



Vocational Guidance in CLIL: Use of CLIL in Adult Education to Provide Support to Intra-EU Mobility

Marianna Memè¹

Abstract

The paper reports the rationale and implementation phases of the Project “Vocational Guidance in CLIL”, funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission and carried out by five organizations based in Belgium, Austria, UK, Spain and Italy. The project aims at supporting those workers wishing to look for a job abroad, providing job guidance training in the language of the country where they would like to work. The training course consists of an Open Educational Resource available on a dedicated platform. The e-course is divided into two different target language levels, B2 and C1, and it is composed of four different modules: “Job search skills”, “Job application”, “Interview skills”, “Intercultural skills”. The strengths and weaknesses of the training course are presented through a brief analysis of the feedback collected so far from the trainees, and further opportunities of exploitation of the project results are hypothesized.

Keywords: Open educational resource, mobility, vocational guidance, CLIL

1. Project Rationale

The European Commission considers workers and citizens’ free mobility one of the most important right to be encouraged, because it represents an essential component of common labor market, in order to stimulate the economic growth and to fight against unemployment.

In a globalized world it does not make sense for Europeans to think about their competences, aspirations and perspectives only in national terms, it is necessary to understand that the job market is now a global market.

What are difficulties and hindrances encountered by workers that wish to look for a job in another European country? The first one is obviously the command of the language. However a large number of people move to other countries without sufficient information about the destination country and most of all without a professional plan. According to the Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion Department of the European Commission’s analysis of intra-EU movers work situation, migrants are often over-qualified for the jobs they do and are at greater risk of redundancy. Moreover, they are less likely to access help from the public employment services, as they are less likely to be fully aware of the services on offer [1].

When applying for a job abroad, or seeking for information to know if their education and work experiences may give them an opportunity in the European job market, people need a set of skills that may be crucial for the success of the job search, such as:

- How to write an effective curriculum vitae
- How to write an effective cover letter
- How to behave during a job interview
- What are the most common employment contracts
- What are the best searching channels
- How to deal with salary issues

There are indeed considerable differences from country to country in regard of all these topics, and a poor knowledge of them may endanger the professional development.

In the light of the above the project’s consortium decided to develop an Open Educational Resource in order to support adults both employed and unemployed who completed their education and are planning to look for a job abroad, addressing at the same time the two major learning needs: language and job guidance.

The training resources were created in the project partners languages (French, English, Spanish, German and Italian) and structured as a CLIL course with gradual difficulties, as the participants are trained in the language of the country where they would like to work.

The project is being implemented by a consortium of five European organizations: *INFOREF-Initiatives pour une formation efficace*, from Belgium, which is the project coordinator and the

¹ Associazione culturale ASTERES (Italy)



responsible for the technical implementation of the platform; *BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH*, from Austria, which is in charge of coordinating the piloting course realization; *Universidad de Murcia*, which provided the guidelines for the creation of learning materials according to the CLIL methodology; *Apricot Training Management Ltd*, from UK, responsible for the vocational guidance contents' guidelines; *ASTERES*, from Italy, which coordinated the creation of the training activities.

2. Project Implementation

During the first phase of the project implementation the consortium created two parallel work groups for the production of the training materials. The first group, led by Universidad de Murcia, created a set of guidelines related to the production of texts, audio files, videos and exercises following the CLIL methodology, while the second group, coordinated by APRICOT, produced a syllabus with all the necessary contents.

After the completion of this phase the partners, with the coordination of ASTERES, agreed on a common structure of the course in each language, so as to have homogeneous materials.

The e-course was first of all divided into two different target language levels: B2 and C1. An initial entry level test addresses the trainee to the most suitable section. The course is composed of four different modules:

- Job search skills
- Job application
- Interview skills
- Intercultural skills

Every module is divided into four units, which develop the main topics presenting different kind of language inputs: a video, four readings, two listening. Each of them is followed by vocabulary focused and content focused exercises. At the end of each module there is a Grammar section that allows the revision of the main rules involved in the module and also provides links to further resources.

In designing the training materials we tried to address all the language competences: reading, writing, listening, speaking, even though the nature itself of the OER, which does not foresee the presence of a tutor during the training, made extremely difficult to produce effective exercises for the practice of the speaking production. However we included in the e-course exercises in which the trainee is asked to take the role of one of the speakers of a dialogue, for instance, and try to reply and interact effectively to the record, with the possibility to listen to the authentic speaker immediately after.

The other activities are a mix of close-ended and open-ended questions. In case of close-ended questions the platform provides immediate correction, whereas in case of open-ended questions model answers with key vocabulary are provided.

At the end of each module there is a final test the trainees need to pass before starting the following module.

Among all the didactic materials we created, there is a set of 8 videos (one at the beginning of each module), that are particularly important, as they allow us to convey contents related, for instance, to non verbal language and right attitudes during a job interview or in a multicultural workplace. Those videos are also collected in the project's YouTube Channel and stands also as an autonomous resource, for those who need to gather basic information without attending the course.

3. Project Results: Strengths and Weaknesses

The training course is currently being piloted, and each partner is collecting feedback from all the participants. We do not have definitive results, however from the analysis of the feedback collected so far we can draw some reflections. Most of the participants found the topics interesting and useful for their career development. The most important perceived language outcomes were related to the acquisition of new vocabulary. The difficulties encountered by the trainees are mainly related to the lengths of the inputs (especially the audio files) and to the complexity of some specific kind of exercise. These data will be analyzed by the partners and used for the creation of the final version of the Open Educational Resource.

4. Conclusion

This paper presented the rationale, the phases of implementation and the results of the project "Vocational Guidance in CLIL", funded by the Erasmus+ Programme and carried out by a consortium of five European organizations.



The project consists in the creation and free diffusion of a training course that aims at enhancing the preparation of European citizens that plan to have a work experience abroad, in terms of language command and job market knowledge. The results presented are still provisional, and much has still to be done to improve the quality of learning; however we could affirm that there are three elements that contribute to the success of the project and deserve to be exploited in the future: the provision of job guidance in an European perspective, the use of CLIL in the adult education field, and the use of ICT both for the creation and the diffusion of the training opportunity, in the light of the Open Education Resource principles.

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