



Developing language awareness in subject classes

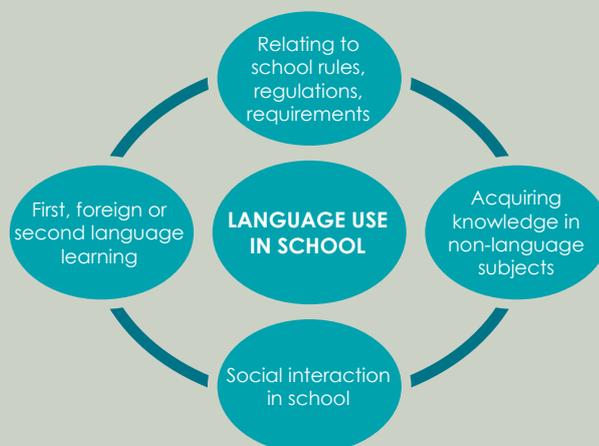


www.ecml.at/languageinsubjects

In order to succeed, learners need to have a solid command of the language used in class, which can be different from the language used in everyday non-academic situations. The project will provide subject teachers with practical resources so that they can identify the linguistic needs of their learners and provide tailored support.

The project will develop two main tools:

- **Practical procedures** that will help teachers to identify their learners' language needs in the specific subject. The ECML publication *Language skills for successful subject learning* will serve as an important tool at this stage.
- **Samples of language supportive teaching materials** for 12/13-year-old learners in different subjects (e.g. mathematics, history, science) which show how different scaffolding techniques can help address the linguistic needs of learners, including examples of the use of the European Language Portfolio.



Using the descriptors

There is a growing awareness among researchers and teachers that learning a subject implies more than learning facts. In order to acquire knowledge in traditional non-language subjects, it is also necessary to master a language which makes learning possible because all learning in school involves working with language(s).

The descriptors in the table below, adapted to different age groups and developed as part of the ECML publication *Language skills for successful subject learning*, help teachers choose teaching material at an appropriate level. For example, understanding arguments and reasoning is an important reading skill applicable to most school subjects.

Age of learner	CEFR level	Understand arguments and reasoning
15/16	B2	Can follow detailed lines of argument and reasoning concerning abstract and concrete topics in teaching materials, even when it involves several steps or different perspectives (for example on historical and social issues or on how to prove something in mathematics).
12/13	B1	Can understand the general line of argument in straightforward teaching materials (for example, in a proof).

B1 is the level expected of most 12/13 year old learners, so the teacher needs to choose texts which are straightforward and which require an understanding of the main points only. Likewise, texts which require an understanding of different perspectives (B2), might be too demanding for this age group.

PROJECT PERIOD

January 2016 – December 2019

WORKING LANGUAGES

English, French

Target groups

The resources are for teacher educators, subject teachers and learners from a migrant background.

Project team

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Related resources

- Language skills for successful subject learning www.ecml.at/language-descriptors
- Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages www.ecml.at/relang
- Sign languages and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages www.ecml.at/prosign
- The language dimension in all subjects – A Handbook for Curriculum development and teacher training www.ecml.at/coe-docs/language-dimensions-subjects-EN.pdf



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The ECML is a Council of Europe institution promoting excellence in language education in its member states.

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