

Promoting Matching Competences in Language Training

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Abstract

In the running of language training courses, a mismatch has been observed in different real cases between the formal degree or certified qualifications obtained by the language learners and the real need of the organisation funding the language course.

This paper summarises the preliminary results of the project PrMaCLT, funded by the Programme Lifelong Learning of the European Commission and conducted in cooperation by training providers from Spain, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia and Poland with the aim to distil good practices to enable an optimal match-making of the competences sought by funding organisations of language courses and gained by the target group of language learners.

The approach followed in the project is the detailed analysis and comparison of twelve real cases (two per country involved) based on the evaluation received by the language training providers involved in them, which have led to the hypothesis that there are factors external to the method applied (whether e-learning, distance learning, blended learning or classroom learning), to the contents provided (whether general purpose or specific purpose for an individualised target group), to the language concerned (regardless of the origin), and to the type of education (public and private), which are crucial for the competence oriented match-making process.

These external factors to the language training course that have a direct impact on the success of the language training course have been classified focusing on:

- a) The specifications provided by the organisation funding the training course, and
- b) The cultural and linguistic background of the learners.

Preliminary conclusions relate to aspects to bear in mind in the definition of the goals of the language course by the funding organisation, in the management of cultural aspects of the target group by the teachers and course providers, and in the adaptation of the components of the method chosen by the language course designer, in order to keep the interest of the target group of learners. These conclusions are illustrated in this paper with two ICT based language courses, which are part of the twelve cases analysed.

Extensive testing of the preliminary conclusions will be carried out in the six countries involved in the project during the next ten months, and they will be gathered in a handbook of useful practices for funding organisations, teachers and managers of language training courses.

Progress of the project will be available at www.promacolt.eu