Teaching and learning Classroom interactions The nature of interactional language <i>Tasks and task-types</i> Student engagement Recognising the diversity of learners and their life-worlds Technology in language teaching and learning</p>	<p>This series of connected tasks represents each of the six activity types of the ALL Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacting and discussing • Interacting and deciding/transacting • Obtaining information and using it • Giving information • Personal response • Personal expression <p>These provide a means for students to engage with a range of learning experiences using a range of language in a range of contexts.</p>
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Module and assessment tasks for Years 11 and 12

Module title: What's in a word? *Le presento i miei collaboratori*

Resource text: *Morte accidentale di un anarchico*, by Dario Fo
Prologue to the play and an extract from Act 2 are available on the Internet

About the text

This is an extract from the second act of the play *Morte accidentale di un anarchico* by Dario Fo, and may be used to show the way language is used for different purposes: to be polite, to obfuscate, or to demand clarity of meaning.

An introduction to the text needs to be provided to set the literary and historical background: the era and the situation in which Dario Fo was writing, the incident in history he makes use of; the setting and period he chooses as the setting for his play, and why.

The teacher will introduce the author of the play, Dario Fo, who wrote this play in Italy in the 1970s. Fo believed that theatre and language are powerful media, not only for looking at ourselves, but for examining our institutions, politics, government, the church, nationalism, monarchy and so on. He constantly questioned the world we live in: yet his subversive, uncomfortable, critical writing was always set in laughter and jest.

In commentaries by the author, Fo says that in *Morte accidentale di un anarchico*, he is retelling the case of the Italian anarchist Andrea Salsedo who, in the USA in 1921, was detained and questioned by the police and who eventually committed suicide by jumping from a fourteenth storey window whilst in police detention. Fo says that to make the case more current and theatrical he has transposed it to present-day Milan, that is, Milan in the 1970s, when the play was written. The irony is clear. The Salsedo case is remarkably similar to the Pinelli case, which played out in 1970 Milan. The teacher will need to speak about the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing in Milan and the Pinelli case which followed. The teacher can go on to mention the *Anni di piombo*, the polarisation of Italian politics and the spillover into armed violence which reached into all sections of society. Comparisons can be made with world terrorism since September 11 2001: new laws, increased government intervention on security, the reportage on TV and the pressure of security issues.

Student assessment tasks

- **Text analysis**
 - Part A Reading and responding
Students answer questions in Italian and English about the text to show understanding of the general and specific details of the text. (Italian and/or English)
 - Part B Students write a summary of the scene to show understanding of the setting, the action and dialogue. Using the information from the text, students write brief descriptions of the characters. (Italian)
 - Part C Examining the language of the text
What are the forms of address used by the characters? What phrases and idioms show politeness? How do the *Commissario*, the *Questore* and the *Matto* treat the journalist? What kind of language do they use? Is any English used and does it seem correct to you? Why doesn't the *Commissario* really wish the interview to be recorded? Why is he worried? The journalist asks very direct questions. What does she ask? What are the *Commissario* and the *Matto* trying to do with their answers?

Who is clear in their use of language and who is not in this scene? What does this scene seek to show about how we use words and language? (English and/or Italian)

- **Personal reflection**

Students reflect upon what they have learnt through doing this unit of work in both learning about the subject matter and their own learning style. The students note and reflect on:

- new learning and understanding they have gained and how this connects with previous learning and own personal experience of the subject matter
- steps they took to understand this text and which strategies, aids, and resources they found useful in helping their learning. (English and/or Italian)

- **Group discussion**

In a panel discussion format, three or four students discuss the play, the use of characters and language, and/or the Salsedo, Sacco and Vanzetti cases, the *Anni di piombo*, present-day terrorism and the fight against it globally and in Australia. (Italian)

- **Investigative task**

Students research some aspect of the play, *Anni di piombo* by Dario Fo (e.g. terrorism) with a view to undertaking an investigative task demonstrating research and personal reflection. The research question, topic or aspect researched will be demonstrated in two tasks, an oral or written part in Italian and a written part in English. (250 words)

Criteria for judging performance

The criteria for judging performance of the four tasks will be as set out in SSABSA Stage 1 and 2, Locally Assessed Languages, Continuers Level, Curriculum Statements 2008.

For full requirements see SSABSA Stage 1 and 2, Locally Assessed Languages, Continuers Level, Curriculum Statements 2008 at www.ssabsa.sa.edu.au/language/support.php.