

**Recommendations for occupational language learning resources
in the framework of the project
“FOCAL”
FOSTERING OCCUPATIONAL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROJECT**

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-
ShareAlike 4.0 International License

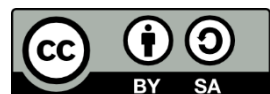


Table of Contents

I. Desktop Research	4
Germany	4
Greece	5
Poland	6
Spain	7
France	9
Conclusion of desktop research	10
II. Interviews report	11
1.0. Migrants	11
2.0. Teachers	15
3.0 Representatives	17

Acknowledgement

This working document has been a partnership effort, with valuable contribution and input by individuals from the partner institutions and professionals working closely with migrants especially in regards to occupational specific language learning. The following sectors are taken into consideration: industry, agriculture as well as commerce and retail.

These recommendations are a collaborative effort from the following organisations:

VOLKSHOCHSCHULE IM LANDKREIS CHAM E.V. (Germany)



AINTEK SYMVOULOI EPICHEIRISEON EFARMOGES YPSILIS
TECHNOLOGIAS EKPAIDEFSI ANONYMI ETAIREIA (Greece)



UNIWERSYTET LODZKI (Poland)



EOI DO MUNDO LUME (Spain)



GIP FIPAG (France)



I. Desktop Research

Every project partner prepared research referencing their own country language educational system dedicated to adult migrants especially in the sector of occupational language related to industry, commerce and retail and agriculture. It seems that the most structured and mature system exists in Germany.

Germany

In Germany there is a course called “German for professional purposes”. This vocational German language promotion for professional purposes is offered in accordance with section 45a of the Residence Act (job-related language training courses) and it is a standard instrument of the Federation’s language promotion. It is implemented by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, and builds directly upon the integration courses (B1), in which migrants learn German. Migrants and refugees who are looking for work are prepared on an ongoing basis for the labour market in the subsequent job-related language training courses. These courses are composed of a variety of courses which can be individually combined on a building block basis, and which combine German lessons with activities carried out by the Federal Employment Agency, the level of the course is aimed at B2.

The materials used for those courses focus on general aspects of the working life, e.g. introduce yourself, express own thoughts, asking for support, explaining some issues, tasks etc. In the existing materials, there are some situational dialogues; however, they offer specialised vocabulary and working context only to some extent, without specific focus on the special profession or sector.

For the sectors, commerce and retail (service industry) as well as industry there are some guidelines issued. The Network "Integration through Qualification (IQ)" which contributed to the development of those guidelines, aims to improve employment opportunities for people with a migration background. The guidelines for sector commerce and retail as well as for industry include the following topics: professional language learning in the context of CEFR (however this is not related to the new descriptors of CEFR Companion Volume); aims of learning as well as description of situational fields (communication situations) when working in the sector. The guidelines include also proposals of applied methods, however they do not include concrete materials, resources. In addition, this gap shall be reduced by the project FOCAL.

About free access to educational materials we can read: However in comparison to the field of industry or commerce and retail, the choice of language learning materials with focus on work based learning and assessment is rather limited, especially there is lack of free of charge materials, available for teachers and learners.

Moreover, there are online materials like e.g. from Goethe Institute related to the working place, those online exercises are free of charge and divided into two sections. The first general area consists of 45 exercises. The varied range of exercises "German at work" offering an insight into everyday working life in Germany for levels A1 to B2. In different professional situations - for example during a presentation, on the phone or in business correspondence, the exercises also address cultural differences. The second sections consists of 112 exercises for professional fields like social or technical professions, in the trade, in the office, in the area of services or culture. In these exercises everyday working life is presented, as well as typical language actions and communication situations at levels from A1 to C1.

Some other sources include those from "[MARKT - Deutsch für den Beruf Materialien aus der Presse](#)" – it is an online platform and newspaper offering materials from various newspapers related to the professional life (you need to subscribe the newspaper). There are also some handbooks and learning materials for the both sectors produced by printing houses, however none of these materials is free of charge.

Greece

In Greece, in part due to the increased flow of immigrants and refugees, there are a significant number of free Greek language courses for these target groups. These are organised by NGOs, integration centres and charity organizations. Some notable examples are [Action Aid Hellas](#), [JRS Hellas](#), [MetaDrasi](#), [the Athenian Migrant Integration Center](#), [Gefyres](#) and the [Greek Council for Refugees](#).

There are also business oriented language courses for foreigners (not migrants in specific) that are available both [on location](#) as well as [online](#). The problem with such programmes is that they are not available for free and are generally aimed at already established professional executives rather than people with a disadvantaged background that wish to enter the labour market. Finally, there is a number of [educational materials](#) that can be found [online](#) and free, which provide mostly basic knowledge, limiting their content to elements that are essential for everyday dialogues, and not for work life.

There seems to be an almost complete lack of materials that combine all the above elements together, hence being:

- Targeted at migrants and relevant groups
- Centred exclusively on business language and not just the basics

Since these materials of general professional interest cannot be found, it is difficult to talk about more specialized materials regarding "commerce and retail" and "agriculture" sectors; these are non-existent. There are three sources that somewhat address the subject, which are:

- The [L-Pack video series](#) (product of an older Erasmus+ project) which can be found on YouTube and, besides some Greek for general circumstances, it also presents a number of dialogs that are focused on professional settings and contain a significant number of business oriented words and terminology as well as some elements of jargon.
- The [HELIOS](#) project. A migrant integration program, which apart from a general themed Greek language module, it also provides a more specialized Soft Skills module where the language acquisition is used for achieving “soft skills on oral communication, problem solving, teamwork and interpersonal skills in the workplace”.
- [Project Layali](#) which seems to be the only permanent establishment (a café-restaurant) that recruits exclusively migrants, who undergo three-month apprenticeship program there. These participants come from the [Zaatar](#) NGO after receiving a Greek language course; they are transferred to the restaurant in order to practice it in a professional context.

Poland

In Poland, the governmental system of migrants’ language education does not exist. Thus, there is not any “central programme of language education” in any sector of it. Mainly two types of institutions provide the language courses for migrants: schools or centres of Polish language for foreigners, existing as a part of state or private universities, private language schools. The schools, which are part of universities, specialise in preparatory courses for future students. The private language schools specialize in courses of general Polish language.

Anyway, both institutions are quite elastic and very fast reacting for the market challenges. Therefore, a series of different courses are created when such demand arises, but it has rather incidental not systematic character. Centre of Polish Language can organize a good example of the process for Foreigners in UL. This includes six months of general and occupational language course provided to managers of French commerce company “E. Leclerc”. The course was realized more than 20 years ago and later never repeated. The same situation appears also in the private language schools, e.g. course of general and occupational language organized by “British Centre” (private school in Łódź) for Swedish origin managers from one of “IKEA” furniture factories.

One of explanations of such educational situation is the history and structure of migration to Poland. For many years, the number of migrants coming to Poland was very limited, including even 12000 migrants from Greece, and later a smaller number of migrants from North Korea, who came to Poland because of war in their countries. This also includes migration from Vietnam, because of the war and later economic reasons; but still the number of migrants in generally homogeneous Polish population is very limited. Thus, there were no reasons to create specific programme for migrant’s language education. The Polish state reacted when it was necessary, e.g. The Centre of Polish Language for

Foreigners in UL was created in 1952 to provide acquisition of Polish language to big group of North Korean children - migrants). It was changed in last three years because of very low unemployment and lack of workers in Poland. It has increased due to temporary economic migrant's number.

The second part of explanation of the described educational situation is a structure existing in Poland firms and companies and their relations to educational needs of migrants' workers. We can divide them into four categories:

- The companies employing only workers speaking English and it is obligatory language of communication (Polish and foreign origin workers).
- The companies employing workers from Ukraine and sometimes from Belarus and the similarities of their native languages related to Polish creates enough platform for communication to explain the simple orders related to the work. e.g. "Jogo" - Polish firm producing cheese, cream, etc.
- The companies employing migrants and organizing for them courses of Polish language (many times related to the occupational language and skills) e.g. Jeronimo Martins in the form of Internet platform and instructions available only for the company employees.
- The companies employing teachers of Polish as a foreign language and organizing for migrant employees face-to-face courses of Polish language (including occupational language).

The content of the courses mentioned in points three and four are confidential and the access to them is possible only for the employed migrants. It seems that the state of occupational language education of Polish provides plenty of room for the development the FOCAL project products because its lack of any easily available materials related to any sector specific occupational language.

Spain

Traditionally, Spain has been a country with more emigrants than immigrants. This condition started to change towards the end of last century, when this trend got inversed. With this change being a new process, the laws and systems that control it are still trying to adapt. Nowadays the process to get a working visa in Spain is complicated, long and restrictive, which prevents many workers of even trying to get it. In Spain, there are no language requirements in order to receive a working visa or permit. Whether Spanish is necessary for the job or not, it is a decision for the employer. This is an obstacle to learn Spanish for non-qualified workers: since picking fruits or being a stock boy does not require a high level of the language, thus learning is not encouraged.

To be accepted into a Formación Profesional or Spanish Vocational Training (FP), a migrant basically needs two things: a successfully completed ESO degree (or its equivalent in their country of origin) and a legal permit of residence or, in case they do not have it, then they need a document stating that they

have applied for said permit. If both conditions are reached, a migrant can start a given FP, and it will be exactly the same FP as their Spanish classmates. The education system does not include any subject such as integration, Spanish as a foreign language or Spanish occupational language. All students, whatever their nationality, are expected to be fluent or at least competent in Spanish. Thus, only migrants knowing Spanish on quite high level have a chance to start their official VET education. One could infer that the Spanish State offers nothing to migrants in order to help them complete their education or access the job market through it, but this is not exactly the case. The Organic Law 2/2006, 3rd of May, of Education, in its article 67 states that:

Paragraph 4 (...) it is duty of the educative Administrations to promote specific learning programs of Spanish language and the other co-official languages, as well as basic elements of culture, thus easing the integration of migrant people. Paragraph 5: In education for adults, a proper attention will be given to those showing a specific need of educational support.

Meaning that, whereas the specific law for FP does not contain any particular disposition for specific formation regarding migrants, the general law for education mandates that this specific formation and/or additional support should be given by the educative Administrations. A variety of initiatives takes place to address this need, usually funded by the Departments of Education and Social Welfare of the different Spanish Autonomous Communities. **CEPI**, Spanish acronym for Centre for Participation and Integration of Immigrants, prepares immigrants for the exams needed to get the ESO-Diploma – mandatory in order to sign a work contract – and offer a variety of Spanish courses, going from the general SFL-Courses to language applied to different professions.

CEPA, Spanish acronym for Centre of Education for Adult People (although this name can vary depending on the Autonomous Community), is not designed specifically for migrants. Anyone with a legal status of residence in Spain can attend these institutions' courses. The most popular ones are probably the courses leading to the ESO-Diploma, which as the name announces are usually chosen by citizens who left school before getting their diploma. Nonetheless, these educational centres usually offer SFL-Courses.

Apart from that, the national curriculum does not offer specific formation for migrants with a mother tongue other than Spanish, either in general or in occupational language. The most important institution for the teaching and learning of Spanish as a Foreign Language, the **Instituto Cervantes**, does offer some courses like Spanish applied to Business, but they are few and not present in all delegations.

The Spanish educational system does not offer specific vocational training programs for migrant workers, but its representatives are aware of this need, as showed by the aforementioned paragraph of the Organic Law. Recently, legislative changes were suggested by the Migrations Ministry last February. This reality adds up to the fact that migrant workers are a growing and important part of sectors such as agriculture or transport, leading us to conclude that the creation of learning materials in occupational language will be urgently needed in the developing new scenarios.

France

French language for foreigners is a well-developed area in which there are numerous pedagogical fields and purveyors. In regards to online materials, there are a few existing websites available, but in the end, they are all very generic and do not offer real practice or specific learnings. Most of them aim at B1 level students.

Regarding the language learning sites, there is one proposal for professional language learning. It is in the manufacturing industry: Shoemakers and carpenters. The interactive exercises include video clips aiming at comprehension mostly on topic and vocabulary with drag-and-drop exercises, multiple-choice questions, etc. Apart from this example, most topics relate to daily life.

Regarding the institutions delivering courses to migrant learners, they aim at general language skills, with two exceptions: IPERIA, an operator within the vocational family helper sector, has developed specific learning materials; the second is Simplon, famous for its digital technician courses, which has a path for migrants that include vocational French in the curriculum. Therefore, there are no specific commerce and retail, industry and agriculture courses.

Yet, if the courses found do not explicitly aim at professional language learning, there are two professional French certificates. The first one is called “Le Français des Affaires” developed by the CCI, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which are the training grounds throughout the country. Its existence implies the running of courses that prepare to this degree. The degree assesses mastery of the French language on the following topics:

- tourism, hospitality, and catering;
- Business French offers five Business French Diplomas, from level A1 to C1, DFP B1, and two Professional French Secretaries' diplomas, from level B1 and B2;
- International Relations, from level B1 to C1.

Another point of interest in this resource is that it is available through a telephone App: Français 3.0. Secondly, the diplôme de compétences linguistique en français ([DCL-FP français professionnel ou DCL-FLE français langue étrangère](#)) is a National Education designed diploma whose ambition is to assess linguistic competences in a situation close to the one at work. It responds to a logic similar to that of case studies: a situation to be discovered, tasks to be carried out, choices to be made, a solution to be

proposed as part of a "mission" entrusted to the candidate. The test is based on authentic written, audio or audio-visual documents. The supports and the mode of distribution of these documents can vary according to the nature of the subjects and the progress of technology.

The test is broken down into five phases, each of which makes it possible to test more particularly a written or oral competence through a certain number of activities: gathering and sorting of information, identification of a problem and choice of a solution. The certificate has been detailed with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching Assessment (CEFR). The beginner's path into the language explicitly refers to a vocational approach to language acquisition. Finally, there is the CléA Certificate. CléA is an inter-professional certification designed by the social partners. It was designed to award first certificate for those without any qualifications. The certificate assesses basic skills (French, Math, and Digital) as well as transversal skills such as team working or learning to learn, with a constant reference to a working environment. The certificate can be awarded in two stages: an initial evaluation where the candidate can obtain certain competences awarded, if not all. For the remaining competence a study proposal can be drafted which helps the student focus on his learning to obtain the full certification later. The candidate has five years to complete the certificate in a final evaluation. CléA is now more recognized and a first port of entry in the path of certification for refugees and migrants that have not obtained a certificate in their country or one that is not transferable in the French system.

Conclusion of desktop research

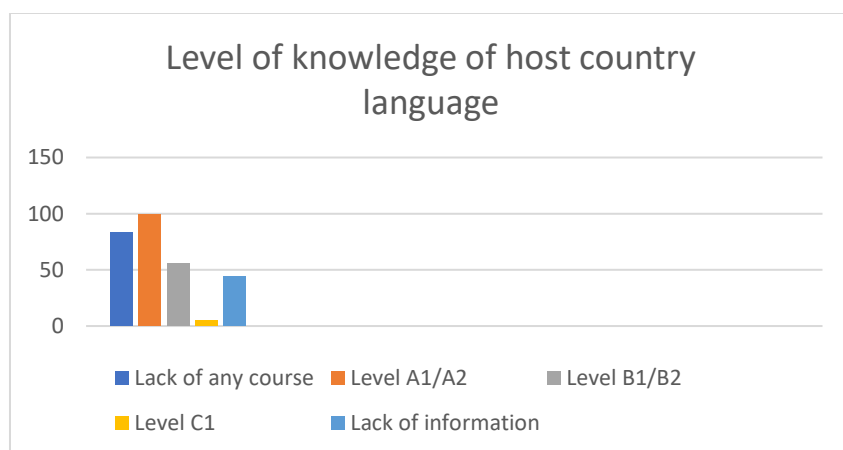
All of FOCAL project partners indicated different levels of engagement when it comes to vocational or especially occupational kind of language education. The lack of widely available occupational specific language courses, i.e. industry, commerce and retail as well as agriculture is a major challenge. It creates vast opportunities for the success of FOCAL project outcomes. The conclusions of the current existing language materials related to migrants' language education of specific occupational language in the sector of industry, commerce / retail, and agriculture are very similar for each project partner – they do not exist or their availability is very limited. The reports of project partners included examples of the handbooks or online courses taking into account occupational language, but in most cases they are not completed and not aimed at the specific kind of occupational language vocabulary and syntax.

II. Interviews report

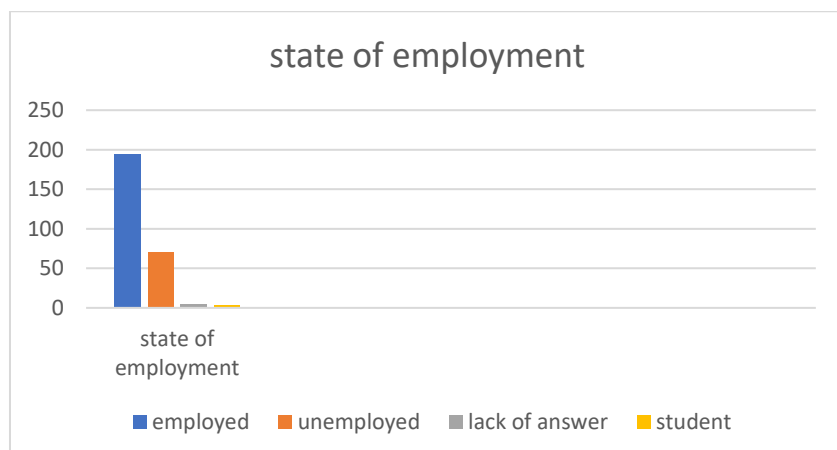
1.0. Migrants:

Totally 296 migrants from four project FOCAL partner countries [(Germany 66), (Poland – 72), (Spain - 83), (Greece – 75)] participated in the survey– in it 96 female gender was indicated, in 198 male, and two participants did not indicate any gender. The declared country of origin and mother tongue of migrants was different depending on the host country. In Germany the largest group were migrants from Syria (11) and migrants speaking Arabic (13), in Poland (Ukraine 26) – migrants speaking Ukrainian (23) and Russian (26), in Spain – migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa (42) and Maghreb Region (especially Morocco) (27) many of whom also speak Arabic, and finally in Greece the largest group was from Afghanistan (18) with the most popular language being Urdu (12).

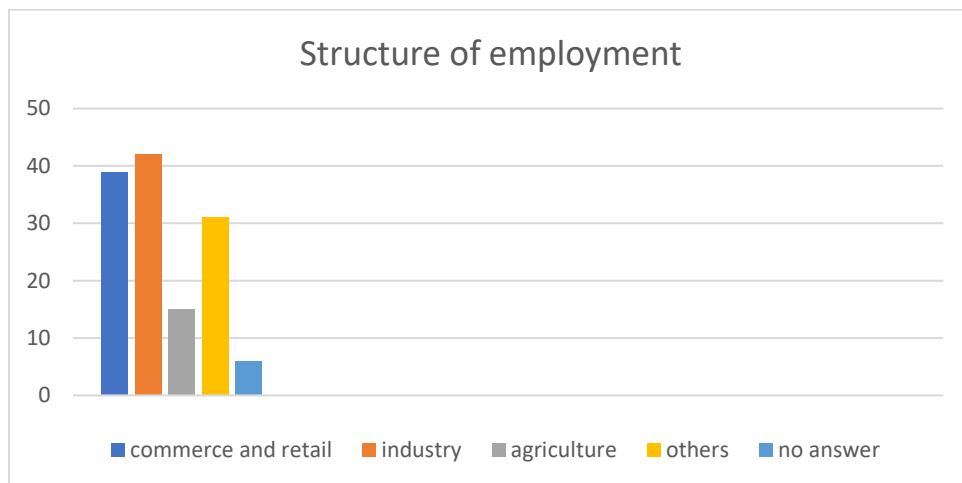
1.1. Level of knowledge of host country language (total 287):



1.2. State of employment (total 271):



1.2.1. Structure of employment (total 133)



1.3 Language skills

1.3.1 Reported difficulties in reading and understanding skill

Indicated difficulties	Number of indicated answers
instructional manual	60
contracts	56
tasks	36
offers	33
technical / specialised texts	104
all of them above	104
others	23
I don't have any difficulties understanding job-related tasks	78

1.3.2. Reported difficulties in writing / composing skill

Indicated difficulties	Number of indicated answers
technical / specialised texts	111
reports	58
e-mails to colleagues / superiors	23
others	21
all of the above	107
I don't have any difficulties understanding job-related tasks	72
no information	6

1.3.3. Reported difficulties in following conversation / understanding skill

Indicated difficulties	Number of indicated answers
professional discussion	135
discussion	94
work instructions	82
conversation with other colleagues	50
no problems	28

It is interesting that so many interviewees declared that they did not have any difficulties understanding job-related tasks. Probably the interviewees were not sure for whom the survey is for and they wanted to underline that they are well prepared for job-related tasks understanding and realization. From there on, it was no surprise that the majority does face difficulties with reading various types of texts, with almost the third having a problem with all types.

1.4. Conclusion of migrants' survey research:

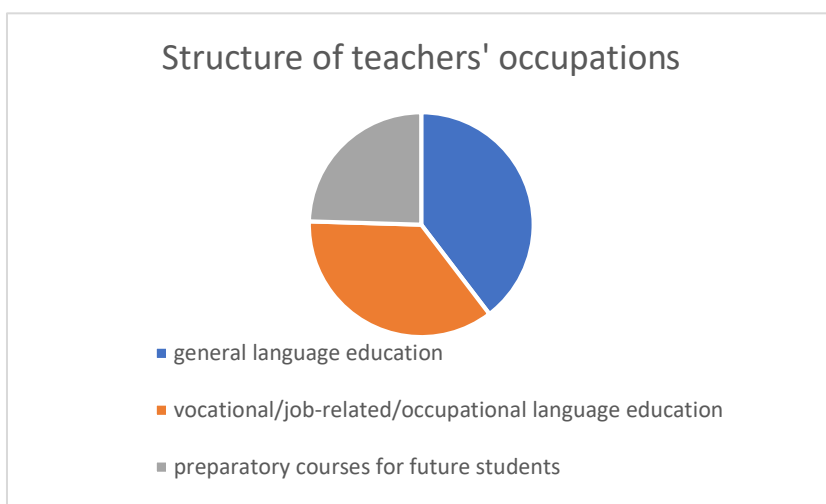
- 1) The migrants who took part in the survey show off quite low host country language level: 29% indicated lack of any language course participation, and 34% only A1/A2 level – it gives 63% of participants having zero or very low level of host country language skills.
- 2) The research shows off clearly that the number of surveyed migrants who are employed is much higher than that of unemployed (71% to 26%).
- 3) The distribution of surveys among concrete economic sectors shows off proper characteristic related to the FOCAL project interests – commerce and retail – 29%, industry – 32%, agriculture – 11%
- 4) The difficulties in language skills indicated by respondents create clear information for building a kind of roadmap for the FOCAL project partners' future activities. We should concentrate on the creation of comprehensive vocabulary and technical instructions exercises, tasks, films and presentations related to the following skills:
 - a) to develop reading / understanding skills:
 - series of exercises, tasks including a variety of technical / specialised language vocabulary, expressions, syntactic structures and typical for this kind of language grammar materials.
 - series of exercises and technical support materials – films, PP or others presentations that refer to reading and understanding contracts and manual instructions.

- series (maybe shorter) of exercises related to the rest of indicated difficulties with understanding e.g. offers and tasks.
- b) to develop writing / composing skills:
- series of exercises and especially technical instructions (PP or others presentations, films) that refer to writing reports.
 - series of exercises, tasks including a variety of technical / specialised language vocabulary, expressions, syntactic structures and typical for this kind of language grammar materials (on the second place because probably it will not be so often expected from the workers' migrants as reports).
 - short course of writing proper and polite e-mails to superiors – it was not indicated very often, but the life practice shows off that for many migrants it is a serious problem. (Maybe the surveyed migrants simply never experienced the necessity).
- c) to develop following conversation / understanding skills:
- series of exercises (model dialogs, records, dialogs to be completed, films, PP or others presentations) related to understanding and participating in professional discussions – especially on the basic professional level – e.g. “how to register goods on shelves of the warehouse”, but not “how to create the computer programme to do it”, etc.
 - series of exercises including typical dialogs between workers of particular sector, e.g. request for putting tools on the place, questions related to the new proposed contract, discussion about new professional tasks, etc.
 - series of exercises developing understanding of superiors' instructions.

2.0. Teachers:

A total of 53 teachers participated in the survey – among those, 21 teachers declared they only gave courses of general language and 32 of them - diverse specialised courses: vocational with language components, occupational language, job-related language and preparatory courses for future university studies with specialization in medicine, technical and economic sciences.

2.1. Structure of the surveyed teachers' occupations



2.1.2. Structure of not-general language teachers' occupations – total: 32

- vocational education (10): 6 commerce, 3 administrative management, 1 not indicated specialization.
- occupational language courses / job-related language courses (9): 6 nursing, 6 warehouse management, 2 not indicated specialization.¹
- preparatory courses for future university students (13): 5 medical specialization, 5 technical sciences specialization, 3 economic sciences specialization, 3 not indicated specialization²

2.2. Teaching materials:

Generally in all teachers' surveys the same materials are mentioned: blackboards, whiteboards, websites (YouTube materials, quizzes websites, specialized websites, etc.), presentations, authors' texts, authors' exercises, films (documental films, feature films, short films from Internet), press materials, photos, etc.

2.3. Methodology and forms of teaching:

2.3.1. The teaching forms used by the researched teachers:

Name of teaching method	Number of teachers using it
-------------------------	-----------------------------

¹ Some teachers have more than one specialization.

² Some teachers have more than one specialization.

individual written work	45
dialogues in pairs and groups	50
practical oral activities with language elements from working life	37
presentations	40
use online tools	24

2.3.2. The most effective methods of teaching based on surveyed teachers' experience:

The most effective methods of teaching according to surveyed teachers	Number of answers
listening comprehension	37
reading comprehension	30
audio-visual perception	38

2.3.3. The work-based elements included in the teaching process:

All reports listed almost the same material, such as:

- understanding operating instructions and commands
- CV composition, cover letters composition, how to behave at the time of job interview
- dialogs including job-related words and expressions, referring to professional discussions; presentation of job, office matters' situations; presentations and scenes show professional life and official matters
- classes with job-offer websites
- typical job-related communicative situations

2.4. Conclusion:

Teachers participated in the survey represented specialization in general language education in almost 40% and vocational education with language components or specialized preparatory courses of language in almost 61 %

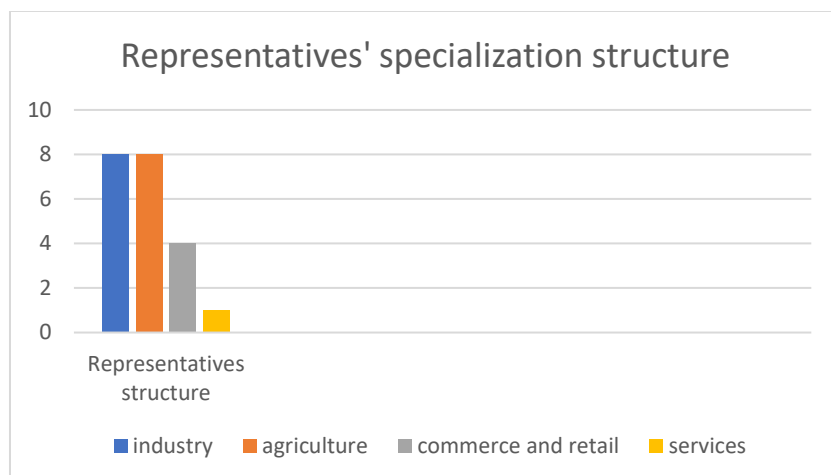
The information listed in all reports is very similar. All teachers regardless of their specialization enumerated the same teaching materials (See 2.2). It seems the most popular teaching method are "dialogs in pairs" and "individual written works" but online activities were pointed only by 45% of teachers (See 2.3.1). Audio-visual perception was recognized as the most effective method of teaching by 71% of teachers. The work-based elements included in the teaching process are listed in 2.3.3..

3.0 Representatives:

3.1. Number and structure of representatives:

Totally 21 representatives participated in the survey.

The representatives' specialization structure:



3.2 Number of employed workers with migrants background:

The number of employed workers with migrant background is various and ranges from 2-5 employees to even 1000 of people.

3.3 Language support for workers with migrant backgrounds

Most of the employers offer language support for migrant workers, this can be as internal language classes or language classes provided by other language centres. The biggest companies also created on-line job-related courses available only for their workers. Very popular is also kind of mentoring system provided by more experienced migrant workers coming from the same country as new employees. The employers also support migrant workers in looking for apartment, looking for shared transport to work, in integration in team work.

3.4 Language level of your migrant employees:

Generally, migrant employees' language level is assessed as beginners or intermediate except in Germany, where intermediate and advanced level is listed. It can be linked to the general integration policy in Germany.

3.5 Language problems of migrant background workers listed by their employers:

The answers also show that the most of difficulties appear in the context of specialised topics, exchange of information on specific job-related issues, including exchange of information on specialised issues between experts. Additionally, the fields like reading and oral expressions are assessed quite well by employers (representatives of the sectors). More difficulties appear in oral interaction, e.g. conversations with colleagues at work, when speaking dialect or jargon; following conversations and actively participating in the discussion during the collaboration/task-oriented work;

or exchanging complex information (e.g. with other experts). Also written expression causes some difficulties e.g. communicating information in writing (e.g. writing reports), using telecommunication for professional purposes as well as simple and complex written interactions. It seems that the best situation is in Germany – for the reasons mentioned above, but even there employers expect support for migrant employees' language skills development. In other countries, the situation is more dramatic and needs a lot of additional support, because state programmes of supporting host country language acquisition by working migrants are inefficient or practically do not exist.