

Language ab initio

The subject

Language ab initio is a language acquisition course designed for students with no prior experience of the language, or for students with very limited previous exposure. At the ab initio level the students develop receptive, productive and interactive communicative skills across a range of contexts and purposes that are appropriate to the level of the course.

Danish Ab Initio and **Spanish ab initio** can only be taken at Standard Level.

The teachers



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Danish Ab Initio



Pia Boe Runge (PR)
Spanish Ab Initio

Language ab initio and Theory of knowledge

Language is itself one of the specific ways of knowing that is identified in the TOK course. In addition to this explicit exploration of language, the skills and wider conceptual understandings that students develop in TOK can make an extremely positive contribution to their study of language acquisition.

The following are examples of TOK-questions in Language ab initio:

- Is it possible to think without language?
- To what extent are we aware of the impact of culture on what we believe or know?
- Is there anything that is true for all cultures?

Language and International-mindedness

International-mindedness is central to the IB philosophy and instrumental in aspiring to a more peaceful world. Language acquisition courses do not have as their only goal the development of language skills, but also fostering intercultural understanding and global engagement. The nature of the language acquisition process supports international-mindedness and is, in turn, supported by it. The flexibility of IB course design allows language acquisition teachers to incorporate ideas and resources that encourage students to view aspects of the language and culture from different (and sometimes differing) perspectives, to make nonjudgmental comparisons of language and culture, and to view language and culture in a global context.

Skills and toolkit (ATL)	Topics	Assessments objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thinking skills• Communication skills• Social skills• Self-management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identities• Experiences• Human Ingenuity• Social organization• Sharing the planet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge and understanding• Communication• Focus and Analysis• Language

Examples of concepts and conceptual understanding in Language ab initio

- **Audience:** How would the language used in a given text need to change if the same basic message needed to be communicated to a different audience?
- **Context:** How does the situation or setting influence the production or reception of a text?
- **Purpose:** When I need to communicate for a specific reason, how do I plan my message and language use in order to achieve my goal?
- **Meaning:** What does the producer of a text do to make the message clear (or, on the contrary, to make it ambiguous) when there is no opportunity for the recipient(s) to reply to the text?
- **Variation:** What does the producer of a text do to make the message clear (or, on the contrary, to make it ambiguous) when there is no opportunity for the recipient(s) to reply to the text?

Link to IBO subject brief

<https://www.ibo.org/contentassets/5895a05412144fe890312bad52b17044/lang-ab-initio-2018-en.pdf>