

Language for Work



... is a European networking project that addresses a European challenge: how to help adult migrants develop the work-related language skills they need for labour market inclusion

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Other European projects

Odysseus: Second Language at the workplace
<http://archive.ecml.at/documents/pub125E2003GruehageMonetti.pdf>

TRIM Training for the Integration of Ethnic and Migrant Workers into the Labor Market and the Local Community.
http://www.die-bonn.de/esprid/dokumente/doc-2005/gruehage05_01.pdf

The linguistic integration of adult migrants (LIAM):
http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/LINGUISTIC/liam/default_fr.asp

Why are work-related language skills important for migrants?

Because ...

*Machines have replaced workers.
But controlling them is still a task for people.
For this we need language.*
(Human resources manager, manufacturing)

- Changes in the world of work (such as computerization, new safety standards, quality audits) demand more complex language skills, both spoken and written

*Every morning we spend five minutes
discussing quality issues.*
(Catering manager)

- Better language skills improve communication and reduce misunderstandings – especially in multilingual and multicultural workplaces – improving productivity and safety

*Each assembly step is specified in a file.
No reading, no assembly!*
(Supervisor, Manufacturing)

- Linking language learning to work motivates learners
- Delivering learning directly in the workplace makes it more accessible to workers and gives learning providers a real understanding of the context
- Improving their language skills makes migrant workers more employable, better team workers and more likely to progress in their career
- Work-related language learning can help workers understand their rights and obligations as employees

A European perspective on the issue

The ECML networking project, *Language for Work / Langue et travail* (2012-2015), provides a platform for professionals to exchange research and practice related to majority language learning for adult migrants or ethnic minorities
<http://www.ecml.at/l2/tabid/891/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

Solutions across Europe... from pre-employment courses to on-the-job learning support



Pre-employment language provision

This aims to equip learners with the language skills they need for generic work tasks, common to different sectors and trades, such as telephoning, explaining a procedure, dealing with forms. It is also likely to include job-search activities, including CV and cover letter writing, application form filling and job interviews.

Learner groups are typically mixed, e.g.

- Unemployed, employees, students/trainees
- Different occupational expertise and work experience
- Different cultural backgrounds, personal histories and levels of education

Examples

- Germany: Guidelines for Identifying language needs trainings http://www.netzwerk-1q.de/fileadmin/redaktion/Publikationen/02_Berufsbezogene_Sprachfoerderung/Broschuere_Sprachbedarfsermittlung_2012.pdf

Language provision for specific occupational areas

This type of language learning targets specific work tasks identified through needs analysis. The training takes place either in the workplace or in a training centre.

Learner groups are more homogeneous, e.g.

- From the same occupational area
- Focused on the same areas of competence, including the same certification, but
- Have different cultural backgrounds, personal histories and levels of education

Examples:

- Norway: for personal care assistants, cleaners, warehouse workers, carpenters, etc. <http://www.vox.no/global-meny/English/Current-issues/Basic-Skills-Profiles/>
- France, early years child care <http://co-alternatives.fr/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Malette-p%C3%A9dagogique-lola.pdf>

NB In France, since the Act of May 4, 2004, work-related language training is eligible for vocational training funds.

Provision in the workplace: to make the workplace a learning space

This type of language learning aims to reach the learners other provision fails to reach. In some instances, it seeks to make the workplace a learning and language development space. In these cases, it adopts a systemic approach that takes into account the interests and perspectives of the various stakeholders, including not only the learners, but also co-workers, management (including HR and L&D), trade unions, and so on. The learning provider acts not only as a language teacher, but also as a learning consultant, advising the different stakeholders on all the various issues that arise around language skills at work.

Learner groups are colleagues at the same employer although they may come from different parts of the organisation. They may also have very different cultural backgrounds, personal histories and levels of education

Examples

- England: Newton, B, Miller, L., Braddell, A (2006), Learning through Work: Literacy, language, numeracy & IT skills development in low-paid, low-skilled workplaces: Audit of Learning. Falmer: Institute for Employment Studies, Research Report No. 434.
- Stuart, M, Winterton, J. (2009), Learning through Work – Phase 2 Evaluation Report. Leeds: Centre for Employment Relations Innovation & Change, Leeds University Business School;

Resources to support adult social care workplaces:

- <http://www.scie.org.uk/workforce/careskillsbase/index.asp>
- http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/publications/Learning_through_Work_guides.aspx

In Sweden, ArbetSam – a workplace learning project in the adult social care sector:

- <http://www.lidingo.se/toppmeny/omsorgstod/projektarbetsam/arbetsaminenglish.4.1df940d7136538bffd421.html>