



## **Our mission: Language learning for everyone**



The South Tyrol is a border area lived in by three language groups (German, Italian and Ladin) with an interesting very recent history of progress in the direction of peaceful inter-ethnic coexistence. The language policies which have, since the 1970s, led to the birth of programmes and institutions designed to preserve the mother tongue and promote learning of a second language are now measuring up to other languages and cultures which have reached the South Tyrol as a result of recent immigration. The local population's sensitivity to the themes of language, culture and identity is undoubtedly high. Despite this, the arrival of new ethno-cultural groups supplementing the three historic groups has contributed to relativising what has sometimes been seen or instrumentalised as a situation of hardship. The people of the South Tyrol, now more than ever a wealth of sound and colour since the setting up of the university in 1997, is facing new challenges and potential.

The Autonomous Province of Bolzano's Bilingualism and Foreign Languages Office has been promoting the German language as a second language and other world languages and cultures for years. For the purposes of offering the province's people direct and immediate access to language learning, the office set up two centres designed to foster language teaching and independent learning: the Bolzano Multilingual Centre and the Merano Multimedia Language Centre.

The Multilingual Centre was set up in the early 1980s as a Research Centre for Bilingualism with the specific objective of promoting the teaching of German as a second language and it has gradually adapted to the social and cultural changes underway in Bolzano province and Europe, becoming a multimedia centre whose objective is to disseminate languages and cultures.

The Multimedia Language Centre was set up in Merano in 2002 as a centre for independent multimedia learning. Its characteristic is, in fact, its huge volume of multimedia supports of various sorts developed specially for language learning (language courses on CD-rom and DVD-rom) or of language acquisition interest via informal trajectories (films on DVD, music CDs, etc.).

Nationally innovative, the Multilingual Centre and the Multimedia Language Centre are public cultural institutions<sup>1</sup> whose purpose is language learning and teaching and awareness raising on other cultures. Recognised as 'special libraries' via provincial council resolution 4490 dating to 6th December 2004, these two language resource centres<sup>2</sup> make available a patrimony of paper based and multimedia resources for all ages and language levels and multi-media terminals for independent learning. Its public is vast and heterogeneous and made up of both language teachers and independent learners. The vocation of the multicultural centres is also evident in their popularity with the city's foreign communities who use them as stimulating meeting and information points at which to keep up the languages they know and learn the province's official languages.

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<sup>1</sup> The Bolzano Multilingual Centre and the Merano Multimedia Language Centre work under the aegis of the Bilingualism and Foreign Languages Office, Italian Culture Division of the Department of Italian Culture, Environment and Energy (Autonomous Province of Bolzano).

<sup>2</sup> Language resource centres provide specific services and resources, environments and equipment available to users for the explicit specific purpose of promoting language learning and teaching, applied linguistics or research in these sectors ("Manuel des centres de ressources de langues", LRC 2003, <http://www.lrcnet.org/html/fr/handbook.html>)

The approach to independent learning adopted by the Multilingual Centre and the Multimedia Language Centre responds to objectives identified via EC language policies (lifelong learning) and highlights their intention to act as places of learning and community where new languages can be learnt and contact made with people and cultures. Its initiatives are organised by emphasising quality and user needs and propounding a multimedia and multi-ethnic vision of society.

The two Bilingualism and Foreign Languages Office buildings thus do not offer solely basic services to local people (resource loans, library references) but also set educational processes in motion in the area for the purposes of fostering a knowledge culture (multicultural and intercultural) precisely by means of independent learning trajectories (independence for learners, introduction to new media, etc.).

## **Reference target**

The reference segments identified encompass both local people and immigrants from various countries residing in South Tyrol and in particular:

- people with a personal and professional interest in languages, the self-taught;
- people preparing for language certification exams;
- teachers and language advisors (educators, teachers, parents);
- school children and students;
- pre-school age children;
- multi-lingual families;
- other local libraries, institutions and associations.

With inter-library loans the user basin covers the whole of the province. Certain requests for loans or service uses also come from outside the region.

## Areas and resources

### The language islands

The independent learning resources are divided up by language and organised onto shelves making up various 'language islands' marked with the original name of the language:

German

English

Spanish

French

Italian

Ladin

Portuguese









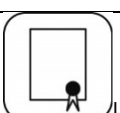





Russian

Arabic

Chinese

World (works in various languages)

Within the language islands, resources are divided up by content and marked in the original language and with an icon common to all languages to facilitate understanding:

 courses for children (elementary school)	 courses for teenagers (middle and high schools)	 courses for adults (16 years of age and over)
<b>GR</b> grammar	 spoken language	 listening
 reading	 writing	 culture and civilisation
 language certification	 specialist languages	 activities
 literature	 audio books	 kids' corner
<b>LY</b> Literature for the young	<b>FU</b> comics	<b>DIZ</b> dictionaries

Most of the resources are divided up in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (levels A1-C2).

Both centres have separate sections for films, music, newspapers, specialist literature, children's resources and fiction for teenagers.

## Films (*home videos*)

Films in the original language are an important language learning resource because they offer authentic images and sounds from other cultures and represent an informal learning method.

Original language subtitles are a useful understanding and learning support.

DVDs in various languages and subtitles are located in the home video section.

## Newspapers and magazines (news)

The newspaper and magazine area (in the Multimedia Language Centre) has armchairs for on-site reading and encompasses the following types of magazines:

- newspapers (on-site consultation only);
- original language magazines;
- magazines with educational aids for language learning;
- specialist magazines for language teachers.

The newspapers and magazines are also available online both on the large online resource portal available on the *Lingue/Sprachen* webpage and on *MediaLibraryOnLine* and *Biblio24*.

## Specialist literature

Both Multilingual Centre and Multimedia Language Centre host collections of specialist literature texts and undergraduate and doctoral theses regarding practical and theoretical aspects of multilingualism and languages in general, and their teaching and learning<sup>3</sup>.

Resources include reference texts for both language teachers and staff at self-learning centres and for the public as a whole (non-fiction texts).

section	<b>LEARNING AND TEACHING LANGUAGES</b>	
D01	Teaching and methodology	MLC
D02	Bi- and multi-lingual education	MC
D03	Early learning	MC
D04	Language consultancy	MC
D05	Independent learning	MC
D06	Intercultural learning/teaching	MLC
D07	Literacy	MC
D08	German L2	MC
D09	Foreign languages	MLC

<sup>3</sup> Mother tongue teaching and learning are outside the jurisdiction of the Bilingualism and Foreign Language Office as they fall under the sphere of action of the school institutions.

D10	CLIL Content and Language Integrated Learning	MC
D11	Italian as a foreign language	MC
D12	Languages and emotions	MC
D13	Technologies	MLC
D14	Languages 50+	MC
D15	Exams and assessments	MC

section	<b>LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY</b>	-
S01	Language and society	MC
S04	Languages in Europe/Language politics	MC
S06	South Tyrolean languages	MC
S07	Series: Bilingual education	MC

### **Kids' corner (*kids* 😊)**

A special area has been set aside for multimedia tools and décor suitable for children of up to 10 with resources for little readers, divided up by language.

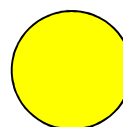
The resources available for children up to the age of 10 are categorised into language islands (German, English, Italian, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Portuguese, Ladin) and encompass:

- illustrated books, stories, illustrated dictionaries, audiobooks and song collections marked with coloured dots (yellow, orange or red, white, green, black). Special attention has been paid to the subject of inter-culture in resources (blue) and key themes such as friendship, love, social emancipation, cultural prejudices, racism and peaceful co-existence between peoples, enabling users to find out more about other cultures, diverse value systems and representations of what is perceived as 'other'.
- language courses on CD roms and educational videogames.
- cartoons.

## CHILDREN'S BOOK CLASSIFICATION

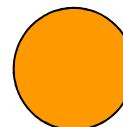
### FIRST BOOKS up to 3 years of age

- Hardcover illustrated books with single concepts or straightforward nursery rhymes featuring mainly images, illustrations and designs.



### ILLUSTRATED BOOKS 4-10 years of age

- Books with images supplemented with easy texts.

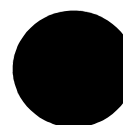


### BILINGUAL BOOKS

- Texts in two languages.
- Books written in more than 2 languages are in the R.ML section.

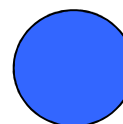


### ILLUSTRATED BOOKS with suggestions for parents and educators



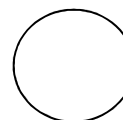
### MULTICULTURE

- Texts and stories of all sorts dealing with other cultures, anthologies of characteristic traditional stories for other cultures.

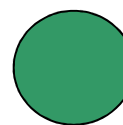


### BOOKS WITH SONGS AND GAMES

- Songs, lullabies, jingles and nursery rhymes.



### ILLUSTRATED DICTIONARIES AND ENCYCLOPAEDIAS



### MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES AUDIOBOOKS CARTOONS



**BILINGUAL BOOKS** (This description applies to books in max. 2 languages)

The bilingual books are located in the section related to second languages or foreign languages (Italian language always last), for example:

a German-Russian book will be under Russian (R.RU)  
an Italian-Chinese book will be under Chinese (R.CHI)  
an Italian-German book will be under German (R.DE)  
a German-English book will be under English (R.EN)

On the coloured dot a capital B shows that it is a bilingual text.

The books are in any case grouped together with the others (single language).

In the event that an appropriate language section does not exist (e.g. a book in Italian-Albanian or German-Wolof) the book is located in the R.ML multi-lingual section (generally blue - interculture). Books speaking of other cultures but written in Italian only remain in any case in the Italian section (R.IT blue).

### MULTILINGUAL BOOKS (R.ML)

Books written in more than 2 languages are located in the R.ML multilingual section together with bilingual books with attached CDs in more than 2 languages! (see books in the bi series: for e.g. *Der Farbenverdreher* de-ita with CD in 8 languages).

## Online resources

The Multilingual Centre and the Multimedia language centre use non-formal learning trajectories and knowledge and, in particular, free online resources usable from any PC with an internet connection. Resources include the following, in organised lists accessible from the web portal [www.provincia.bz.it/languages](http://www.provincia.bz.it/languages):

- language learning sites;
- podcasts and youtube videos for language learning;
- links to online newspapers and magazines.

In addition to offering free online resources, the two centres offer the opportunity to use a web platform which gives access to various language courses to assist registered users for the activation and use of a coupon entitling them to a three monthly free subscription to an online language course.

## Independent learning terminals

Both language centres have self-learning terminals which can be used to consult the centre's resources. The following are available:

- PC terminals with access to the Languages web portal;
- PC terminals on which to consult the centres' multimedia resources (*whitelists*);
- PC terminals with audio listening supports;
- TVs with DVD readers;
- Wi-Fi connections (in the Mediateca)



## Criteria for new acquisition choices

New acquisitions are made on the basis of various considerations:

- the mission of the two language centres and official guidelines;
- the pre-existing collections and any gaps in the various sections;
- collections present in other libraries in the area;
- real and potential user needs including those of non-European language communities present in the province;
- new library and multimedia market trends.

New acquisition proposals or recommendations come from:

- language consultants (tutors);
- front-office staff;
- users.

Sources for resource selection are:

- catalogues, newsletters and internet sites from publishing houses;
- bibliographies, reviews and reports from sector media;
- visits to sector trade fairs;
- visits to similar centres.

Generally the same books are not bought for both centres with the exception of educational resources (courses and grammar) or books preparing language certification exams.

### Material format

All types of support are bought with priority given to multimedia resources (such as paper + audio or video resources).

### Material language

Resources are bought in the original language (especially films and narrative) or in bilingual editions - original language/Italian or German. In the case of some specific languages (for example Arabic or Chinese) bilingual French/Arabic or Chinese/English versions are also acceptable, for instance.

### Coverage levels

The Multilingual Centre and the Multimedia Language Centre have fixed coverage level guidelines to apply to the various sections in order to show the study level desired for the various levels. The coverage levels are specified in the collection papers.

## Weeding out

The resources of the Multilingual Centre and the Multimedia Language Centre are periodically reviewed in order to obtain a living, up-to-date collection coherent with their mission and purposes.

Resources are thus assessed from a use, quality, user friendliness, coherence and topical perspective. Dated or unattractive resources (especially multimedia ones) are regularly weeded out.

Resources weeded out are only reacquired if their value and circulation and appreciation rates with users are high.

Material weeded out but still in good condition can be sent to other libraries or institutes or made available free of charge to individuals (Fundgrube).

The library keeps magazines of particular linguistic/academic interest in its collections, above all if these are not available at other institutions.