

Good Practices around Languages and Media for Migrant Learners

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Abstract

Migration has contributed to the richness in diversity of cultures in most developed countries. However, while losing touch with their own customs in many cases, the exclusion of non-national residents from many civil and citizenship rights is also leading to a lack of social integration into the host countries. Helping migrants acquire and develop cultural awareness and social inclusion is an arduous task, and especially challenging where language and culture play a leading role: "Culture is embedded in language as an intangible, all-pervasive and highly variable force" [1].

Based on these social concerns, the LiMe project, a Key Activity 2 Languages Multilateral initiative supported by the European Lifelong Learning Programme, which comprises six organizations from across five European countries (Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, and UK) aims to minimize the impact of these social-cultural disadvantages by helping migrants develop language and cultural competences, in order to foster a sense of belonging and understanding leading to greater integration. To achieve the objectives, the project identifies strategies and good practices to help migrant learners and educators understand language as portrayed in various types of media – e.g. television, radio, films, newspapers, promotional material , ICT media, among others [2].

The project departs from a shared integrative understanding and culminates with the development of a virtual learning platform that hosts media-based learning materials from A2 to B2 (CEFR) and teacher training packages for integrating media into language teaching.

In short, the project contributes to breaking down possible language and cultural barriers in order to help migrants overcome problems presented by everyday communicative challenges. The possibility of migrants inclusion through media will also contribute to the development of good practices for teaching and learning a foreign language among this target group- "Media: inform, amuse, startle, anger, entertain, thrill, but very seldom leave anyone untouched"(Shirley Biagy, 1996) - and strengthen social bonds, especially in migrant education based on innovative methods applied through the development of a virtual learning platform.

Keywords: migrants, culture, language, inclusion, media

References

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