

The linguistic integration of adult migrants: from one country to another, from one language to another



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The linguistic integration of adult migrants: from one country to another, from one language to another

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*L'intégration linguistique des migrants adultes:
d'un pays à l'autre, d'une langue à l'autre*

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www.coe.int/lang-migrants

Foreword

Europe is today a continent of diversity.

Few topics attract more public attention than the considerable efforts deployed to accommodate this diversity and take full advantage of its potential. Whether or not governments decide to compensate for the fall in the population of working age by large-scale immigration, this diversity is set to increase in the years to come.

States respond by framing integration policies, with the very active assistance of the Council of Europe. The Organisation itself has played a very important role in supporting and expanding this process. In 2002, the ministers responsible for migration affairs in the Council of Europe member states undertook to develop and implement integration policies based on the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

However, despite the considerable progress made, two worrying trends appear to have taken root. First, many people consider that these integration policies have not really achieved their primary objectives, that the promises of equal treatment have not been fulfilled, leaving behind them polarised or fragmented societies. Second, the failures of these policies have strengthened the voice of those who see migrants and their different traditions and customs only as a threat to public order, national identity and their own security.

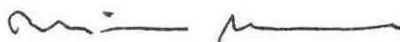
Indeed, it is not enough just to acknowledge the existence of diversity. Merely acknowledging difference in our societies and in our own complex and multiple identities does not offer a guarantee of social justice or social harmony. This cannot be achieved except through the processes of social cohesion.

The only real public policy choice in a democratic society is to give migrants a voice, to recognise their true value and build up their feeling of belonging to receiving societies, in other words to empower them. In taking this route we will be able to build fair and just societies for all, in which migrants are and feel integrated.

The solution is interaction: enabling migrants to establish closer, lasting relationships with the inhabitants of the receiving society and with other migrants, whether in the workplace, in their neighbourhood, at school, in hospitals, at the doctor's surgery or in local administrative services.

Migrants have a vital role to play in our societies and our economies, and we cannot afford to allow the advocates of racism and intolerance to undermine our democratic values and negate the human dignity we owe to everyone, whatever their nationality, origin or race. Promoting interaction between migrants and host societies will, through greater mutual understanding, help break down barriers and eradicate xenophobia.

This is the thinking behind this publication. I hope you will find it a useful aid to the action you take to ensure that diversity is seen as an asset for everyone



Thorbjørn Jagland
Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Preface

Our education systems are not very good at teaching us how to cope with paradoxes, and the linguistic integration of migrants – the topic of the volume you are about to read – provides an illustration of the fact. Most of us admire people who can speak several languages and switch from one to another without much effort – or so they make it appear. Yet, as societies we are too often sceptical and even suspicious of those speaking languages other than that spoken by the majority of our fellow countrymen and women. Using “foreign languages” and speaking the majority language imperfectly or with an accent are seen as indications of foreignness. Whereas a couple of generations ago at least some kinds of foreignness might have been seen as something pleasantly exotic, our societies today increasingly seem to equate “foreign” and “threat”.

Many people seem to think that, if other people come to our country, the least they can do is to “become like us”. The call for the linguistic integration of migrants is therefore strong but it is often a call for assimilation rather than for integration. The need for a common language of communication in a society is of course not in dispute, nor is the need for those who move across borders to learn the language(s) of the societies in which they settle. As this publication makes very clear, however, integrating culturally and linguistically into a new society does not require giving up one’s own identity – on the contrary.

We would in fact do well to remember that identities are rarely singular, even for those who live their whole lives in the country of their birth. Most of us emphasise different aspects of our identity in different circumstances. If we are in our home town, we may think of ourselves as being from a particular part of town, but if we are with people from all over the country, we are more likely to identify ourselves as being from a particular city or region and, if we travel abroad, our national identity may be the one we feel most strongly. There is no contradiction here – these are all different aspects of our multifaceted identities.

As the authors of this volume make clear, developing proficiency in the majority language can facilitate integration, and the acquisition of competences is generally done at different levels and in different ways. Migrants may fear that the language to be learnt will “drive out” their mother tongue for functional reasons and lead to the loss of a “sense of belonging”. Coming to appreciate and feel at ease in a new culture should, however, not imply cutting one’s bonds to the culture(s) in which one grew up.

It is also worth underlining that learning is a lifelong process. We are never “done” learning a language, even if it is our native language, at least until what the Swedish author Vilhelm Moberg called “our time on earth” – *vår stund på jorden* – is over. It is a reasonable expectation that adult migrants are no less lifelong learners than other members of society.

Linguistic integration of adult migrants requires will, perseverance and encouragement. It is a personal as well as a public responsibility. It also requires tools and it is one of the main merits of this volume that the authors provide succinct overviews of various issues and tools, ranging from linguistic profiles and tailor-made courses through curriculum and course design, as well as teaching methodology and motivation, through to assessment and knowledge of society. It is not the intention of this introduction to provide a summary of the various contributions, which merit being read in full. Allow me nevertheless to point to a few issues raised by the authors, without detriment to the other issues covered.

Literacy is not a question of absolutes. One can be literate in one’s native language and yet struggle with obtaining literacy in another language, especially if it uses a different alphabet or writing system. Some migrants have never learned to read and write their native language while others may have learned but lost their literacy through inadequate practice. And literacy is not only about “knowing the letters”: in a complex society, literacy is also about understanding texts of different complexity, some of which require an understanding of one’s new society.

This publication underlines the importance of educational culture, knowledge of society and citizenship, this last in its double dimension of a legal status conferring rights and obligations and a mindset – or a set of attitudes if the reader prefers – that emphasises the need for individuals to participate in and commit to the public arena. Democracy needs democratic institutions and laws but, in order to work in practice, these need a culture of democracy. Democratic culture is not innate. It needs to be developed in each successive generation and it needs to be maintained in order not to be forgotten and fall into disuse. In this, democratic culture is not like riding a bicycle – once you learn it you know it – but like a language: if it is not practised, it may be forgotten. Needless to say, education at all levels plays a crucial role in developing the democratic culture without which our societies will not remain democratic.

In this volume, there is one concept in particular that links to democratic culture: what is described as linguistic goodwill. The linguistic integration of adult migrants depends on the migrants themselves but it also depends on the society to which they move. If those the migrants meet in their new community are positively curious about and value the migrants' languages and cultures, integration is encouraged. If we are indifferent or hostile to the linguistic background and competences of migrants, we will not encourage integration.

It is fitting that this volume is put together and published by the Council of Europe. As an intergovernmental organisation, the Council of Europe brings together our 47 member states and another three states party to the European Cultural Convention. The Council of Europe's fundamental goals of promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law are very much in line with the values required to promote the linguistic integration of migrants, as are the three priorities of the part of the 2014-15 programme to which DG II: Directorate General of Democracy contributes in a particular way – diversity, participation and democratic innovation.

To paraphrase John Donne, no society can be an island unto itself. History, as far as I am aware, knows of no examples of thriving societies living in complete isolation, totally uninfluenced by other cultures or languages. Most languages have borrowed words as well as grammatical structures and other elements from other languages and cultures. Lack of impulses from outside is generally synonymous with stagnation.

But the Council of Europe is also, as far as its Secretariat is concerned, an organisation of migrants – albeit privileged migrants, as we come to our new community with a secure job. As staff members of an organisation based in Strasbourg and working in two official languages – English and French – most of us live in a country other than the one in which we were born and work in languages that are not our native tongue. Many of us also juggle two home languages, neither of which is necessarily an official language of the Council. In my case, we juggle French as the language of the community in which we live and English as a frequently used language of communication with many friends and colleagues, as well as Spanish, with the accent heard on the slice of land between the Andes and the Pacific, and Norwegian as the native languages of the parents – the former with greater success than the latter – to the extent that we could not give a meaningful answer to the obvious question “What is the native language of your daughters?” In this, we are no different from other migrants and we were always careful to tell the girls that, if they hear school friends talking derisively about foreigners and immigrants, they should never forget that we are immigrants too.

The Chilean sociologist Eugenio Tironi – who incidentally spent several years in exile in Europe – said that the answer to the question “What kind of education do we need?” is to be found in the answer to a different question: “What kind of society do we want?” The answer to that particular question has to include the desire to see adult migrants integrate linguistically in their new societies in such a way that their own linguistic and cultural competences and heritage are valued, as they feel increasingly at ease, linguistically and culturally, in their new societies. This volume will provide readers with an excellent overview of many of the issues involved and hopefully whet their appetite for further reading, further reflection and not least action to further the linguistic integration of migrants in the true sense of the word.

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Introduction

This collection takes a very specific look at longstanding issues which are still highly topical today, namely those concerning migration and, in particular, the public policies designed to help migrants settle and begin their new lives. They are longstanding, as demonstrated by a compilation of the texts of the conventions, recommendations and resolutions drawn up by the Council of Europe since the 1970s in which language issues have been dealt with on a regular basis, such as Recommendation 1625 (2003) of the Parliamentary Assembly and the following extract from the reply by the Committee of Ministers:

Language policies should also foster integration. The Committee of Ministers supports the opinion of the CD-ED that it is necessary to address the policy implications of introducing objective standards of competence not only in foreign but in other languages. This requires exploring the increasingly complex overlaps and divergences between mother tongue, languages of instruction and languages traditionally defined as “foreign”, as they are experienced by learners.

The issues are topical because the concerns persist, showing clearly that difficulties remain throughout Europe, even though there are substantial contextual differences. For instance, it is significant that the report by D. Fiala (Doc. 12201, 12 April 2010) presented to the Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population – and backing Recommendation 1917 (2010) – was entitled “Migrants and refugees: a continuing challenge for the Council of Europe”¹ and underlined the complexity of the problems. Integration is not a precise science, and the many different efforts being made across Europe need to be shared in order to build up as much good practice as possible while also giving prominence to language issues:

Language learning, citizenship awareness, democratic participation, access to work, education and housing, protection of rights and community bridges are all essential for integration and need to be examined in any integration strategy.

Integration is, of course, a challenge for people settling in a new country, but also for the host societies. One type of integration which cuts across all the others (employment, education, rights, etc.) clearly involves language, as “linguistic integration” (to use the usual term) does not just mean learning the language(s) of the host society. And it certainly does not just mean tests of language proficiency and of knowledge of the host society which are basically imposed on migrants and their family members as conditions for entering a country, working, settling and acquiring citizenship. As shown by various longitudinal studies (conducted by the Language Policy Unit, which is in charge of these issues), most European countries are tending to introduce more tests and raise the standards expected, sometimes actually in a kind of copycat process. Language education therefore ends up being diverted from its original purpose of integration and, in the most extreme cases, being used to further various types of exclusion. The paradox is that the proficiency levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) are cited to justify the decisions made. That is an unacceptable abuse of this non-prescriptive instrument, to which the texts here add the necessary corrections and clarifications.

It was developments of this kind which led the Council of Europe’s Language Policy Unit to start a project designed to support member states in their efforts to foster the linguistic integration of adult migrants, by making the Organisation’s fundamental values and principles central to decision making concerning the organisation of language education for adult migrants. The Language Policy Unit has been able for many years to arrange the necessary collaboration of experts to address these issues without hidden agendas of an ideological nature.

1. Our emphasis.

Seeking quality in language programmes for newly arrived migrants and established groups is the same as seeking fairness and non-discrimination, transparency and effectiveness. Using the general protocols for the design of language training and the instruments available for the purpose (including the CEFR or the analysis of language needs, also developed at the Council of Europe) naturally means developing language education suited to these various groups, the diversity of their language repertoires, their command of social communication in the languages used in the host society, their previous training and their careers, and also suited to their needs as they see them, even though they may be biased by their perceptions of what learning and knowledge involve. This is to make sure that adult migrants do not have the impression that learning the dominant language in their environment necessarily means having to give up the languages of their past. Is it really necessary to sacrifice one language in order to acquire a new one in a world where multilingualism is everywhere?

The Language Policy Unit has been assuming this responsibility for many years by various means, including through papers such as “The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants” (2008), intergovernmental conferences (2008, 2010 and 2014), surveys and studies, and specific support for certain measures taken by member states. Recently, it has done so by setting up a dedicated website on these issues, offering access to all the resources produced and compiled on the topics (www.coe.int/lang-migrants). It includes relevant content in a more user-friendly, Wiki-like form, consisting of concise entries (approximately 25) which may be consulted individually, but are also grouped together in sections for more linear reading. Starting out with a reminder of the principles (fairness and quality) illustrated by practical examples of their application, it takes users to the core aspects of the design of language training (structure and practical implementation), before addressing the issue of the assessment of language learning and then the intercultural relationships involved in the teaching and learning processes.

The content clearly reflects the requirement of genuine compliance with the Council of Europe’s fundamental principles, which demands a co-ordinated approach to language policies and due consideration for the reciprocal rights and responsibilities of migrants and host societies. The relevant institutions are called upon to implement language programmes that respond to migrants’ language needs for personal, social and working life, while accommodating their diversity, so that they can learn independently. The programmes and tests must be designed in accordance with internationally accepted standards of quality assurance, giving incentives precedence over compulsion. Lastly, it is essential that, wherever possible and regardless of the teaching methods employed, they use or value migrants’ languages of origin, which are part of their changing identities. Languages are vital for building intercultural understanding and social cohesion. The collective investment in appropriate “benevolent” language education is clearly very small compared to what is at stake.

Chapter 1

Human rights, equity and quality

Guiding principles

The Council of Europe's project on Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) aims to help member states to develop inclusive language policies based on Council of Europe shared values: respect for human rights and the dignity of the individual, democracy and the rule of law. Effective respect for these fundamental principles requires a co-ordinated and principled approach to language policy which cuts across different domains of integration policy (social, employment, health, etc.), and an awareness of the mutual rights and responsibilities of migrants and societies. The Council of Europe has elaborated standard-setting instruments and recommendations which set out the principles governing actions in the migration field. These are complemented by language policy guidelines and reference tools developed to support their effective implementation in an inclusive approach based on shared values and principles (Ref. 1).²

Drawing on these principles, agencies responsible for language policy are invited to consider the extent to which they:

- ▶ implement language programmes that provide a clear response to migrants' language needs for personal, social and working life: as migrants' immediate and medium-term needs are identified, corresponding communicative objectives can be defined, drawing on and adapting the scales of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) as required, for example, for addressing one's children's teachers, speaking to neighbours, writing a CV for a job, etc. (Ref. 2);
- ▶ ensure that programmes are sufficiently open to accommodate the diversity of migrants: there is no standard model, as migrants can differ considerably in terms of their personal situation, their needs and capacities, prior educational and language learning history, and time needed or available for learning the language; the form and phase of migration also varies depending, for example, on the intended duration of stay (Ref. 3);
- ▶ support migrants in developing independent learning skills: once the course is completed they will need to be able to manage their learning and acquire independently the competences they need to the level(s) required, at work, through building social networks, etc.; the European Language Portfolio (ELP) is designed to support the development of learning skills and can be used by migrants to relate their progress to the proficiency levels of the CEFR (Ref. 4);
- ▶ monitor language and culture courses to ensure they meet internationally accepted standards of quality assurance: the experience of effective tailor-made courses of a high quality, designed and delivered by properly trained professionals with the necessary facilities, may be more costly but provides value for money in terms of migrants' attendance, motivation and learning outcomes (Ref. 5);
- ▶ define required proficiency levels in a realistic and flexible manner that reflects the actual needs and capacities of migrants: the CEFR can be used to define "profiles"; for example A2 level for spoken interaction but A1 for reading or written interaction, rather than homogeneous levels (A2 for all competences); in adapting the CEFR levels for official purposes such as residence or citizenship it is important to set realistic levels, bearing in mind that in most societies the majority of native speakers do not need to perform the tasks specified at the higher CEFR levels; the requirement to demonstrate a "sufficient" level or "good standard" in the official language is not only too vague to be useful but is based on the unproven assumption that successful integration depends on a given level of language proficiency (Ref. 6);

² This reference and the following references at the end of each paragraph refer the reader to documents and other resources on the same subject at the end of the section.

- ▶ ensure that formal tests, where used, conform to accepted standards of quality and are not misused to exclude migrants from society: where tests are used for official purposes such as residence or citizenship, they should be prepared by professional bodies to ensure that they are impartial, reliable and fair; however, there is no established relationship between passing a language test and successful integration; migrants can be well integrated and yet have limited language skills; language proficiency develops through real-life use over time and therefore is not a precondition for, but rather a result of, participation in society; alternative forms of assessment such as the ELP provide evidence of what a learner can do in the language and could complement or replace a test that is linked to the CEFR (Ref. 7);
- ▶ devise effective incentives rather than ineffective sanctions: tangible rewards for language learning, such as speedier access to employment or social benefits, provide enhanced motivation; however, sanctions that attempt to force migrants to learn can result in less effective learning and negative attitudes towards integration; disproportionate measures may be discriminatory and infringe the human rights of migrants (Ref. 8);
- ▶ value migrants' languages of origin and their unique plurilingual and pluricultural identities; their languages of origin play an important role in the integration process; in a plurilingual and intercultural approach to language provision it is important to show that these languages are valued and encourage migrants to transmit them to their children in view of their importance as markers of identity and an asset for the whole of society (Ref. 9).

Languages are an essential instrument for building intercultural understanding and social cohesion. The language or languages of the host society into which migrants are seeking to integrate, and the languages which are already part of their individual linguistic repertoire, shape their identities as active, democratic citizens. A plurilingual and intercultural approach to the teaching of the language of the host society ensures that languages become instruments of inclusion that unite rather than segregate people.

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Linguistic integration

The integration of newly arrived migrants is a multifaceted process and therefore complex to evaluate. Various indicators have been developed to assess how successful adjustment to another society has been. These include using as a basis broad areas like social inclusion, health, etc., or more specific indicators (income, employment, housing, education, participation in society, etc.) such as those developed by Eurostat (*Indicators of immigrant integration – A pilot study*, 2011). These methods of analysis very often do not include criteria which are directly related to languages, even though the language of the host country is, to a greater or lesser degree, crucial for adult migrants, especially in cases of long-term settlement.

The genuine integration of migrants into their new society also involves efforts to accommodate them that go beyond the specific steps taken to welcome them. The acceptance of new forms of social behaviour, provided that they do not infringe the fundamental values of democracy, presupposes that the society in question is open to otherness and tolerant of change. It is important that this “collective self-questioning”, which challenges the natural inertia of long-lasting cultural change, should be accompanied by educational measures for the benefit of everyone everywhere (see White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, 2008).

Specific nature of linguistic integration

While it is possible to use the term “linguistic integration”, this kind of integration is definitely not to be regarded as being the same as other kinds. This is because languages are not to be seen merely as practical means of communication which simply need to be acquired, just as migrants end up finding housing or employment. They can also be used as material for building both individual and group cultural identities. As identity markers that are assumed, laid claim to or merely tolerated, languages play a part in creating social and cultural distinctions, just as religious beliefs and clothing do. Thus, learning and using a new language – the language of the host society – or using other languages that the migrant already knows but which are unfamiliar to the established population is not just a practical matter but may also trigger processes that lead to the questioning of identities.

Linguistic integration: an asymmetric process

The linguistic integration of migrants who speak other languages in the society which receives them is not a symmetrical process. For the members of the host society, the visible presence of new languages can trigger anxiety or fears about national identity surrounding challenges to (often imagined) linguistic unity or corruption of the dominant language as a result of “contamination” by other languages, not necessarily just those used by migrants. People find it hard to accept the development of a new form of diversity that replaces the traditional linguistic diversity of their home territory (regional and minority languages). These reactions occur at an ideological level, although the arrival of new languages in a given territory does not have direct implications for the established population who are under no obligation to learn the new languages.

For migrants, the issues are immediate and have other implications: they may view the acquisition of the dominant language of their new home as a form of enrichment of their identity or may feel that it makes them vulnerable. Then again, learning the new language may cause suffering (through inability to express themselves) or may possibly undermine their existing identity. They may rightly fear that the language to be learnt will “drive out” their previous languages (including their mother tongue) for functional reasons and lead to the loss of a “sense of belonging”.

Whereas for the established population it is their understanding of national identity which is at stake, for migrants both their cultural identity and their group allegiances may be called into question. The price of integration differs according to the viewpoint.

Linguistic integration: a one-way process?

The very idea of linguistic integration may actually only be one of what the established population deem to be the duties of newcomers and it is not necessarily the main aim of the newcomer. “Integration” is actually often taken to mean that migrants do not stand out from other speakers of the dominant language or do so only minimally (through a slight accent, for instance) or even that they do not use their other languages in public and forget them. In this view of integration, migrants should go unnoticed linguistically and use the

“normal” language of the native population. This is an external interpretation of integration, which relates to the wishes of certain native speakers, namely the gradual elimination of differences combined with linguistic standardisation. This interpretation also requires adult migrants to show a high level of proficiency in the dominant/official language, which is perceived as a demonstration of their loyalty and allegiance to the host country. In the final analysis, proficiency in language is equated with citizenship: “someone who speaks French (well) is French”.

These “assimilationist” expectations may be offset by a curiosity about unknown languages, a desire to learn them, goodwill regarding mistakes that are made or difficulties migrants have in expressing themselves and acceptance of the use of other languages in public or in the media. These more positive attitudes may depend on the degree of legitimacy attached to the languages (migrants’ languages versus foreigners’ languages) and to a large extent on the degree of acceptance of inherited diversity. These positive attitudes should be encouraged by all forms of intercultural education.

The position of the Council of Europe is that the external definition of linguistic integration mentioned above is not consistent with either the real needs of the host society or the expectations of migrants themselves and the rights they should be granted. From an internal perspective, integration should not be defined solely in relation to acquisition of the majority/dominant language, but in relation to each individual’s language repertoire. From the point of view of migrant speakers, linguistic integration should accordingly be understood as their adjustment to their (new) communication environment, that is, as a rearrangement of their individual repertoires and the integration of the languages that make up these repertoires.

The forms of linguistic integration

Looked at from this point of view, several forms of linguistic integration are possible, and also many ways of adjusting individual language repertoires to a new linguistic environment. They reflect the various aims or needs of migrants (or other groups). Whether the adjustments are satisfactory or not is for the individuals concerned to judge.

The following distinctions may be made:

- ▶ *linguistic integration is passive*: the language resources available in the individual repertoire are uneven because the resources in the majority language are insufficient to deal with communication situations effectively without considerable effort. Communication often requires the involvement of third parties and its success depends largely on the linguistic goodwill of the other speakers. This may lead to social self-censorship: the migrants do not take part in or actually avoid certain activities because they seem linguistically too challenging. They may regard their repertoire as ineffective and a source of frustration. This may lead to them being “excluded” by native speakers of the language. However, they may equally well be accepted by them with greater value being assigned to their previous languages and a purely practical role to the majority language of the host society, and they may not develop their proficiency in the new language further. Their language of origin may retain a strong identity function here;
- ▶ *linguistic integration is functional*: the resources in the repertoire (essentially in the majority language) suffice for dealing (relatively) successfully with most social, professional and personal communication situations and are sufficient to ensure that most verbal exchanges are successful. There may be mistakes or examples of fossilisation, which the migrants may ignore if they are mainly concerned about effectiveness. Or they may attempt to address this with a view to achieving greater linguistic “naturalisation” and standing out less if they believe this to be useful and acceptable. In this case, the language of origin does not necessarily have a prominent identity function;
- ▶ *linguistic integration is proactive*: adult migrants seek to improve their competences so as to fit in better linguistically, but also for personal reasons: for their work-related activities or in order to develop their social and personal relationships, etc. They strive to make fewer mistakes and to acquire more advanced competences acceptable in their own eyes;
- ▶ *linguistic integration expands linguistic identity*: migrants reconfigure their repertoire by fully including the receiving society’s language: the repertoire is managed with conscious effort; in particular, the

use of languages alternately in the context of life in society is not avoided. The language of origin remains the one reflecting the migrant's identity, but the receiving society's language(s) also start(s) to be part of the migrant's identity. The existence within a repertoire of several languages which reflect identity might be compared with dual nationality. The language of origin may then have such value attached to it that there is a desire to pass it on, something that adult migrants often avoid, believing that the use of their own language is a marker of migration.

These albeit abstract forms of integration of the languages in the migrants' repertoire probably depend on the higher or lower value accorded to the languages present in their repertoire before they arrived in the host society. The degree of success in integrating languages into the repertoire is not quantifiable (e.g. low integration, functional integration, integration proper). The following forms of linguistic integration and their variants represent the possible choices open to the adult migrants:

- ▶ by deciding not to change their repertoire, that is, not systematically learning the main language of the host society, the migrants put up with the functional pressure of not being able to use it, especially if they spend most of their time in environments where their language of origin dominates;
- ▶ if they wish to change their repertoire, but are unable to do so due to lack of time or self-confidence, for example, this can cause psychological and social discomfort;
- ▶ they may aim to functionally rearrange their repertoire, without attempting normative adaptation, that is, they accept fossilisation, retaining a non-native accent and transposing cultural communication habits into the target language, for example, as part of a single-identity language strategy, marked by the migrant's language of origin;
- ▶ they may aim to rearrange the linguistic repertoire in order to achieve "linguistic naturalisation", involving the gradual dropping of the language of origin and its ultimate disappearance so that it is not passed on between generations. Again this is part of a single-identity language strategy marked by the language of the host society;
- ▶ the aim may be to rearrange the functional repertoire but with two joint languages of identity.

It is up to migrants to decide for themselves and for their families and children which of these language strategies are best suited to their goals in life and the management of their identity. It comes back to the idea that the role of language training is to inform them about the consequences of these choices and explain that migration necessarily involves an identity-adjustment process which should be managed with plurality and mixing in mind rather than with nostalgic inflexibility.

When receiving training, these language users could be asked to reflect on how to manage code shifting, for example "micro shifting" within the same communicative situation depending on the participants and their tolerance of linguistic diversity, or the distribution of two or more languages throughout their social exchanges (macro shifting). In any case, the fact that migrants may wish to choose among these various types of adaptation implies that arrangements need to be made for listening to migrants' views and for designing and managing tailor-made courses.

Related resources

Linguistic integration of adult migrants – Guide to policy development and implementation (in particular Chapter 3), Council of Europe, 2014.

Languages and language repertoires: plurilingualism as a way of life in Europe, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2004.

Language learning, teaching and assessment and the integration of adult immigrants. The importance of needs analysis, Piet van Avermaet and Sara Gysen, 2008.

Living together in diversity – Linguistic integration in Flanders, Reinhilde Pulinx, 2008.

Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe (see Chapter 4), Jean-Claude Beacco and Michael Byram, Council of Europe, 2007.

White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue – "Living together as equals in dignity", Council of Europe, 2008.

Family reunification

Family reunification v. family reunion

These two terms are used interchangeably by international bodies (Council of Europe, European Union, UNESCO, etc.) and no specific scope has been identified for either. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, for example, uses “family reunion” (e.g. in Recommendation 1686 (2004)) but more often “family reunification” (e.g. in Recommendation 1703 (2005)). UNESCO defines “family reunion/reunification” as “the process of bringing together family members, particularly children, spouses and elderly dependents” in its *People on the move: handbook of selected terms and concepts* (p.28). The term “reunification” is used throughout this document.

Family reunification and language requirements

Respect for and protection of family life are recognised as fundamental human rights in many international declarations, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 16), the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 8), the European Social Charter (revised 1996), the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (1977) and the EU Directive on the right to family reunification (2003/86/EC). The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has voted strongly to support this right in its Recommendation 1686 (2004) and recently in its “Position paper on family reunification” (AS/Mig (2012) 01, 2 February 2012).

The Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) repeatedly underlines that “the concept of ‘family’ underlying that of family reunion has not been defined at European level and varies in particular according to the value and importance attached to the principle of dependence”, and also urges member states to “interpret the concept of ‘families’ as including de facto family members (natural family), for example ... a partner or natural children as well as elderly, infirm or otherwise dependent relations” (Recommendation 1327 (1997), Recommendation 1686 (2004) and others).

From a human rights perspective and in order to be in line with the interpretation of the European Court of Human Rights, a broad definition of “family” seems to be necessary (see also EU Directive 2003/86/EC, Article 4); the principle of dependency may be a helpful criterion.

There is a political debate on the conditions that must be fulfilled in order to exercise the right to family reunification. These conditions differ from country to country; they may include the age of women and children concerned, financial guarantees, etc. More and more countries also attach language requirements to entry conditions in cases of family reunification.

Where such conditions are applied, these requirements are (see reports of surveys – see “related resources” below):

- ▶ pre-entry courses, usually aiming at level A1 of the CEFR;
- ▶ pre-entry tests at this level.

Without a certificate attesting that a course has been successfully completed or a test taken and passed, no entry visa is granted by the country concerned.

There is a danger that these measures are discriminatory, especially when they are applied to vulnerable groups, in particular women migrants. Courses are not always available, attendance at a course may mean temporarily abandoning a child or dependent parent, renting a flat in another city, and paying for the course and the test. And although the required level may seem minimal to those who are experienced language learners and literate in the writing system of the language in question, for people with little or no language-learning experience and little self-confidence it can pose a formidable and disproportionate challenge. This is especially likely to be the case when the levels set are not adapted to the linguistic situation and the language needs of the migrants concerned. In these circumstances the language requirement all too easily functions as a barrier to family reunification.

“The right to respect for family life is a fundamental right belonging to everyone” and “reconstitution of the families of lawfully resident migrants ... by means of family reunion strengthens the policy of integration into the host society and is in the interest of social cohesion” (Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1686 (2004)).

As far as integration is concerned it is important to realise that in cases of family reunification there is always one member of the family (the so-called sponsor) who is already legally resident in the host country. In most cases he or she is already familiar with relevant legislation, knows about the way of life in the country and may well be competent in its language. This family member can often act as a very effective “guide” and “interpreter” for newly arrived relatives, so that in the early stages part of the integration process takes place in the family language of the migrants. This is the language they are familiar with and in which they can more easily understand complex matters, whereas it will take them much longer before they can use the language of the host society to participate in its affairs.

Experiences in some countries show that once the intending immigrant has completed the pre-entry language course, several months (in extreme cases as much as two years) may elapse before all administrative issues are settled and he or she is allowed to travel to the host country. By that time most of the language learnt in the pre-entry course has been forgotten and a new start must be made in the host country.

From a human rights point of view, only measures that facilitate integration and respect the principle of proportionality are acceptable.

Optional language tuition provided free of charge close to where migrants are living and without a test can be considered to be such a measure, whereas an obligatory course requirement that takes no account of personal circumstances and entails high costs may be an obstacle to family reunification. As regards family reunification involving minors, the European Commission underlines that linguistic requirements are not in line with EU migration principles (Council Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification). The Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly goes even further when stating that “[r]equirements relating to language skills should not constitute an obstacle for the exercise of the right to family life” (Resolution 1618 (2008)).

The Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe therefore is of the opinion “that a knowledge requirement (regarding for example the language or society of the host states) as a condition for family reunification is in itself discriminatory and a threat to family life, and therefore not in line with the purpose of the Family Reunification Directive” (AS/Mig (2012) 01, p.3).

Related resources

Language requirements for adult migrants in Council of Europe member states, report on a survey, Claire Extramiana and Piet van Avermaet, Council of Europe Language Policy Division, 2011.

Language learning in the context of migration and integration – Challenges and options for adult learners, case study, Verena Plutzer and Monika Ritter, Council of Europe, 2008.

The role of literacy in the acculturation process of migrants, Hervé Adami, 2008.

Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants, Hans-Jürgen Krumm and Verena Plutzer, 2008.

Integration of adult migrants and education: Extracts from Council of Europe conventions and recommendations/resolutions by the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly, rev. 2013. Compilation prepared by the Council of Europe Language Policy Unit.

Language tests

Language tests are formal instruments of assessment. They can be used either to measure proficiency without reference to a particular programme of learning or to measure the extent to which learners have achieved the goals of a specific course. The language tests that adult migrants are sometimes required to take in order to secure entry to their host country, permanent residence or citizenship may fall into either of these categories.

Language tests are not necessarily the most appropriate form of assessment to use with adult migrants, especially when linked to financial or social sanctions, because they can undermine motivation to learn. In some circumstances, particularly when assessment is associated with a language course, it may be preferable to use an alternative instrument, for example a portfolio. The European Language Portfolio is especially suitable for this purpose because it is explicitly linked to the categories of language use and the levels of proficiency

described in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). However, use of the ELP as an assessment instrument requires continuous support from the teacher, especially as self-assessment will not have played a role in the previous educational experience of many adult migrants. Self-assessment should always be supported by evidence of achievement, and its validity is enhanced when it is supported by other forms of continuous assessment. Alternative forms of assessment are especially useful when certification is localised.

Language tests that are properly designed, constructed and administered have the following advantages:

- ▶ results are standardised and reliable, which means that it is easy to compare candidates across the same or different administrations;
- ▶ candidates are assessed with a high degree of independence and objectivity;
- ▶ large numbers may be tested in a short space of time;
- ▶ test validity helps to ensure fairness.

Good practice in test design requires that developers first determine the purpose of their test and the real-world demands on test-takers. Real-world demands must then be translated into linguistic requirements – the knowledge and skills that the test-taker is likely to require – which can be mapped on to the proficiency levels and “can do” statements of the CEFR. The next step is to produce a test specification, which describes the item or task types to be used, the format of the test, the criteria by which performance will be measured and other practical matters. The test specification must then be broken down into specific testing points so that a suitable combination of test tasks and task types can be developed. The goal should be to provide test-takers with adequate opportunities to demonstrate that they meet the assessment criteria. Test development also requires pre-testing of items.

Language tests should be taken under conditions which are equally fair for all test-takers. This entails that test centres are suitably accredited for the administration of the tests and meet general quality requirements; test centre staff are professionally competent; a high level of security and confidentiality is maintained throughout the testing process; physical conditions in the test centre are appropriate (e.g. noise and temperature level, distance between candidates); and all necessary arrangements are made for test-takers with special requirements. If not appropriately managed, each aspect of test administration has the potential to infringe the human rights of test-takers.

Objectively marked test items (e.g. multiple choice questions used in tests of listening and reading) can be accurately scored by machines or by trained markers; subjectively marked items (used to assess speaking and writing) need to be scored by trained assessors whose work must be constantly monitored. In general, tests should be kept under continuous review in order to ensure that they test the abilities they claim to test, the abilities are measured in a consistent way by all versions of the same test and each test works in a way that is fair to all test-takers, whatever their background. These issues are clearly of central importance when tests are aimed at adult migrants. So too is the issue of access to the test: requiring adult migrants to pay a fee may be a disincentive and lead to discrimination.

A further factor to consider is that “integration tests” have a disproportionate effect on particular groups of persons. The “free movement” principles of the European Union mean that EU nationals will only be subjected to any form of testing should they apply for citizenship of another EU member state. So if the overall aim of tests is better integration of migrants, a significant proportion of persons are left out of the process, raising concerns about equitable treatment. Efforts should therefore be made to ensure that there is a clear distinction between processes that are designed for the specific purpose of managing migration and tests that seek to measure and support an individual’s progress along an “integration pathway”, even though there may be similarities in the testing methodologies used in each case.

Related resources

Linguistic integration of adult migrants – Guide to policy development and implementation, Council of Europe, 2014.

Integration tests: helping or hindering integration?, Report, 2014. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe. Rapporteur: Tineke Strik, 2014.

Providers of courses for adult migrants – Self-assessment handbook, Richard Rossner, 2012.

Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options, Richard Rossner, 2008.

Language tests for social cohesion and citizenship – an outline for policy makers, Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) Authoring Group (the following language versions were kindly provided by ALTE members: Bulgarian; German; Italian; Norwegian).

Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants, Hans-Jürgen Krumm and Verena Plutzar, 2008.

Language requirements for adult migrants in Council of Europe member states, report on a survey, Claire Extramiana and Piet van Avermaet, Council of Europe Language Policy Division, 2011.

Relating language examinations to the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” (CEFR) – A manual, Council of Europe Language Policy Division, 2009.

Manual for language test development and examining – For use with the CEFR, ALTE and Council of Europe Language Policy Division, 2011.

Chapter 2

Designing language programmes

Language policies for adult migrants: from values to education

The language policies which member states put in place for adult migrants must first of all fit in with the aims of the reception arrangements they are subject to. These principles can only be interpreted here as the general principles of the Council of Europe: promotion of human rights, democratic pluralism, the rule of law and measures to support social cohesion.

Aims of training for adult migrants

These guiding principles need to be viewed in relation to the specific context of language training for adult migrants. However, member states first need to recognise their specific responsibilities in relation to the provision of language training for these individuals, bearing in mind that for a long time migrants themselves were seen as solely responsible for learning the language of the host society. This language support must have objectives, such as ensuring a level of competence in oral communication, a crucial element of social life, in particular in the workplace. However, it should also seek to generate a sense of belonging to the migrants' new social environment, in addition to their existing loyalties, while bearing in mind that this sense of belonging depends on the migrants' own plans (for instance, permanent or temporary settlement). Lastly, a successful integration policy also involves states equipping themselves properly to contain the fears and remove the ambiguities which the visible presence of newcomers can trigger in the host societies. One of the responsibilities of intercultural education initiatives for all (for instance, as part of compulsory education) is to raise awareness about these issues. In this sense integration is clearly a two-way process.

Design of language training for adult migrants

The practical implementation of these principles depends on the design of language training, that is, the general approach to developing language courses for migrants. It involves:

- ▶ profiling the learner groups concerned; for instance, "training course for migrants" does not suffice as a classification, as migrants' language repertoires and knowledge of the host society can vary considerably;
- ▶ defining the language needs, that is, the spoken and written communication situations which the migrants wish to be able to cope with, particularly in the language of the host society, but also using all the other language resources at their disposal;
- ▶ on the basis of the target situations identified, specifying learning objectives in terms of activities and descriptors of activities based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR), by types of discourse (work conversation, discussion of current events, presentations, etc.) and by domain, such as family life, work, social life, etc; (for instance, being able to read listings of television programmes);
- ▶ deciding on relevant objectives in terms of the structure of spoken and written texts, vocabulary, morphology and syntax, etc., drawing on the reference-level descriptions of the CEFR (when available) and adapting these, especially in terms of vocabulary, to the needs and expectations of migrants;

- ▶ dividing these objectives when providing training into sequences of activities, taking particular account of the teaching time available;
- ▶ defining the organisation of these sequences of activities;
- ▶ giving pride of place to active and self-directed teaching/learning, while taking very careful account of the learners' educational culture, in other words, their learning habits and their expectations regarding the teaching;
- ▶ organising these sequences of activities within the available teaching time, bearing in mind the pace of learning;
- ▶ testing and having learners self-assess what has been learnt.

Quality of language training for adult migrants

Apart from the technical characteristics designed to ensure that the training on offer meets the adult migrants' training needs, it is essential to regularly assess the overall quality of the training as regards, for instance, the qualifications required of trainers or the relevance of training resources, external auditing of the training programmes, seeking the opinions of students and other stakeholders (employers, for instance) and overall assessment of the outcomes of training. These monitoring and quality assurance mechanisms are an essential part of managing training of this kind and assessing its impact.

The training provision should also include, as vital, cross-cutting elements:

- ▶ highlighting the value of migrants' languages of origin in group activities in order, *inter alia*, to encourage their maintenance and transmission from generation to generation;
- ▶ raising awareness about how the host society works in terms of its structures and cultural and social diversity, with a view to stimulating learners to react to these and to examine these features in greater depth.

In this sense language policies for integration can be a worthwhile collective "investment", as they contribute to social cohesion. However, explicit principles like those mentioned above may be undermined either because of technical shortcomings (which the resources on the LIAM website (www.coe.int/lang-migrants) seek to remedy) or because they mask a policy of exclusion in which knowledge of the language(s) of the host society is used to restrict access to it. Should this be the case, language training that is designed without taking account of social ethical principles cannot alone contain the development of negative effects in the long term.

Related resources

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2008.

Adult migrant integration policies: principles and implementation, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2010.

The "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" and the development of policies for the integration of adult migrants, David Little, 2008.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages", David Little, 2012.

Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options, Richard Rossner, 2008.

Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes, Claire Extramiana, 2012.

Providers of courses for adult migrants – Self-assessment handbook, Richard Rossner, 2012.

Integration of adult migrants and education: Extracts from Council of Europe conventions and recommendations/resolutions by the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly, rev. 2013. Compilation prepared by the Council of Europe Language Policy Unit.

Taking account of the diversity of migrants' contexts

The diversity of migrants' life goals is matched by a great diversity of repertoires and educational backgrounds when they begin learning the majority language: "migrant" is a sociological or legal category, not a homogeneous linguistic one. When drawing up any integration policy relating to languages and adult migrants, whether newly arrived or already settled, account must be taken of the different contexts in which they are received and their varying linguistic experience and knowledge.

Thus there can be no single standard or universal solution in terms of the organisation and evaluation of language programmes, for all such programmes need to be tailored to the learner, in so far as this is possible given the resources available.

The objectives of language programmes for adult migrants vary according to the nature of the migration: refugees, long/medium-term workers or residents, spouses of migrants, newcomers, etc. This diversity is reflected in the domains in which the language of the receiving country is used, which may to some extent be common. These differences in the nature of migration should guide institutions' identification of objectives for language programmes, and therefore their preparation of courses.

Other factors in the diversification of needs and expectations in terms of languages stem from migrants' previous experience: the nature of their educational capital (highly educated versus limited or no schooling in their country of origin), the nature of their vocational training and the composition of their linguistic repertoire, which may include some languages, whether or not learnt through teaching, used in Europe as national/official languages, or taught as foreign languages (German, English, Spanish, French, etc). Account will have to be taken of similarities between the language of origin and the/a language of the receiving country (particularly a language using the Latin alphabet as against another alphabet, or language written using a writing system which is not alphabetical).

Account should also be taken of "timing" relative to migration: during the phase prior to effective migration or on arrival in the receiving society (when the need is urgent), and form of settlement (brief stay, settlement involving regular alternation between countries, long-term settlement, settlement involving a planned return, settlement regarded as permanent, etc.).

Finally, care should be taken not to consider "good" factual knowledge of the receiving society and a "good" command of its language(s) to be necessarily a sign of integration. Adoption of that society's fundamental values is a socio-affective and identity-related process which has to be characterised by a set of parameters and assessed on the basis of migrants' overall conduct, not just their linguistic skills. So conversely, what is deemed to be a "poor" command of the target language does not automatically mean that the person concerned has not adopted the basic values of the society in which he or she has settled.

Language programmes that take no account of these factors or of the diversity of these contexts are unlikely to be effective. Member states should opt for flexible courses with "tailor-made" types of assessment and testing methods, as appropriate as possible to the persons and groups concerned, on the basis of investments considered acceptable in order to create and maintain social cohesion. The extent to which programmes can be adapted for specific groups of migrants is a matter of resources and is therefore dependent on political decisions in each member state.

Related resources

Linguistic integration of adult migrants – Guide to policy development and implementation, Council of Europe, 2014.

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2008.

Adult migrant integration policies: principles and implementation, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2010.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and levels of language proficiency

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) is a reference tool that has three main purposes:

- ▶ to provide language professionals across Europe with a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc.;

- ▶ to help them to overcome the barriers to communication arising from the different educational systems in Europe;
- ▶ to define levels of proficiency by which to measure the language learner's progress at each stage of learning and throughout his or her life.

Launched in 2001 and now available in almost 40 languages, the CEFR is used throughout Europe and also in other parts of the world. Designed to support the teaching and learning of foreign languages in formal education, its descriptive scheme and proficiency levels should be applied to the language needs and communicative proficiency of adult migrants only after careful interpretation and adaptation. As its title indicates, the CEFR is a framework of reference, not a normative instrument.

Levels of language proficiency are artificial constructs made necessary by the way in which education systems are organised. They are a response to the need to make learning targets explicit and measure learning outcomes. If adult migrants are to develop proficiency in the language of the host country and their proficiency is to be measured, it is necessary to specify the level required of them. Council of Europe member states usually do this with reference to the CEFR, which defines proficiency in six ascending levels arranged in three bands (A1 and A2; B1 and B2; C1 and C2) in relation to three kinds of language activity: reception (listening and reading), production (speaking and writing) and interaction (spoken and written).

How the CEFR describes proficiency

The CEFR adopts an action-oriented approach to the description of communicative proficiency: it sees learners as language users with real-life needs, describing what they can do at each of the levels. The description has two interdependent dimensions: the language activities that learners perform and the competences (knowledge, skills and characteristics) that make those activities possible. Learners cannot communicate without, for example, knowing words, how to pronounce them and how they relate to one another grammatically. On the other hand, linguistic knowledge of this kind is usually acquired for purposes of communication.

The CEFR's levels do not provide ready-made solutions

The CEFR seeks to be flexible, open and dynamic. Accordingly it does not provide a single scale of language proficiency, but rather a toolkit from which an indefinite number of scales can be constructed, in response to the characteristics and needs of specific learner groups. It can also be drawn on to design an indefinite number of language courses, each of which likewise caters for specific learner needs. Although its successive levels reflect the foreign language learning trajectory typical of European education systems, any attempt to use the CEFR to develop curricula or assessment instruments for any part of those systems necessarily requires selection and adaptation: selection because no curriculum or test can possibly take account of every dimension of the CEFR; adaptation because whereas the CEFR is language-independent, curricula and tests always focus on a particular language and should take account of the characteristics and needs of a particular population of learners.

Levels and profiles

In any language we can always understand more than we can produce. The CEFR allows us to take account of this fact by describing proficiency separately in relation to reception, production and interaction. This is especially useful when setting learning targets for adult migrants. The CEFR defines overall listening comprehension at A2, for example, as follows: "Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated". This may be an appropriate learning target for adult migrants seeking permanent residence, but the same is not necessarily true of creative writing at A2: "Can write short, simple imaginary biographies and simple poems about people".

In our daily lives all of us perform some language activities more than others. Most of the communication related to social interaction and the transactions we carry out in shops, banks, etc., are associated with A2, and in most societies the majority of native speakers do not need to perform the tasks specified for production and interaction at the higher CEFR levels. These are important considerations when determining the proficiency level that adult migrants should demonstrate in the language of their host country in order to secure entry, permanent residence or citizenship.

Related resources

For more detailed discussion of the CEFR in relation to adult migrants, see:

Language policies for adult migrants: from values to education, Jean-Claude Beacco.

The “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” and the development of policies for the integration of adult migrants, David Little, 2008.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”, David Little, 2012.

See also Council of Europe publications related to the CEFR (www.coe.int/lang-CEFR), in particular:

Report of the Intergovernmental Forum on “*The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the development of language policies: challenges and responsibilities*”, 2007.

The CEFR Common Reference Levels: validated reference points and local strategies, Brian North, 2007.

Contextualising uses of the CEFR, Daniel Coste, 2007.

The CEFR and the development of training schemes for adult migrants

The 2001 *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR) is an instrument to help member states to develop programmes to support plurilingual education. It facilitates the creation of language programmes that are mutually comparable because they are based on a finite set of common elements (competences, activities, levels, etc.). At the same time, however, it facilitates adaptation of such programmes to the particular context and purposes, given that the “basic elements” are open to multiple combinations. Therefore, as shown by the example of school programmes, the CEFR is no standard teaching programme for training schemes aimed at migrants predefining the levels to be attained.

The CEFR as an instrument for devising programmes rather than a programme in itself

The CEFR is specifically geared to facilitating the implementation of curricula for plurilingual education (see Chapter 8 CEFR), to the extent that it defines language knowledge neither directly (good, poor, lesser knowledge of a language, etc.), nor even in terms of levels (which are only abstract benchmarks), but instead via a set of nested interlinked descriptors which use a closely monitored terminology in order to characterise language knowledge in detail.

On these bases, the CEFR constitutes a common analytical instrument to help language professionals specify concrete goals in accordance with needs and expectations vis-à-vis a specific set of learners, in terms interpretable by all.

Therefore, for both migrants and other target groups, the CEFR should not be used “the wrong way round”, for instance by selecting a level to be achieved which is deemed reasonable and relevant and setting it as an objective. Instead of this a priori and top-down approach, recourse should be had to the diversity of acquired repertoires for adult migrants and their employment in the host society, their personal, social, professional, cultural and other integration in the host society, and therefore the potential diversity of corresponding training goals.

As the CEFR has spread, it has given rise to restrictive uses or uses which are contrary to its spirit. Only six levels are used, even though it allows the user to establish and modulate more levels; priority is also given to identical competence levels (e.g. B1 for written reception, oral interaction, written production, etc.), whereas differentiated competence profiles would be more appropriate.

In any case, deciding that, for example, “level A2” is an objective for all migrant adults and that any course (or form of assessment) at this level is suitable (courses which they might attend with foreign students or vocational trainees), denotes a conception of the CEFR which is very far removed from the principles on which it is based.

The CEFR and teaching methodologies

The CEFR is also deemed to have triggered a “revolution” in teaching methodologies in view of the new teaching strategy which it proposes, namely the action-oriented approach to teaching. This term appears prominently (p. 15) in the form of the “action-oriented approach”, which the CEFR itself adopts. The latter does, however, specify that:

It has been a fundamental methodological principle of the Council of Europe that the methods to be employed in language learning, teaching and research are those considered to be most effective in reaching the objectives agreed in the light of the needs of the individual learners in their social context.

Furthermore, task-based learning has been widespread since the 1980s (“task-based language learning or teaching”), constituting a variant of the communication-oriented approach. This is an important point in teaching adult migrants, who have learning habits and educational cultures which no doubt differ from those used in the host country. Their training provides a forum for encounters between different educational cultures, and the latter’s efficiency probably depends on striking a balance between “active” approaches geared to increasing efficiency and the traditional approaches (grammar, memorisation, prioritising writing, etc.).

The CEFR is one of the necessary instruments for designing adult migrant training courses, but language training engineering (whatever the target group) must also draw on other instruments (analysis of needs, reference level descriptions (RLDs), discourse analysis, interlanguage description, etc.). The need has also emerged for a “top-down” complement to the CEFR based on new descriptors for the level A.1.1 communication competences (below the A1 benchmark, which would then become A.1.2). These competences are not included under A.1.1, and they have proved useful for characterising the first competences acquired, which are limited but not useless. They can be acquired autonomously without teaching, and the decision was taken to describe them in order both to enhance migrants’ language acquisitions (making them easy to certify) and to set a proximal objective for initial teaching.

Related resources

Linguistic integration of adult migrants – Guide to policy development and implementation, Council of Europe, 2014.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”, David Little, 2012.

The CEFR Common Reference Levels: validated reference points and local strategies, Brian North, 2007, in the Report of the Intergovernmental Forum on “The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the development of language policies: challenges and responsibilities”, 2007.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR), Council of Europe/Cambridge University Press (available in 38 language versions), 2001. www.coe.int/lang-CEFR.

Niveau A1.1 pour le français (publics adultes peu francophones, scolarisés, peu ou non scolarisés). Référentiel et certification (DILF) pour les premiers acquis en français, J.-C. Beacco et al., Paris, Didier, 2006.

Descriptions of CEFR reference levels for individual languages (RLD)

Framework descriptions by language

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2001) is the first and best-known of the instruments produced in the context of the projects conducted by the Language Policy Unit in order to pursue the perspective of plurilingual and intercultural education. But it is not the only one, far from it.

Reference instruments

Plurilingual education was subsequently developed “from the top” in the *Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe* (2007) which concerns all taught languages (and not foreign languages alone), and was taken to a further stage of development with the *Platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education* (known as the Platform), present on the Council of Europe website since 2009.

However, the CEFR has also been developed “downwards”, so that the descriptors (generic and not language-specific) of the activities and skills are given substance by the linguistic material permitting their attainment in each language, at a given level of proficiency. This range of reference instruments received the designation of “reference level descriptions (RLDs)” for national and regional languages and was produced for German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, etc. These reference systems by language and level are naturally usable for the construction of courses such as those intended for adult migrants (see *The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants*, concept paper, J.-C. Beacco, 2008, Chapter 4).

From descriptors to words

For course organisers and teachers, the specifications of the CEFR may indeed have appeared too broad.

By means of the RLDs, which have a similar function to that of the 1975-vintage “threshold levels”, we identify the forms of a given language (words, grammar, etc.), command of which would correspond to the communicational, socio-linguistic, formal and other skills defined by the CEFR. These transpositions of the CEFR allow a shift from general communication skills to inventories of corresponding discursive genres (the CEFR’s textual types and genres) and to the characteristics of these genres, represented essentially by inventories of linguistic forms – general concepts, functions, “grammar” (understood in the morphosyntactic sense) – and by specific concepts or vocabulary, etc. Thus we move from a general frame of reference, common to different languages, to ones which are specific to each language, from a “communication” to a “language” orientation of teaching which is more immediately workable. The transposition of the descriptors to the forms is an undertaking of some theoretical complexity, whose results are to be handled with caution. It is guided by the analysis of narrative (aimed at characterising the narrative genres), the knowledge relating to natural acquisition of languages, and the expertise of designers of tests or assessments.

Choosing from the RLD inventories

The very open-ended character of these CEFR specifications by language has been explicitly subsumed in certain RLDs which embody forms of variability built into the inventories, such as the option which designers are given to propose a word in either the production or the reception mode, indicative open-ended lists, the deliberate absence of distinction between ordinary oral forms and standard written ones, and so on. In any case, these frames of reference are not, any more than the CEFR, syllabuses to be applied, but instruments for devising tailor-made courses. Material should therefore be selected from them, especially lexical elements, to suit learners’ needs. This contextualisation is also necessary, though less so, for grammatical contents which must in any case remain in a very gradual time sequence. Just one of these RLDs was specifically conceived for level A.1.1 speakers not conversant with literacy functions (*Niveau A.1.1 pour le français*, J.-C. Beacco, 2006) and comprises descriptors for access to written expression (p. 161 et seq.) which thus do not appear in the CEFR. But all these frames of reference are appropriate for courses aimed at adult migrants, as these are distinguished from the others only by the nature of the language needs which they are required to meet.

Related resources

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper (Chapter 4), Jean-Claude Beacco, 2008.

Niveau A1.1 pour le français (publics adultes peu francophones, scolarisés, peu ou non scolarisés). Référentiel et certification (DILF) pour les premiers acquis en français, J.-C. Beacco et al., Paris, Didier, 2006.

A Platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education, Council of Europe, Language Policy Unit, www.coe.int/lang-platform.

Language repertoire

The individual language repertoire

Migrants' questions are not confined to ensuring that they learn the host country's majority language. The mechanisms to be built up must provide the preconditions for successful reconfiguration of their language repertoires.

Plurilingual competence, repertoire of languages

The concept of a "repertoire of languages" (or "language repertoire") is not specific to migrants: it refers to the fact that all individuals are potentially or actually plurilingual. The "plurilingual competence" is the manifestation of the capacity for speech which is part of the genetic make-up of all human beings and which can be used in several languages in succession throughout a person's lifetime. The Council of Europe differentiates between "plurilingualism" as a competence for speakers (able to use more than one language) and "multilingualism", which refers to the presence of several languages within a given area. The repertoire of languages known by each individual ("individual repertoire") comprises languages acquired in different ways (languages learnt at home from infancy onwards, learnt subsequently during schooling or afterwards, learnt independently, etc.) for which people have different competences (everyday conversation, reading, listening, etc.) at levels of mastery which also differ (elementary, independent, experienced, etc.). These languages can have specific functions (communicating within the family, socialising with neighbours, working, expressing one's belonging to a group, etc.), but these functions can nonetheless be fulfilled jointly by several languages. This distribution of languages in the repertoire may change over time or may depend on communication situations (using several languages simultaneously in exchanges, known as code alternation).

Learning languages, reorganising repertoires

Learning a new language can modify the inherently unstable balances between repertoires. In most cases, when a foreign language is learnt at school, the repertoire is broadened without any further consequences, apart from an enhanced perception of cross-connections between the existing languages. In the case of migrants, the reorganisation is more complicated, because acquiring the majority language is an important issue (indeed a vital one when residence rights depend on it), a fundamentally identity-based process that takes place in full public view in the host country and which is usually called linguistic integration (although this oversimplifies matters). In fact, such integration is only one of the possible ways of reorganising repertoires, which is characterised by the fact that it occurs under pressure, the pressure of efficiently communicating in a new social space and building up a (new?) linguistic and cultural identity in that space.

Plurilingual education for all

From the Council of Europe's point of view, the goals of language teaching, for whatever purpose, are therefore those of plurilingual education (for which the CEFR is one implementing instrument). Such education is geared to enhancing individual language repertoires, especially the language(s) already present, in order at least to prevent them from becoming a sign of marginality on the part of the adult migrants themselves or their children. It is also intended to expand the repertoire in accordance with individual needs, expectations, interests and desires and the role which the individual wishes "his" or "her" languages to play in building up his or her plural belonging, which establish the social player in his or her cultural uniqueness. The central place of plurilingualism thus constitutes one of the bases for critical education in linguistic tolerance, that is, intercultural education.

Related resources

The role of literacy in the acculturation process of migrants, Hervé Adami, 2008.

Education: tailor-made or one-size-fits-all? A project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie, Elwine Halewijn (ITTA), Annelies Houben (CTO) and Heidi De Niel (CTO), 2008.

Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes, Claire Extramiana, 2012.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, David Little, 2012.

Language needs

The concept of language needs was present in the Council of Europe's first works, in particular those by R. Richterich (*A model for the definition of language needs of adults learning a modern language*, 1972) and then by R. Richterich and J.-L. Chancerel (*Identifying the needs of adults learning a foreign language*, 1980).

The concept of language needs

This term refers to the linguistic resources which learners need in order successfully to cope with the forms of communication in which they are going to be involved in the short or medium term. These needs (and hence these communication situations) are identified as part of a specific process which consists of gathering together the information required to assess what uses will actually be made of the language learnt and thereby to determine what types of content should be taught on a priority basis. This process necessarily is the starting point for the development of language programmes intended for learners such as adults who are not covered by school education. It is particularly relevant for adult migrants who are under pressure to cope, from the moment of their arrival and on a daily basis, with exchanges in a language of which they have limited or no knowledge. It must lead to the development of tailor-made courses, which are the only means of meeting the expectations of the relevant groups. However, it should not be reduced to a technique for specialists, as the needs cannot be defined without input from those concerned or indeed on their behalf.

Analysis of language needs

In order to specify the language needs of a particular group which is regarded as homogeneous on the basis of certain aspects, use is made of data such as information questionnaires for learners, interviews with them and with native speakers in contact with them, samples of their spoken and written production, and observations of language activities which take place in the context(s) concerned. This approach is particularly vital if the needs to be identified concern professional activities. What competences are required for a given job or professional assignment? The information is gathered by means of external observations (which may be described as "objective") or through the feelings of those concerned ("subjective" analysis), the two being complementary. Approaches of this kind may be cumbersome and expensive and the findings need to be properly processed afterwards to form the elements of a programme (for instance, categories for analysing forms of communication or frequent "mistakes"). Transition from the survey to the programme stage is not automatic.

Needs and expectations

Several players are involved in the process of developing courses for adults and adult migrants and they do not necessarily have the same views about the aims or the methods of teaching. If the promoters of a language course are business managers, they may wish to obtain immediate, practical results; for their part, teachers may give precedence to the teaching methodologies which they believe are effective (communicative approach, task-based approach, etc.), while learners often approach their needs from the angle of their previous experience of education/learning and their educational culture. These varied expectations involving many different interpretations of the language needs which have to be satisfied require negotiation so that the objective and subjective needs are harmonised. Adult migrants must not be excluded from the relevant exchanges.

Related resources

Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes, Claire Extramiana, 2012.

Language learning, teaching and assessment and the integration of adult immigrants. The importance of needs analysis, Piet van Avermaet and Sara Gysen, 2008.

Living together in diversity – Linguistic integration in Flanders, Reinhilde Pulinx, 2008.

Linguistic profiles and profiling

Traditionally, language competence is thought of in holistic terms, as a collection of undifferentiated abilities. Examples of this approach are the requirement that pupils should achieve CEFR level B2 in their first foreign language by the time they leave school, or that adult migrants should achieve CEFR level A2 in the language of

the host community in order to secure a long-term residence permit. In both cases it is assumed that the same level of proficiency will be achieved in listening, reading, speaking and writing. However, this assumption is not supported by the reality of language use. Even in our first language our proficiency varies from activity to activity and from person to person. In most cases we understand more than we can express, and native speakers differ from one another according to educational background and the kinds of communication they engage in on a daily basis. All native speakers of a language can take part in spontaneous informal conversation, but their listening and reading skills vary according to their educational level, personal interests and professional orientation. The same is true of the productive skills – speaking and writing – especially when they are used for formal purposes. By no means all native speakers of a language are able, for example, to give an extended oral presentation or write a report. Each of us has a communicative repertoire or profile that comprises the activities and kinds of discourse we regularly engage in.

When it comes to learning additional languages, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) recognises that plurilingual competence is generally uneven: learners usually attain greater proficiency in one language than in the others, and their profile of competences is likely to differ from language to language. Because the CEFR describes language proficiency in terms of different communicative activities – listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, writing – it can be used as the basis for profiling in two different but complementary ways, both of which are relevant to adult migrants.

First, descriptors in the CEFR can be used or adapted to describe the repertoire of language skills that migrant learners need to acquire in order to begin the process of integration in their new society. Some of those skills – for example, understanding signs and public notices or being able to answer the questions asked by officials – are needed by all learners. But other skills – for example, the ability to understand instructions related to a particular kind of work or to communicate simple messages in writing – may or may not be necessary, according to the situation of the individual migrant. This suggests that the same language course will not be appropriate for all migrants and implies that those charged with designing and delivering language programmes for adult migrants should, where possible, adopt a modular approach in order to meet their learners' various and divergent needs. Tailor-made courses usually follow this principle. A profiling approach also acknowledges that adult migrants may need to achieve different levels of proficiency in different communicative activities. This has implications for language tests. If adult migrants are required to take tests, they should do so at different levels for different CEFR activities, according to their target profile, instead of taking a test linked to a single CEFR level.

Secondly, as adult migrants become increasingly proficient in the language of their host country, their sense of what they need to learn is likely to evolve. Besides informing the design of courses based on objectively determined profiles of communicative need, the CEFR's approach to the description of communicative proficiency supports the negotiation of learning targets that correspond to learners' individual needs. This is one of the functions of the European Language Portfolio model that has been developed for use with adult migrants. In particular, the checklists of "I can" descriptors are designed to help migrant learners to identify learning targets, monitor learning progress and assess learning outcomes for themselves. The guide for teachers explains in greater detail how this ELP can be used to profile migrant learners' existing proficiency in the language of the host country and identify elements of the proficiency profile they need to develop (see Chapter 7 of the guide).

Related resources

The European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, 2012.

Linguistic integration of adult migrants and the ELP: an introduction, David Little, 2012.

ELP for adult migrants learning the language of the host country: a guide for teachers, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, 2012.

Goal-setting and self-assessment checklists, David Little.

Workshop activities to introduce the CEFR and the ELP, David Little.

Tailor-made courses

Tailor-made courses are designed to take account of particular learner characteristics or requirements. They respond to what has always been one of the Council of Europe's central concerns: that language courses should

meet the needs of learners. Following the lead given in the 1970s by the Council of Europe's own pioneering work on the analysis of language learners' needs, it is helpful to distinguish between social and individual needs.

Social needs

Social needs (sometimes called objective needs) are generally defined in terms of the communicative tasks that language learners will be required to perform in a given situation. For example, someone who wants to work as a waiter in a foreign country needs (among other things) to know how to greet customers, explain the menu to them and answer questions about it, take their orders, and respond to complaints. Each of these activities can be described in terms of the vocabulary the learner needs and the receptive, productive and interactive routines he or she must master.

Individual needs

Individual needs (sometimes called subjective needs) are the needs that the learner experiences in the language learning situation. Accordingly, they have to do with factors like attitude and motivation, learning style, learning aptitude and learning skills. Attitude and motivation may well receive a positive boost if the course in question is based on an adequately detailed analysis of learners' objective needs, because that helps to ensure a clear learning purpose. But those subjective needs that have to do with the learning process itself can only emerge as the course proceeds. In other words, whereas an analysis of learners' objective needs provides a basis for programme planning, eliciting and responding to subjective needs is a task for the teacher. Because subjective needs change as learning progresses, responding to them is a never-ending task.

Related resources

Two case studies offer practical illustrations of tailor-made courses:

- ▶ *Education: tailor-made or one size fits all*, by Elwine Halewijn, Annelies Houben and Heidi De Niel, reports on a project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie that developed tailor-made courses on the basis of a detailed analysis of migrant learners' social needs;
- ▶ *Responding to the language needs of adult refugees in Ireland: an alternative approach to teaching and assessment*, by David Little, describes the approach developed by Integrate Ireland Language and Training, which brought social and individual needs into interaction with one another.

Language learning, teaching and assessment and the integration of adult immigrants. The importance of needs analysis, Piet van Avermaet and Sara Gysen, 2008.

Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants, Hans-Jürgen Krumm and Verena Plutzar, 2008.

Living together in diversity – Linguistic integration in Flanders, Reinhilde Pulinx, 2008.

The language needs of adult immigrants, D.A. Wilkins, 1973, as part of the project "A European unit/credit system for modern language learning by adults", Council of Europe.

Chapter 3

Delivering language programmes

Developing curricula and course programmes for adult migrants

The need for a curriculum

Like any educational provision, courses for adult migrants need to be run within a framework that specifies general principles and aims, and outlines the approach to be used, which may be called a curriculum or as discussed in *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education* (p. 13), a “plan for learning”:

“Curriculum” is a difficult concept to pin down, and a common agreed definition of it is still a long way off. Here, we shall use it very broadly to mean “a plan for learning”. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) insists that the school curriculum is part of a wider curriculum, a “path travelled by a learner through a sequence of educational experiences, whether under the control of an institution or not” (CEFR, chapter 8.4). It accordingly sees the “educational” curriculum as part of an “experiential” and “existential” curriculum, which starts before schooling, develops alongside it, and continues after it.

A curriculum for courses for adult migrants is, however, not like a school curriculum which is designed to cater for all children passing through the school system. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach, curriculum designers have to take into account the very diverse needs, educational backgrounds and plurilingual repertoires of adult migrants in working to provide a framework in which courses can be designed that will aid their language development in such a way as to support the integration process.

Course design and course objectives

A language course curriculum for adult migrants that takes Council of Europe principles into account puts the needs, expectations and language profile of migrants at the heart of the process of course design. Those responsible for designing courses or series of courses for adult migrants consider the specific needs of the learners expected to enrol on each course, including their educational and cultural background, their level of literacy in their own language or other languages, their situation in the host country, their specific vocational, professional or social language needs, and so on. These needs, together with the key features affecting course organisation, such as the number of hours available and the frequency and size of classes, will determine the course objectives and the desired course outcomes. But adult migrants do not expect or deserve to be treated like children. They need to play a role in deciding the objectives and outcomes of the course in which they are the key participants, and these may differ from individual to individual.

Depending on the flexibility available within the institution, course design may include agreeing with migrant learners:

- ▶ the level of proficiency or profile that participants are expected to attain by the end of the course;
- ▶ the methodology and learning materials that would be most suitable;
- ▶ the use to be made of the learners’ own languages, and their previous experience of language learning;
- ▶ how the course time should be divided between “taught” lessons, individualised autonomous learning using digital and other media, and other learner activities;
- ▶ the procedures to be used to assess progress and the achievement of learning outcomes.

Developing course programmes

A programme or a written plan for each course or course module is a way of giving practical guidance to teachers, who themselves may come from different backgrounds and have experience of teaching migrants that varies considerably. Having a specification of objectives and content for given periods of time (months, weeks, etc.) within a given course can provide invaluable support. However, bearing in mind the diversity of special language needs adult migrants may have, no syllabus document should be seen as – or be written as – a straightjacket. Teachers should be free to deviate from and add to what is specified in the syllabus in order to better respond to the needs of their learners at given times. Indeed, for tailor-made courses for adult migrants, syllabuses may suggest various options rather than specifying a defined pathway.

The CEFR as a resource for language curriculum, syllabus and course design

It is essential that the teaching methodology and the processes of learner assessment outlined in curriculum and syllabus documents support migrants in the integration process, and safeguard their human rights and their pluricultural and plurilingual identities in line with Council of Europe guidelines and recommendations. With this in mind, language course curricula and syllabuses in Europe, including those for adult migrants, generally draw on the principles contained in the CEFR and the descriptors of “common reference levels” that it contains. However, the CEFR itself is not a curriculum or syllabus, nor does it include descriptors or recommendations relating specifically to the teaching of languages to migrants: it is a resource to support anyone who is designing a curriculum for language education. In particular, designers of curricula and syllabuses for adult migrants are likely to take account of the action-oriented view of language competence described in the CEFR, as well as the notion that language curricula and syllabuses need to be “multi-dimensional”. This implies that, depending on learners’ needs, it makes sense to specify course objectives in terms of given “actions” or communication tasks that participants are likely to face, and the language competences that they will need to deal with these tasks.

A well-thought-through and simply written curriculum, and clear and flexible syllabus documents generated through a well-managed course design process are key factors in the quality and effectiveness of language courses for adult migrants.

Related resources

Linguistic integration of adult migrants – Guide to policy development and implementation, Council of Europe, 2014.

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2008.

Providers of courses for adult migrants – Self-assessment handbook, Richard Rossner, 2012.

Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options, Richard Rossner, 2008.

Education: tailor-made or one-size-fits-all? A project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie, Elwine Halewijn (ITTA), Annelies Houben (CTO) and Heidi De Niel (CTO), 2008.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants: evaluating policy and practice (reference document for the conference in 2010), David Little (ed.), 2010.

Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education, Language Policy Unit, Council of Europe, 2010.

Motivation in language training for adult migrants

Language courses for migrants should be designed to assist them in:

- ▶ raising their communicative competence in the language of the host country while meeting their perceived needs;
- ▶ identifying and formulating their language needs related to personal activities, employment and their particular situation (children at school, occupation, etc.);
- ▶ overcoming any doubts they may have about their ability to learn the language of the host community to the level they need.

Migrants often demonstrate a strong desire to be successful, and approach learning their new language with commitment and energy. It is therefore appropriate to devise and implement positive incentive-based policies for those migrants who may not independently take the necessary initiatives, for example by availing themselves of possibilities for personal tuition or enrolling in a suitable language programme.

Imposing v. fostering conditions

However, this positive approach is not a universal feature of migrant language education. As recent surveys by the Council of Europe confirm, a number of countries impose conditions which can result in penalties or sanctions, if a migrant is considered not to meet the stated requirements. For example, irregular attendance at an obligatory language course may result in a reduction in financial or social benefits while failure to pass a test can lead to loss of a residence permit, or to a refusal of citizenship or authorisation to enter a country for the purposes of family reunification.

Certain conditions linked to sanctions may be perceived by migrants as posing unrealistic demands or insurmountable obstacles. This situation can lead to resentment or anxiety, with a consequent reduction in the motivation needed for successful language learning.

Increase motivation

While there are good reasons for encouraging migrants to learn the language, forcing them to attend a course, learn a language or take a test may result in weak external motivation with poorer results than would otherwise have been achieved by incentives that lead to stronger personal motivation. Migrants, like any other learners, are more likely to succeed when language programmes provide them with success in meeting needs-related, realistic, attainable objectives, and develop the strategies and confidence for further learning as their current needs expand and gradually become more apparent to them. Their motivation to learn the language well is more likely to increase where they can see the results in their daily lives and official requirements are clearly linked to tangible incentives or rewards such as a partial reimbursement of fees, more rapid access to citizenship, or greater opportunities on the labour market. Besides encouraging migrants to identify more closely with the language of their host country, such incentives promote social cohesion.

Encourage personal engagement

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recalls that migration is about people as much as processes. The relevance and impact of conditions need to be evaluated, in particular whether they are necessary and proportionate in their effect on the person. Excessive sanctions will be perceived by migrants as discriminatory, and as an externally imposed administrative measure. This in turn will undermine the necessary personal engagement with the language learning process, thus representing a missed opportunity for contributing to further personal development.

Successful language learning for integration depends not on administrative measures aimed at forcing migrants to learn the language, but on a regular diagnosis of the individual's needs along with incentives that provide strong motivation for the development of proficiency in the language of the host country.

Related resources

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2008.

Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants, Hans-Jürgen Krumm and Verena Plutzer, 2008.

Education: tailor-made or one-size-fits-all?. A project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie, Elwine Halewijn (ITTA), Annelies Houben (CTO) and Heidi De Niel (CTO), 2008.

Language requirements for adult migrants in Council of Europe member states, report on a survey, Claire Extramiana and Piet van Avermaet, 2011.

Integration of adult migrants and education: Extracts from Council of Europe conventions and recommendations/resolutions by the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly, rev. 2013. Compilation prepared by the Council of Europe Language Policy Unit.

Teaching methodology

Since the 1970s the Council of Europe has promoted an approach based on the communicative needs of learners and the use of materials and methods that are appropriate to their characteristics as learners. Diversity of learner needs and characteristics necessarily generates diversity of objectives, methods and materials. Accordingly, the organisation does not favour one particular teaching methodology over others. In the 1970s the Council of Europe's own pioneering work on needs analysis distinguished between objective and subjective needs. Objective needs are defined in terms of the communicative tasks that language learners will be required to perform in a given situation, while subjective needs have to do with factors like attitude and motivation, learning style, learning aptitude and learning skills. Language courses for adult migrants are more likely to succeed and the learners themselves are more likely to be positively motivated if the courses are based on a careful analysis of learners' objective (or social) needs and are taught in a way that responds to their evolving subjective (or individual) needs and takes account of their educational background and experience.

Since the 1970s the Council of Europe has also promoted the idea of lifelong language learning. This is clearly relevant to adult migrants, whose proficiency in the language of the host country should continue to develop over the course of their lifetime. Lifelong language learning is a matter not of non-stop attendance at language courses but of acquiring learning skills that can be applied outside the classroom, in the course of daily life. One of the purposes of the European Language Portfolio is to support the development of such skills, which may help to explain why it has been particularly successful when used with adult migrants.

Although the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* does not favour any particular teaching methodology, its action-oriented approach to the description of language proficiency assigns a central role to communicative tasks in the teaching/learning process.

The website of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML – www.ecml.at) provides a wide range of materials, support and case studies arising from the Council of Europe's language education policies.

Related resources

Education: tailor-made or one-size-fits-all? A project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie, Elwine Halewijn (ITTA), Annelies Houben (CTO) and Heidi De Niel (CTO), 2008.

Responding to the language needs of adult refugees in Ireland: an alternative approach to teaching and assessment, David Little, 2008.

The European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, 2012, accompanied by an introduction and a guide for teachers.

Literacy

General remarks and clarifications

Literacy can be seen as a fundamental human right according to Article 26 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights concerning the right to education "directed to the full development of human personality" (Article 26.2). A number of international agreements, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1996, underline the importance of this human right, which is not limited by age (see Article 13.d). The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1990, explicitly confirms this right to education in the case of migrants (Articles 43 and 45).

Reading and writing are essential skills for survival in the modern world and there are strong links between illiteracy, poverty and exclusion. The ability to use the written language adequately to perform everyday tasks and make use of the resources of society is a necessary competence. This explains why access to education is also stressed in the European Social Charter (revised 1996) as "the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion" (Part II, Article 30).

Not addressing adult illiteracy can be seen as a strong violation of this right to education; migrants have the right to equal treatment as far as fundamental education is concerned.

As for migrants, different types of illiteracy are relevant:

- ▶ illiterate people have never learnt to read or write, perhaps because they did not receive proper education in their country of origin;
- ▶ functionally illiterate people are those who were taught to read and write but they are not able to use these skills to meet the requirements of daily life. This category of functional illiteracy is culture-specific because literacy requirements differ from country to country as debates on health literacy or media literacy show. People who belong to this group have usually had only a limited education;
- ▶ those who learnt to read and write in their language of origin but have lost these skills through lack of use and further training constitute a special sub-group, the so-called secondary illiterates.

Sometimes migrants who can read and write in their language of origin are treated as illiterate because the language of the host community uses a different writing system. But of course they are not at all illiterate. For practical reasons they may attend the same courses as illiterate people because they have to learn a new writing system from the very beginning, but they are already familiar with the relationships between sound and written symbols and they have already developed the ability to look for meaning in a text.

Terminology is delicate because terms such as “illiterate” and “limited language proficiency” are discriminating terms which neglect the fact that the people concerned are often fully able to participate in social life. They do not describe precisely which communicative competences people have although they are not able to reach a certain level in reading and writing. Therefore it is preferable to speak of “teaching literacy” instead of focusing on illiteracy.

Danger of exclusion of illiterate migrants from educational programmes

There are three main reasons why illiterate migrants are often excluded from educational programmes (for details see *Literacy for special target groups: migrants*, L.-M. Rinta, 2005, UNESCO-Institute for Education):

- ▶ language programmes for migrants are usually designed for migrants who are literate in their mother tongue and can make use of literacy skills from the very beginning. Only a few countries offer special programmes for illiterate migrants and little is known about their specific needs;
- ▶ illiterate migrants often have especially difficult working conditions: long hours, work that is physically exhausting, more than one job;
- ▶ because they cannot read they do not benefit from written information about programmes designed to meet their needs. Sometimes they are ashamed of their illiteracy and thus reluctant to admit that they cannot read and write, and sometimes they are not aware of the importance of literacy, so that when asked whether they are competent in a language, they say yes, because they can speak it.

Consequences for language tuition

Illiterate adult migrants urgently need to access elementary education and instruction in basic literacy skills (see also *Basic concepts and core competencies for education for democratic citizenship*, Francois Audigier, Council for Cultural Co-operation, project on Education for Democratic Citizenship, Council of Europe, 2000 (DGIV/EDU/CIT(2000)23; Y.37.035.4). Programmes to teach literacy therefore have to be a necessary part of any integration programme.

Research shows that it is easier to acquire literacy in one’s mother tongue than in a second language because the language itself is already familiar. Simultaneously learning a new language and literacy skills is much more difficult and time-consuming. Acquiring literacy in the new language is easier for people who have already learnt to read and write in their language of origin. Practical considerations – for example linguistically heterogeneous groups of learners or a lack of qualified teachers competent in migrants’ languages – often mean that literacy is taught through the medium of the new language. In these circumstances specialist training for teachers, team teaching with teachers from a migrant background and the development of special materials would seem to be necessary.

Illiterate migrants cannot be subject to the same linguistic requirements as other migrants. They need special courses and much more time to reach the required levels. Testing them in all skills at the same level is counter-productive because their oral skills are necessarily more developed and it is a complex task to learn a new language and literacy at the same time. Assessment is especially problematic because even listening tests usually require that the test-takers can read and write. To make family reunification dependent on language tests is to exclude illiterate migrants from the fundamental human right to live together with their family.

Related resources

Language learning in the context of migration and integration – Challenges and options for adult learners, case study, Verena Plutzar and Monika Ritter, Council of Europe, 2008.

The role of literacy in the acculturation process of migrants, Hervé Adami, 2008.

Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants, Hans-Jürgen Krumm and Verena Plutzar, 2008.

Languages for work

Learning the language of the host country for professional or vocational purposes

When it comes to the integration of migrants, command of the host country's language is usually deemed essential for access to employment or the exercise of an occupation of any kind, from the lowest level of responsibility to the highest. Work-related language training is therefore recommended when the need for communication in a work environment has been established. Nevertheless, the difficulties begin once the learner has signed up for this type of training, as it is necessary to devise specific courses similar to tailor-made courses. Another difficulty is that work-related language training often suffers because of confusion with courses for low-skill workers (basic knowledge and key competences) on the one hand and general language training provided for foreigners on the other. While courses in basic knowledge and key competences may well be suitable for low-skill, non-native speaker employees of foreign origin, the same is not true of skilled non-native speakers. Similarly, non-native speakers with work communication needs will probably derive little benefit from general language training that is not suited to their specific needs.

Communication in the workplace and the needs issue

When designing course programmes for the occupational context, there are two opposing approaches, depending on whether one starts out from language teaching and moves towards the relevant occupational activity or, on the contrary, from holistic analysis of the work environment and moves towards the training intervention. The needs issue is fundamental in both approaches: communication needs, language needs and resulting training needs. To determine the type of language needs that training must take into account the TRIM project (Training for the Integration of Migrant and Ethnic Workers) refers to analysis of in-house communication (systemic analysis), set against analysis of conventional training needs. The latter model centres on the individual's linguistic deficits in the workplace which must be made good through training. Conversely, the TRIM project envisages the language training process as an integral part of vocational training, in the context of health and safety training modules provided for employees, for instance.

Language competences in the workplace

The Council of Europe has developed the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* whose descriptors have been used as a basis for the elaboration of Reference Level Descriptions (RLDs) by language (for a certain number of languages). General competences are listed for the educational, professional/employment, public and personal fields. If we now consider the infinite range of language competences required in occupational contexts which themselves are infinitely varied, a distinction has to be made between several types of competences: general, specialised, transversal cutting across several trades, and bound up with situations of occupational communication, etc. There are also competence bases, basic competences and key competences within the meaning of the European Parliament and Council Recommendation of 2006 (2006/962/EC) and the Canadian "essential competences".

Which language competences are required for any given occupation? Alongside an approach based on “language first and occupational matters afterwards or elsewhere”, we find teaching approaches linking up the linguistic dimension with the occupational dimension from the first levels of command of language. In short, language teaching for professional and/or employment-related purposes may consider the occupation in a very broad manner or, on the contrary, with regard to specific occupations (the medical profession, the cleaning sector, etc.), or even specific posts within a given occupation. The teaching situation also varies depending on whether the training takes place upstream of employment, in direct relation to a job or in the workplace itself. A distinction can therefore be made between training courses providing access to employment (for job-seekers), training courses for retaining one’s job (for changing jobs requiring adaptation) and training courses aimed at career progression.

Language competence frames of reference

Some frames of reference for language competence in the workplace, that are drawn up as a basis for designing a training scheme, describe specific competences rather than just the general skills provided for under general language teaching. In France, for example, such frames of reference exist for posts in the local and regional civil service and in the construction and civil engineering sectors.

In Germany (Land of North Rhine-Westphalia), professional qualification schemes combine care for the elderly with language training. In the United Kingdom, assessment of the specific communication skills required of staff in the personal healthcare sector puts the spotlight on language competences. Finally, in Canada, a language dimension is included in the general – and therefore cross-disciplinary – skills required in different areas of professional activity.

Further information on these questions, and in particular details of the examples given above, may be found in the study on *Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes*.

Related resources

Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes – Outline of issues and educational approaches, Claire Extramiana, 2012.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, David Little, 2012.

Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants, Hans-Jürgen Krumm and Verena Plutzer, 2008.

Integration of adult migrants and education: Extracts from Council of Europe conventions and recommendations/resolutions by the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly, Compilation prepared by the Council of Europe Language Policy Unit, rev. 2013.

TRIM project (*Training for the Integration of Migrant and Ethnic Workers into the Labour Market and Local Community*, M. Grünhage-Monetti et al. (eds), 2005.

Teacher training for language teachers working with adult migrants

Like teachers of any subject, language teachers need to undergo specialised initial or pre-service teacher training before they are asked to take up their teaching duties. This is just as true for those teachers for whom the language in question is their mother tongue as for those for whom it is an additional language. Guidelines for training aimed at future teachers of languages in mainstream European schools are to be found in the European Profile for Language Teaching Education, the result of an EU-funded project, and in the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages that resulted from a Council of Europe ECML project and is intended to help teachers in training to assess their own progress. These documents may be especially useful reference points for when preparing training programmes for those who are working as teachers but have not yet had any formal training in language teaching.

However, generally such initial training does not cover the special demands made of teachers who work on language courses for adult migrants. Moreover, some teachers of migrants working for community associations and charitable organisations, or as volunteers, may not have had any training at all as language teachers. In such cases, additional training is needed to equip language teachers to teach migrants effectively. Bearing in

mind Council of Europe principles, specific areas that may need to be addressed in further teacher training are likely to include, among other topics:

- ▶ the social, psychological, educational and language background of typical migrants;
- ▶ their likely situation and real-life needs in the host community;
- ▶ intercultural issues, including diversity and racism;
- ▶ plurilingualism, pluriculturalism;
- ▶ the role of the CEFR descriptors and principles in the teaching and assessment of adult migrants;
- ▶ learning materials and teaching approaches suitable for adult migrants.

Ways of providing further, specialised teacher training for teachers of adult migrants

Further training for teachers of adult migrants may take any or a combination of the following forms:

- ▶ it could be an induction course at the beginning of their employment as teachers of migrants – this is usually short and focused on practicalities such as the typical education and language background of migrants in the locality in question, how to assess the needs of these migrants, what kinds of learning materials to use, and how to motivate learners facing practical, social and psychological challenges in the world outside the classroom;
- ▶ alternatively it could be an in-service training course in the specific field of migrant language training, maybe part-time alongside practical “on the job” experience, which could usefully be drawn on in assignments and for practical assessments. Issues that need special attention in in-service training for teachers of migrants include the handling of cultural aspects of language teaching for those who come from different educational traditions, dealing with low levels of literacy, relating the language syllabus to the migrant students’ everyday practical needs and assessing migrant learners’ progress. Specialised programmes have been developed in some member states for “retraining” language teachers so that they are formally qualified also to teach migrants;
- ▶ workshops may be led by experienced teachers of migrants and specialists in the field and many employers realise the value of offering teachers the chance to regularly exchange expertise and collaborate in exploring challenging areas at the workplace or, less regularly, at relevant external events and conferences;
- ▶ mentoring by a more experienced colleague may include team teaching, in which the two teachers plan and jointly teach certain lessons, and peer observation, during which they observe each other and comment or seek clarification on what they have observed.

The importance of continuous professional development

All such options may be seen as part of professional development, the process by which individual teachers, however experienced they are, continue to broaden and deepen their expertise and their knowledge-base in the specific kind of language education that adult migrants need. Professional development can also include any activities in the professional field which are felt to be useful and important to the individual, such as taking on new teaching and non-teaching duties, learning one or more migrant languages, guided reading, counselling students and surveying their views, and classroom-based research. While it is best self-directed, individualised professional development nevertheless requires guidance and financial support, as well as recognition, from the employer.

Related resources

Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options, Richard Rossner, 2008.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”, David Little, 2012.

Providers of courses for adult migrants – Self-assessment handbook, Richard Rossner, 2012.

The “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” and the development of policies for the integration of adult migrants, David Little, 2008.

The role of literacy in the acculturation process of migrants, Hervé Adami, 2008.

Chapter 4

Assessing language proficiency and language courses

Assessment of language learning

Functions of assessment

Assessment of language learning serves one of two functions: either to measure learners' proficiency without reference to a language course, or to measure the extent to which they have achieved the goals of a particular programme of learning. Within the latter function it is usual to distinguish between formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment takes place during the course of learning in order to provide learners with feedback on their progress and alert the teacher to any aspects of the course that may need adjustment. It is sometimes referred to as "assessment for learning". Summative assessment takes place at the end of the course and seeks to measure overall learning achievement. It is sometimes referred to as "assessment of learning".

Forms of assessment

Assessment usually takes one of two forms: either a test that generates a score which can be translated into a statement about the learner's proficiency/achievement, or a compilation of evidence that illustrates what the learner can do in his or her target language. The evidence may take the form of written text (essays, letters or other documents relevant to the learner's target repertoire) or recordings in audio or video which demonstrate the learner's oral capacities. It is often presented in a portfolio.

Alternative forms of assessment, such as portfolios, have three advantages over tests: evidence may be collected under non-threatening conditions, which gives it greater validity as evidence of a learner's true ability; evidence may be derived from the performance of real-world tasks that have been identified as particularly important for the learners in question; and there is greater potential to judge learners' performance holistically and thus to focus on their underlying ability to complete tasks successfully.

Tests sometimes entail sanctions while alternative forms of assessment are often intended to enhance learners' motivation .

The European Language Portfolio as an assessment instrument

The Council of Europe's European Language Portfolio (ELP) includes checklists of "I can" descriptors arranged according to the activities and proficiency levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). The checklists are used by the learner to identify learning targets and assess learning outcomes. When evidence of proficiency is systematically linked to checklist descriptors, the ELP can complement or replace a test that is linked to the CEFR. The use of the ELP as an assessment instrument requires continuous support from the teacher, especially as self-assessment will not have played a role in the previous educational experience of many adult migrants.

Related resources

Responding to the language needs of adult refugees in Ireland: an alternative approach to teaching and assessment, David Little, 2008.

Language tests for social cohesion and citizenship – An outline for policy makers, Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) Authoring Group, 2008.

The European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, 2012, accompanied by:

- ▶ *The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European Language Portfolio: an introduction*, David Little, 2012;
- ▶ *The European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country. A guide for teachers*, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, 2012;
- ▶ *The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European Language Portfolio: goal-setting and self-assessment checklists*, David Little;
- ▶ *Workshop activities to introduce the CEFR and the ELP*, David Little.

European Language Portfolio

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) is designed to support the development of learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism. Conceived and developed by the Council of Europe in parallel with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR, it allows users to record their experience of learning languages other than their mother tongue(s) and to assess their language learning achievements against the proficiency levels of the CEFR. In this way it can serve as a complement to certificates and diplomas.

Three components

The ELP has three obligatory components:

- ▶ a language passport, which presents a regularly updated overview of the owner's linguistic profile;
- ▶ a language biography, which helps the owner to reflect on his or her language learning and language use, focusing on goal setting and self-assessment, learning strategies, the intercultural dimension of language learning and plurilingualism (the ability to communicate in two or more languages at any level of proficiency);
- ▶ a dossier, in which the owner collects samples of work that reflect the language proficiency he/she has achieved and his/her intercultural experience (the dossier may also be used to organise work in progress).

Links to the CEFR

The ELP is linked to the CEFR in three ways:

- ▶ because language learning is a lifelong process the CEFR recognises the importance of developing learner autonomy because "once teaching stops, further learning has to be autonomous" (CEFR, p.141). The ELP is designed to support the development of language learning skills;
- ▶ the ELP is also designed to promote intercultural awareness and plurilingualism, both of which are key concepts of the CEFR and central to the Council of Europe's language education policy. They play a key role in the integration process;
- ▶ the ELP helps learners to relate their learning progress and achievement to the proficiency levels of the CEFR. The language biography includes checklists of "I can" descriptors arranged according to the proficiency levels and communicative activities of the CEFR. The checklists can be used to identify learning goals and self-assess learning achievement, which is periodically recorded in the language passport against the CEFR's self-assessment grid. Provided learners are required to support their self-assessment with evidence of their achieved proficiency, the ELP can also be used as an assessment instrument in its own right or as a complement to formal tests. It is important to recognise that self-assessment has no place in many educational cultures and needs careful mediation to adult migrants.

The ELP and adult migrants

The ELP can support the linguistic integration of adult migrants in three ways:

- ▶ because it is designed to help learners manage their own learning, it is especially appropriate for use in courses that are designed to meet the needs of individual learners. It thus has particular relevance for tailor-made courses;
- ▶ because it is concerned to support the development of plurilingualism, the ELP offers adult migrants a way of recording and reflecting on the languages they know and use in addition to the language of their host country. Making them aware of their linguistic capital and the role that it might play in their integration can be a powerful motivating factor;
- ▶ because it is concerned to support the development of intercultural awareness, the ELP can help adult migrants to achieve a deeper understanding of similarities and differences between the host country and their country of origin.

An ELP website

The Council of Europe's ELP website provides a wealth of detailed information on the background to the ELP, the development and registration of ELP models, and the use of the ELP in a variety of educational contexts. The website also provides templates and detailed instructions to support the development of new models (www.coe.int/portfolio).

An ELP toolkit

The Council of Europe has developed an ELP for adult migrants that can be adapted to suit the needs of different contexts (see section "Instruments": www.coe.int/lang-migrants). It is accompanied by:

- ▶ a general introduction;
- ▶ a guide for teachers that explains how to use each page of the model; and
- ▶ goal-setting and self-assessment checklists developed specially for adult migrants.

Related resources

The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" David Little, 2012.

The European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, 2012, accompanied by:

- ▶ *Linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European Language Portfolio: an introduction*, David Little, 2012;
- ▶ *European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country. A guide for teachers*, Barbara Lazenby Simpson, 2012;
- ▶ *The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European Language Portfolio: goal-setting and self-assessment checklists*, David Little;
- ▶ *Workshop activities to introduce the CEFR and the ELP*, David Little.

Quality in education and training for migrants

The quality of education and training relates to the degree to which it meets the needs and expectations of the learners concerned and the needs of the other stakeholders, particularly those organising it and those funding it. The Council of Europe's policy guidelines and recommendations indicate that the quality of language courses and language tests for adult migrants should also be judged according to the ways in which the courses contribute to the promotion of intercultural dialogue, foster tolerance, and support the integration of immigrants in their host societies. These principles are outlined in the Declaration and Action Plan of the Third Council of Europe Summit in Warsaw.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance is “the maintenance of a desired level of quality in a service or product, especially by means of attention to every stage of the process of delivery or production” (Oxford Dictionary). In the case of language courses for adult migrants, this includes regularly evaluating:

- ▶ whether the real-life needs of individual migrants are being addressed in the design of language programmes;
- ▶ whether their ability to engage in relevant transactional and social exchanges with members of the host community is being strengthened, and whether they gradually experience fewer difficulties because of language problems;
- ▶ whether the culture and language(s) of adult migrants are being respected and, where relevant, supported as they learn the language and customs of the host community;
- ▶ how motivated and engaged they are by the teaching and learning activities and materials, and the way the teachers work.

The aim of quality assurance in this context is to regularly review the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and management, and, if necessary, to make adjustments that ensure that the needs of those receiving and sponsoring the education are met. The Council of Europe has produced a self-assessment handbook including a detailed checklist to support managers and staff in carrying out internal quality assurance themselves. The questionnaire can also be used as a checklist when designing and setting up new language courses for adult migrants.

Quality control

Quality assurance in education is best carried out by those directly involved in organising and teaching the courses, that is, the institution or entity providing them. Quality control, on the other hand, is an important responsibility of those overseeing the provision, usually government agencies. Where courses for migrants are financed from public funds, there is a specific duty to demonstrate through quality measures that the courses are effective and represent “value for money”. In language and other courses for adult migrants, quality control is especially important because of the range of different providers, which may include community associations and voluntary bodies, as well as further education colleges, distributed over a wide national area and with ad hoc local management.

Quality control needs to be undertaken by competent specialists in the field of adult migrant education. Procedures might include carrying out unannounced short observations of a cross-section of classes for migrants, or talking to randomly selected learners about specific aspects of their course, as well as by checking paperwork and the results of assessment. In some countries quality control takes the form of accreditation under a mandatory scheme involving a more formal periodic audit. This is designed to ensure that all institutions contracted by the national authorities to provide courses for migrants have achieved and maintain equivalent standards in line with government policy.

Quality management

The work of those providing courses for adult migrants is complex and demanding since such a wide variety of language needs has to be met. Quality management is needed in order to ensure that, within an organisation, there is a continual and systematic approach to quality assurance and a regular focus on identifying opportunities for improvement. However, managers and co-ordinators of language courses are not necessarily trained in this work. Suggestions as to the principles and procedures for quality management in the domain of language provision for adult migrants were offered in a thematic study presented by Richard Rossner at the Council of Europe seminar on the linguistic integration of adult migrants in 2008: *Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options*.

In certain member states, language tests and examinations are made obligatory for adult migrants. These are usually unrelated to the language courses that are available. Quality management is, of course, equally important where such tests are concerned. Useful standards for language tests are outlined in the ALTE “Minimum standards”.

Related resources

Providers of courses for adult migrants – Self-assessment handbook, Richard Rossner, 2012.

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2012.

Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options, Richard Rossner, 2008.

Language requirements for adult migrants in Council of Europe member states, report on a survey, Claire Extramiana and Piet van Avermaet, 2011.

ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe): <http://www.alte.org>.

Language courses, assessment and quality assurance

Language courses and language assessment are at the core of provision for migrants seeking to improve their skills in the language of the country to which they have migrated. The design and quality of the courses and the tests are of critical importance both for migrants themselves and for the national or provincial authorities who establish the goals and often provide funding for the provision. This section covers three interlinked areas – provision of courses, tests and other forms of assessment aimed at migrants, and quality assurance issues surrounding such courses and tests. For each area various resources prepared under Council of Europe auspices are available. These include:

- ▶ background papers with analysis and guidelines;
- ▶ case studies describing specific approaches to courses and assessment;
- ▶ tools that can be used by teachers and managers.

Under each heading below brief information about these resources is provided (texts are available online on the LIAM website: www.coe.int/lang-migrants).

Provision of language courses for students who are adult migrants

Council of Europe member states are increasingly requiring adult migrants to attain certain minimum levels of proficiency in the language of the country before they are granted the right to long-term residence and, beyond that, to citizenship. In support of such policies, many member states directly provide or fund the provision by other entities of language courses for adult migrants who do not yet have the level of proficiency in the language that is required. Such provision evidently involves careful reflection on various aspects of course design and delivery, for example the way in which adult migrants' individual needs are assessed and taken into account in specifying the objectives, structure and content of the language courses offered to them.

Resources relating to needs analysis and course design

- ▶ *Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes – Outline of issues and educational approaches*: this paper focuses in particular on adult migrants' need to be supported in acquiring the necessary language skills to enter the job market. It examines various approaches that have been taken to providing language training for this purpose.
- ▶ *Language learning, teaching and assessment and the integration of adult immigrants – The importance of needs analysis*: this paper proposes a model for analysing the individual needs of migrants and proposes a task-based approach to their language training and to assessment.
- ▶ *European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country – A guide for teachers* (Chapter 7): this chapter of the guide outlines how individual profiles of students entering language courses can be drawn up and how the profiles can then be drawn on in course planning.
- ▶ *Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants*: this paper discusses the language learning needs of adult migrants arising from their particular social needs and their background prior to migration.

Resources in the form of case studies that examine language provision for adult migrants in different contexts and from different points of view:

- ▶ *Responding to the language needs of adult refugees in Ireland: an alternative approach to teaching and assessment*: this case study looks at an innovative solution to the provision of language support for a diverse group of migrants and refugees in Ireland.
- ▶ *The role of literacy in the acculturation process of migrants*: this case study discusses the impact of low literacy and different educational backgrounds on adult migrants attending courses in France, and describes some of the difficulties students encounter and the implications of these for policy makers and providers.
- ▶ *Language learning in the context of migration and integration – Challenges and options for adult learners*: this case study considers the situation of illiterate migrants in Austria and the approaches used to help them to acquire basic literacy in the context of their language courses.
- ▶ *Education: tailor-made or one-size-fits-all? A project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie*: this case describes a project in which techniques were successfully designed and used for drawing up individual profiles of adult migrants in the Netherlands, as well as to provide guidance and motivation in their language courses.

Assessment of adult migrant students before, during and after courses, and testing of adult migrants in countries where tests are a requirement for residence and other permits, or for citizenship

Assessment of adult migrants' language ability is carried out for various purposes and may take various forms.

i) In relation to language courses for adult migrants, the main functions of assessment by the course providers are:

- ▶ to assess students' language level and needs before they are placed in a class so that the course they are placed in is suitable;
- ▶ to assess students' progress during the course and to identify difficulties that individual students may be experiencing so that teaching is adapted to learners' needs. This kind of assessment can be done in a wide variety of ways, including through continuous assessment by the teacher, assessment of students while they are carrying out a language learning tasks, etc;
- ▶ at the end of many courses, to assess learners' achievement so that they can be awarded a certificate.

Institutions using tests in these ways need to ensure that they are valid and reliable.

ii) Self-assessment by learners of their own language proficiency can also be useful and motivating. The version of the European Language Portfolio designed specifically for adult migrants and accompanied by a guide for teachers and self-assessment checklists, serves this purpose. It enables adult migrants regularly to assess and record their progress in any of the languages in their repertoire including the language of the country they have migrated to.

iii) In some countries, migrants are asked to take official tests in order to demonstrate that they have reached a level required for residence, citizenship or even for family reunion. Increasingly, they are asked to take such tests before they leave their home country. There is, of course, a possibility that such tests are disproportionate and discriminatory. In addition, examination bodies offer public examinations which adult migrants and other language learners can take or are advised to take in order to demonstrate that they have achieved a given level of proficiency. As with all language tests and examinations, great care is needed to ensure that they are valid, fair and reliable, and that migrants have access to relevant training to help prepare for the examinations.

Resources relating to tests of a formal nature

- ▶ *Language tests for social cohesion and citizenship – An outline for policymakers*: this paper prepared by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) provides a useful overview of policy considerations to ensure that tests are valid, reliable and fair.

- ▶ *Language learning, teaching and assessment and the integration of adult immigrants. The importance of needs analysis*: this paper proposes a model for analysing the individual needs of migrants and proposes a task-based approach to their language training and to assessment (also referred to under “provision of language courses”).

Resources relating to self-assessment by adult migrants of their developing language proficiency

- ▶ *European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country*: this version of the ELP has been created specifically with the needs and situation of adult migrants in mind to enable them to consider their existing skills in various languages, and to track and reflect on their progress in learning the language of the host country; it is generic in the sense that it is designed to be adapted to suit the needs of particular contexts.
- ▶ *European Language Portfolio for adult migrants learning the language of the host country – A guide for teachers*: this provides teachers with detailed guidance on how to use this version of the ELP; it also contains a chapter on profiles and levels (also referred to under “provision of language courses”) and on how to create an ELP for low-level learners.
- ▶ The European Language Portfolio for adult migrants is accompanied by two documents: i. *An introduction to the ELP* and ii. *Goal-setting and self-assessment checklists*.

Quality assurance of language courses and testing

Language education provision for adult migrants varies in quantity, price and aims from country to country, and the same is true of tests and other forms of assessment which adult migrants are subject to. Language training for adult migrants is critically important from the point of view of social and economic integration, and the amounts of effort and money being invested in it are rightly considerable. There is therefore a need to ensure that such language learning and language assessment services are relevant and effective in delivering the intended outcomes, and are supported by a system for ensuring that the quality both of the educational experience and of the outcomes remains consistently high and that opportunities for continuous updating and improvement are identified and responded to. National education authorities organise “inspections” or other forms of external assessment at school level, but there is commonly a less systematic approach to quality assurance in further and adult education, whether in the state or in the independent sector. However, evaluating and managing the quality of language courses and tests for adult migrants is essential, both for the benefit of those taking the courses and the tests, and for the authorities who are responsible for organising and funding the courses, which in many member states are wholly or partially financed from taxes.

Resources relating to the quality of language course provision

- ▶ *Providers of courses for adult migrants – Self-assessment handbook*: this is a tool in the form of an extended questionnaire designed to help managers and staff working in centres providing courses for adult migrants to look in depth at and reflect on all areas of their work with a view to assessing whether quality improvements are desirable or indeed necessary; it may also be useful for those in state authorities charged with overseeing the provision.
- ▶ *Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options*: this paper examines the reasons for a quality approach and the main areas which need to be considered when assessing and assuring the quality of language courses.

Resources relating to the quality of tests and other forms of assessment

- ▶ *Language tests for social cohesion and citizenship – An outline for policymakers*: this was prepared by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) and provides a useful overview of policy considerations to ensure that tests are valid, reliable and fair.

- ▶ *Relating language examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) – A manual*: this is to be found in a dedicated section of the Council of Europe’s website; it sets out procedures for linking language tests to the levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference*, and is accompanied by *The CEFR and language examinations: a toolkit*, the *Manual for language test development and examining*, and various other documents relating to language tests.

Chapter 5

Taking account of the intercultural perspective

Linguistic goodwill

Contact with languages we do not know, which we hear being used, see written in scripts that differ from our own or which we have to use ourselves to a very limited extent (a few words) usually triggers various reactions ranging from surprise or amusement to rejection. By “linguistic goodwill” we mean the attitude which consists of showing an interest in unknown languages, admiring them as human creations, without making any value judgments or classifications, and being ready to establish communication with those who speak them, whoever they may be.

Ethnocentrism

These unfamiliar languages are therefore often regarded as exotic or irrational and grating in sound or even ugly, while their speakers are often regarded as noisy or loud, especially when the languages are used on our home territory, where they may be seen as intrusions. Reactions of this kind are frequent when the speakers are of modest means, in which case it is the users of the languages as much as the languages themselves which are rejected. Such reactions are particularly prevalent in respect of adult migrants, who may end up undervaluing their language, hiding it and not passing it on.

They reflect a banal form of ethnocentrism, which can apply to many other expressions of otherness, such as clothing, table manners and standards of politeness, etc. They are therefore a potential breeding ground for racism and discrimination.

Favourable disposition towards languages

All forms of intercultural education have a duty to highlight these reactions and urge individuals to control them, drawing on the most objectivised data possible, which go beyond the dominant social representations and automatic ethnic stereotypes. This approach, involving a kind of reflective reassessment, should lead to linguistic goodwill, thus positive curiosity for the unknown and pleasure in discovery. In terms of their diversity, languages are among the most exceptional creations of *Homo sapiens* and they deserve admiration or, at least, interest. Far from being mere marks of identity, they also reflect human beings' ability to develop infinitely varied modes of communication from the same raw material: human sounds.

Education in goodwill

The plurilingual education approach itself involves teaching resources for developing classroom activities that generate an attitude of linguistic goodwill. They are based on the perception of the diversity of languages, in the form of discovery of language and languages. These practical forms of introduction to linguistics are primarily intended for young learners. However, they probably would also be useful for more advanced learners. These activities involving the observation and manipulation of various linguistic forms should help individuals recognise the unitary functioning of languages and make contact with other languages less disconcerting.

In terms of attitudes and behaviour, for instance, this involves learning, for example:

- ▶ not to be shocked on hearing unfamiliar sounds;
- ▶ not always to think that the speakers of foreign languages speak too loudly or inarticulately;
- ▶ to make an effort to speak clearly and more slowly so as to facilitate interaction with non-native speakers;
- ▶ to mediate or correct what the other person says in a discreet, non-judgmental manner;
- ▶ (...).

It could also concern repertoires and stress the need, for instance:

- ▶ not to show too great surprise on finding out that a speaker has a particular language in his or her repertoire;
- ▶ to equate scope of repertoire with “intelligence”;
- ▶ to adopt a comparative assessment approach for repertoires;
- ▶ to adopt the code-switching used by the other speaker (when possible);
- ▶ not to show off one’s repertoire gratuitously but to use it playfully with the other speaker to generate complicity.
- ▶ (...)

This linguistic civility is a full part of the objectives of plurilingual and intercultural education.

Related resources

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2008.

Languages and language repertoires: plurilingualism as a way of life in Europe, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2004.

Linguistic diversity and new minorities in Europe, Ingrid Gogolin, 2004.

Living together in diversity – Linguistic integration in Flanders, Reinhilde Pulinx, 2008.

The linguistic integration of adult migrants, report on the seminar, Language Policy Division, 2008.

White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue – “Living together as equals in dignity”, Council of Europe, 2008.

Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe (Chapter 4), Jean-Claude Beacco and Michael Byram, Council of Europe, 2007.

Language of origin

The names given to language categories are always problematic. Even the use of the word “language” to describe a language variety is not self-evident, as some are identified with terms such as “patois” or “dialect”, implying that they do not enjoy the same legitimacy as “real” languages.

An external definition

In the case of migrants, reference is often made to the term “language of origin”, which is defined in the *Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe* (2007) as “language variety, often the first language, of persons or groups who have moved to live in other states. These speakers must adapt linguistically to the new environment and learn, at least partially, the language (or languages) of the host country” (see Glossary).

This is, however, an external description: for the speakers concerned, it is their mother tongue. They themselves can only refer to it as their language “of origin” if they no longer use it much or at all: that makes it the language variety of their parents and grandparents or those who stayed in their country of origin. It is the language “from back there”, which they wish:

- ▶ either to hide, as it is a tangible sign of difference and foreign languages are not readily accepted in the host society;
- ▶ or to use between people of the same origins, for practical reasons and also to demonstrate belonging; in these contexts, a language of origin may take on the role of a language of identity.

It cannot be characterised in isolation, but as a function of its place in a speaker’s individual repertoire.

The term is actually reserved for certain first languages which are not used or are not autochthonous in the host society. We probably would not instinctively say that English was the language of origin of an English-speaking civil servant stationed in Brussels. The term language “of origin” tends to be used for languages which are regarded as being very “exotic”, of low international prestige or used by poor migrants from poor regions.

Language of yesterday, language of tomorrow

For migrants, it is not the language of somewhere else but that “of before”, that is, before their departure from their own country. It is a source of “linguistic nostalgia” for their children, for example, and for the adults themselves, who may tend to forget it for lack of practice, and it resurfaces in a delightful, lively manner when a particular word or expression is used.

The language of origin is therefore mostly the first language of migrants: the one in their repertoire which they use with their families, relatives and fellow nationals. The diffuse linguistic intolerance which may affect certain unpopular languages means that there may be a tendency not to pass it on. Language teaching in the language of the host society must take account of these languages, by making a symbolic place for them and by encouraging the learners to pass them on, because the relevant knowledge is an asset for their children’s future. And this contribution by migrants is a boon for the host society, which it would be economically harmful to let go to waste.

Related resources

Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants, Hans-Jürgen Krumm and Verena Plutzer, 2008.

Education: tailor-made or one-size-fits-all? A project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie, Elwine Halewijn (ITTA), Annelies Houben (CTO) and Heidi De Niel (CTO), 2008.

Educational culture

Adult migrants do not just come from nowhere. They come from another society where a particular educational philosophy applies and bring with them certain ideas of education and learning which they have built up from their personal experience of school or the ordinary social representations which usually describe and explain them. Like all learners who change educational environment (either in the same context – for instance, from school to university – or in a new one), they have to understand and indeed adapt to new ways in which the educational establishment operates. This and the interpretations of it may be termed educational culture. Although this field generally falls within the area of comparative education, it should actually be seen more as a form of intercultural encounter, between education/learning approaches and educational values, in so far as all societies have adopted systems for passing on accumulated knowledge.

Nature of educational cultures

Educational cultures are the framework in which educational activities take place. In the present case, however, the native teachers and the learners do not in principle share the same approaches. Different traditions have produced specific teaching practices, involving, for instance, clearly identified types of exercises such as replying orally to questions, doing written exercises or producing certain types of texts. These are not universal, however, and asking the teacher a question is not an acceptable practice everywhere. These teaching habits are accompanied by types of student behaviour which are expected and are deemed to be the only ones acceptable (for instance, arriving on time, addressing the other learners politely, doing the work asked of them, standing up to reply, etc.). They govern the types of verbal relationship with the teacher, the rules on speaking (asking permission to speak), assessment methods (what is fair), physical behaviour (a teacher sitting on a student’s desk) and acceptable types of clothing. All these features which are considered natural on both sides need to be properly identified if they are a source of genuine misunderstanding. For these groups and others, the group educational culture therefore has to be negotiated.

Hands-on ways of teaching and learning

It is in this context that the question of the choice of teaching methodologies and hence of the expected learning behaviour arises. Preference may be given to approaches deemed to be active (and considered more effective), in which learners are involved in performing simple or complex, repetitive or open tasks likely to occur in social situations, in individual or group activities or in forms of formative self-assessment. However, language teaching specialists’ beliefs of this kind have to allow for widespread practices such as rote learning, expanding one’s vocabulary with bilingual dictionaries, making the most of description activities (“grammar”), translating everything and noting everything in writing and so on. It is by no means certain that the best strategy for all groups is to banish these practices or “drag” them towards more “modern” practices. It is not therefore possible to propose a single standard solution: appropriate educational cultures must be devised on

a case-by-case basis, while nevertheless taking account of the nature of the challenges posed by the language tests and certification which may be demanded of adult migrants.

Related resources

Responding to the language needs of adult refugees in Ireland: an alternative approach to teaching and assessment, David Little, 2008.

Adult migrant integration policies: principles and implementation, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2010.

Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants – Guidelines and options, Richard Rossner, 2008.

Knowledge of society

Citizenship training

The training offered to migrants (or which they must follow to acquire nationality) usually includes a “non-linguistic” component. This generally involves a presentation of the host society, taking various forms: viewing of a film, talk with trainers or training proper. The areas covered usually involve the history of the country and its general, economic and political features. The training often highlights knowledge of citizens’ rights and duties, in particular as regards life in society (health, education, legal status of spouses, taxes, military service obligations, etc.) and routine administrative procedures. The training may be followed by assessment or actual tests, the results of which may determine access to a desired status (permanent residence, citizenship).

Information

It is important not to misunderstand the expected outcomes of this kind of training and to look closely at its content. It should actually serve no other purpose than to inform the persons being trained, with the information either being initial or supplementing or modifying the experience which the adult migrants have already acquired of life in the society where they sometimes have lived for a long time. Above all, the relevant information must be understood (and hence given in the migrants’ language). And the courses should probably be seen more as an opportunity for identifying the support and resources available to assist migrants in their daily lives than as involving actual assimilation of the technical information provided.

The presentations may also tend to praise the host society and show it in the best possible light. It is by no means certain that the relative lack of reference to (or playing down of) the social problems affecting it adds to the presentations’ credibility. The tendency to present the nation as a united entity, the better to differentiate it from those newly arrived, quite often results in the differences which make it up (generational, income, regional, religious, political and anthropological differences, etc.) being ignored and precedence being given to discourse based on national identity, although it is well known that identity is built up over time and that several conflicting notions of identity exist side by side within a single political environment.

Training

It would therefore be relatively futile to assess commitment to the host societies’ fundamental democratic values on the sole basis of the acquisition of factual or functional knowledge. And it would be just as naive to believe that a “national” narrative can lead people to sign up to sometimes new societal values. It must be underlined that the relevant training can in no way seek to replace heightened intercultural awareness as the product of education or experience. The latter is, of course, relevant to migrants, but it is equally vital for the whole of society, which must (re)learn to accept, openly and critically, differences other than the inherited ones which form its multiple and future identity. Intercultural education pursues educational objectives of this kind and therefore extends far beyond the limited framework of the training courses for migrants, in which it nevertheless has a fundamental and irreplaceable part to play.

Related resources

White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue – “Living together as equals in dignity”, Council of Europe, 2008.

The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants, concept paper, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2008.

Citizenship

The legal benefits of citizenship confer the same rights and responsibilities on migrants as on other citizens. It is therefore important that the available pathways and specific requirements concerning long-term residence and citizenship are made known and transparent to migrants wishing to avail of these opportunities as early as possible. Conditions vary across states in terms of, for example, length of legal residence, extent of involvement in society, degree of language proficiency and knowledge of the society required. Unduly demanding measures and long delays may discourage many migrants who might wish to do so from applying for citizenship.

The current debate on integration and the growing tendency in a number of countries to introduce specific measures or requirements offer a valuable opportunity for public dialogue and awareness raising about the fundamental nature of “citizenship” and its role in facilitating integration, which is a two-way process with roles and responsibilities for citizens of the receiving state as well as migrants. This implies going beyond the legal aspects of citizenship (which are addressed in specific international instruments, including those of the Council of Europe) and examining the broader notion of “participation” linked to the exercise of active democratic citizenship.

Building on its experience of the European Year of Citizenship through Education (2005) and its intensive work on a values-based approach to participation in civic life, the Council of Europe has elaborated a Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, accompanied by a recommendation of the Committee of Ministers (CM/Rec(2010)7 on the implementation of the measures contained in the charter. These (non-binding) instruments promote an approach to education for democratic citizenship for all members of society (citizens and non-citizens) that leads to the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes which empower people to exercise, and where necessary defend, their democratic rights and responsibilities in society. The texts set out an inclusive approach to democratic citizenship that promotes social cohesion, intercultural understanding and respect for human dignity and values diversity.

The development of the kinds of knowledge, attitudes and skills required for residence and citizenship purposes is a lifelong learning process for all members of society regardless of their official status. In the specific case of migrants, integration courses can usefully prepare them for essential independent acquisition beyond the course by providing appropriate information, awareness raising, practices and activities designed to foster their active participation and empowerment. This concept of (education for) citizenship does not lend itself to standard forms of evaluation.

In this broader perspective of citizenship viewed as participation, and bearing in mind a growing tendency in some countries to accept dual nationality (and acknowledge plural identities), naturalisation cannot be the ultimate objective. It is a significant choice for those who request it in the wider context of an ongoing process of integration characterised by increasingly active participation in society and a stronger sense of belonging, irrespective of whether they are seeking citizenship. Migrants need access at the earliest possible stage to civic, political, economic, social and cultural life as they build on and enrich their existing citizenship attributes and experiences as part of a developmental process which may include “legal” citizenship but essentially leads to the kind of active participation in the life of society which is essential for integration.

This process of participation is facilitated by language courses that are sufficiently targeted and flexible to accommodate the diversity of migrants’ capacities and needs. Where a language test is linked to the granting of citizenship it should be borne in mind that there is no evidence of a close link between a specific level of language proficiency and the exercise of citizenship. The ongoing process of integration can advance even with limited language skills while migrants’ proficiency develops over time through language use in real-life activities. Therefore, rather than setting language requirements as a precondition, citizenship measures need to reflect the reality that communication skills are acquired and refined as a direct result of active involvement in society.

Related resources

Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and explanatory memorandum).

Adult migrant integration policies: principles and implementation, Jean-Claude Beacco, 2010.

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The linguistic integration of migrants affects every aspect of settling in a new country (employment, health, etc.). The aim of this collection of texts is to propose a number of specific measures member states can take to help adult migrants become acquainted with the language of the host country. The main focus is on organising language courses that meet migrants' real communication needs. It is not enough for authorities simply to consider the technical aspects of such courses, they should also design and conduct them in accordance with the fundamental values of the Council of Europe.

A number of issues concerning the linguistic integration of adult migrants are presented here, beginning with the notion of linguistic integration itself. Family reunion, the nature of citizenship and the function of language tests, among others, are dealt with from the point of view of language and language use. Readers are invited to reflect on the type of language competences that need to be acquired as well as an appropriate use of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. The collection also sets out approaches and instruments designed to assist in implementing effective policies.

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