

# **RAOUL Project**

## **Raising Awareness of the Use of Languages**



## **Motivational Tool**

## Motivational Tool

### Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>How to use this pack</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Engaging harder to reach and disadvantaged learners</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Languages and Work</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Learning Languages</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Useful Contacts</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>22</b>

## Preface

RAOUL has arisen from the conviction of its partners that the potential benefits of being able to use a language other than one's own are overlooked by significant numbers of adults. RAOUL enabled its partners to research a pan-European approach to raising awareness among individuals of the impact of other language competence in workplaces. The development of a motivational tool using the experience of teachers, learners, employers, employees and potential employees in the partner countries permitted participants to explore and promote the advantages of being a competent linguist at work. The longer term aspirations of the project will be that, in applying the promotional tool, interest in and demand for language learning will increase. In encouraging adults, as individuals, to recognise that language skills may enhance their employability, the project also embraced consideration of the profile of languages in workplaces within the partner countries.

The coordinating partner for the project is the **Leicester City Council Adult Skills and Learning Service**, UK which delivers teaching in a broad range of subjects for those who are 19 years of age and above. Learners are part time, from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and with widely differing motivations to learn. Annually a variety of languages is taught at a range of different levels. This includes European, community and lesser taught languages. In addition there is a large English teaching department for adults seeking to make their home in the UK and for whom English is not a first language.

### **Volkshochschule Schopfheim, Germany**

The school is a not-for-profit institution supported by municipal and regional funds. It is member of the DVV, Deutscher Volkshochschulverband (Association for the Education of Adults) and part of a network all over Germany. A wide range of subjects is offered with languages as the largest department. 15 languages are taught, the most popular being English followed by French and German as a Foreign Language. In these three languages the school offers preparatory training courses for international examinations: Cambridge, Delf / Dalf, Goethe and telc. The courses follow the levels of the Common European Framework from A1 to C1. The institution cooperates with companies in the surrounding area and offers language training on site to employees.

### **Cambridge English Language School, Hungary**

The Cambridge English Language School is a private language school, established in 1996 in Debrecen. It offers general English language courses and context led courses, in law, health, economy, business. The school has its own lifelong learning and e-learning centre, built in May 2004 and is developing e-learning options for its students.

### **Associazione Internazionale Impegno Civile, Italy**

The Associazione is a voluntary organisation set up in Messina (Sicily) in 1988. The organisation carries out work in the fields of: sport and leisure; welfare, health and social care; fundraising and advocacy; training and lifelong learning. It has organised vocational training courses for unemployed young people from Sicily, Puglia and Calabria; in Taormina, Sicily, it runs a Youth Hostel, and a "Parco letterario" (a library/museum centre).

### **The Université Populaire du Rhin, France**

This is a not-for-profit organisation for adult education in Mulhouse. It has a very large languages department where 5000 learners participate in courses in 20 different languages. The organisation's location, very close to the French borders with Germany and Switzerland, makes the learning and teaching of German particularly important and specific courses in German for work are part of its offer.

The following partners contributed to the project in its first year:

### **Society for Intercultural Research and Friendship SIRF, Turkey**

SIRF is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1995 in Ankara. Of a membership of 4000 it has around 500 adult learners and provides a range of activities intended to foster intercultural research and friendship. The organisation offers learning opportunities in human rights, civil society, democracy, family learning, environmental studies and peace education.

### **Folkeuniversitetet Inherred, Norway**

An adult education organisation based in Steinkjer that has offered language courses for more than 35 years. Courses are for leisure and pleasure and, in collaboration with local universities, for those seeking to improve language competence for work reasons. 8 languages are taught in the organisation by fully qualified and trained staff.

## Introduction To The RAOUL Motivational Tool

The information in this pack is for people in work, seeking work or requiring information to prepare for workplace entry. Increasingly, “work” goes beyond national frontiers. Successful business practice within the global market place demands effective communication with colleagues from all over the world.

The RAOUL partners’ view is that monolingual individuals may incur disadvantage on entry to and within workplaces. We believe that language competence is an undervalued and underrated skill at work.

The pack contains basic information drawn from all the RAOUL partner countries. We have looked at how workplaces use the skills of people who can speak other languages; we have talked to people about their experiences of learning other languages; there are case studies of individuals

who have learned and then used languages at work; and there are the opinions of teachers and other professionals in language industries.

Language learning is not consistent across Europe. Whilst most people have the opportunity and are encouraged to pursue studies of another language at school, what is learned is not necessarily what is most useful in work or, indeed, in social intercourse. Language competence, like many other skills, diminishes with under-use. Lifelong opportunities to upskill and to use language are necessary to maintain linguistically able populations. The value socially, politically and economically of wide-ranging and effective communication makes it imperative that other language competence remains high on individual learning agendas but it is rarely the case that it does.

## How to Use This Pack

This pack is principally for people who offer information, advice and guidance to workers who are seeking new opportunities or to those preparing to enter employment. It is designed to raise awareness of the advantages of being able to speak other languages in the work place. Each of the following chapters is divided into four sections:

1. The Introduction gives the context for the chapter. It describes current attitudes, policies and practice prevalent in language learning and use.
2. Case studies are provided to illustrate the theme of each chapter and to give practical

examples that are easy to understand. They come from RAOUL partner countries and include the views of employers, teachers, learners and language users.

3. Key messages highlight the main points of each of the chapters. They specify issues that need to be tackled and suggest actions to take.
4. Over to you. This section asks you questions about what is happening in your part of the world. The questions are designed to lead you to supplement the information from RAOUL with local knowledge so that you will be able to offer comprehensive advice about language learning and the use of languages in local work forces.

# Engaging Harder To Reach And Disadvantaged Learners

## Introduction

Getting people to learn languages is not always an easy task. Of course there are the keen students who join classes because they have a really clear idea about how languages will be useful for them. It might be that being able to communicate in another language is essential for work or for family reasons or because they enjoy travel or have homes abroad. But what about all those other people who are not quite certain whether language learning is useful or is for them?

The European Union is sure that being able to use a number of languages is a really good idea for Europe as a community and for the European economy. National governments operate within a global economy where individuals are required to be much more mobile in their jobs and must be able to communicate with colleagues from all over the world. Not being able to use other languages can be a big disadvantage so people who only use their mother tongue need to be encouraged to learn or they might get left behind.

So how do you go about finding people who, for one reason or another, have slipped through the languages net? Below you will find examples from the RAOUL partners about what they do to reach new language learners and about how disadvantaged learners have benefited from their language learning experience.

## Strategies For Engaging New Learners

### France – personal contact and e-contact

French partners wanted to see whether an e-learning language opportunity would attract interest from previously reluctant learners. At the outset, a description of the RAOUL project was emailed right across France to friends and relations asking them to publicise it in workplaces and among unemployed people they might know. This action caused a number of people to become aware of the benefits both of learning another language (either for work or travel) and of the possibility of learning in places and at times that would fit their work and life routines. However, using technology to contact and recruit learners was not as successful as had originally been hoped.

The next step was to engage people face to face in meetings (not specifically to do with learning but where prospective learners might be found) This turned out to be a much better way of getting

people into learning. The advantage of this method was that people were not only informed about language learning, but they also had the opportunity to ask questions. Direct contact was made with the Mulhouse unemployment office (ANPE), social centres and the re-education centre ('centre de ré-éducation' Albert Camus ) in order to reach disabled people and families of prisoners. Additionally, contact has been made, through intermediaries, with the hospital in Mulhouse and with several companies such as Peugeot and Dupont De Nemours.

### Germany – publications, the media and personal contact

The organisation publishes a twice yearly brochure of course offers which is widely distributed in the area via shops and public places. Special events or courses are advertised through additional flyers and posters. The local press is key to publicity and particularly effective in reaching disadvantaged learners since papers are free and get into every household – even in small villages. Flyers are sent to intermediaries who may come into contact with potential learners and visits are made to them to give information.

At the beginning of each semester there is an Open House opportunity. People are invited to come and visit the organisation and to take part in free taster sessions. Drinks and snacks are provided and teachers are on hand to give information and to answer questions. Even if people don't actually book a course, this creates a chance for a first direct approach. Taking time and making opportunities for personal contact is essential particularly when dealing with learners who are disadvantaged in some way.

### Hungary – making the most of personal contacts; creating special learning opportunities

An ex-student happened to get a job in Balkany, a small, poor and remote village in Hungary, close to the Russian border. The population there is in decline and a Dutch-owned metal-work company virtually the only employer. An initial investigation of the company showed that white-collar workers had intermediate knowledge of English, but blue-collar workers didn't speak any foreign languages.

A special language course was created. Unusually, it was the teachers who travelled to deliver the course so that participants could

learn in a place convenient to them. Content was tailored to be specific to the work place needs of the learners. A native speaker of the language worked with a Hungarian language teacher to help make the course content as realistic as possible. 75 % of blue - collar workers applied for the course. Great success came after just three months of learning. The company owners came to Balkany, and our learners were confident enough to talk about basic aspects of their work and to discuss simple problems with their Dutch colleagues.

### Italy – listening to learners

The organisation (Impegno Civile) publicises its activities in the local press, on the local radio and via its own website. Posters and leaflets are regularly distributed to shops and public places in the town and surrounding villages. Visits are made to workplaces such as village town halls, in order to be able talk directly to workers about opportunities for learning languages.

Cooperation with local voluntary centres is important for promotion. People in the centres undertake to broadcast opportunities and to motivate people to join the organisation's learning programme.

Periodically people are invited to the organisation's literary centre dedicated to Quasimodo - one of the most important of Italian poets, winner of a Nobel Prize.

During these visits there is a chance to discuss language learning with teachers and with students.

A key factor in motivating people to join courses is to propose learning that fits in with their busy lifestyles. Avoiding times of the week when attendance will be difficult; putting courses on for specific target groups when they can be sure to come along means that more people get a real chance to learn.

### The UK – making the most of networking

Reaching new language learners is best achieved by working in partnership. The service belongs to a local Languages Strategy Group which brings together a range of providers of language learning and users of language services through quarterly meetings. The focus of this forum is on strengthening the case for language learning and usage in the region. A principal activity of the group is to seek out ways in which more and different people might be attracted to learning another language. Being part of the group has led to new projects to develop resources and innovatory ways of teaching.

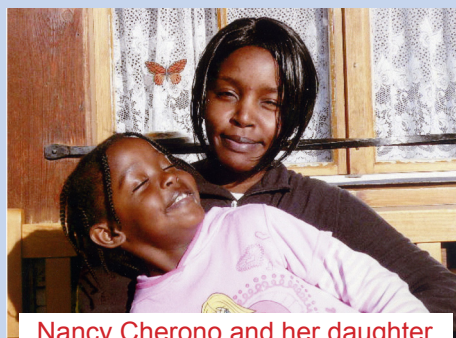
As part of the local authority the service has direct contact with development workers across the city who promote learning opportunities with community and voluntary organisations. These workers are often the first contact for people who don't think learning is 'for them'. They help them overcome barriers and encourage them to 'dip their toe in the water'. They believe that the first step into learning something new can lead to further training and enhanced employment opportunities.

## What do the learners say?

### From Germany: Nancy Cherono

#### Participant in a "German as a Foreign Language" class

*"I'm from Kenya. I worked there for three years as a trained nurse before I met my German husband. In January 2006, I arrived in Germany with my little daughter. I couldn't speak a word of German. We live in a very small village in the Black Forest. At the beginning I didn't know what to do or how to talk to anybody. I felt really lonely and helpless. When we went to the city council in Schönau, a small town close to our village, I saw a VHS Schopfheim's brochure. My husband helped me to contact the VHS. We went to see Brigitte Fleck and I was able ask all the questions I wanted about the "Integration Course". I booked the course and it started in March 2006. Now, after a year, I have attended nearly 600 hours of German and registered for the examination "Zertifikat Deutsch". My German has improved a lot. I found a job at a hotel in Todtnau. It's no longer a problem for me to talk to my neighbours and my colleagues. My daughter will attend school in September. Now I can help her with her homework. In future I want to get back to work in my original career. But first I have to pass another examination. So I still need to improve my German and to learn a lot of specialist vocabulary".*



Nancy Cherono and her daughter

## From the UK: Teresa Wright

### Language learner

*“Due to circumstances beyond my control, in October 2004, I was suddenly without employment. With a student loan as my only income I had no choice but to leave a university degree course, resulting in few future prospects, low self esteem and a period of depression. Looking for alternative approaches to gain my degree I browsed through the Adult Education Prospectus and was specifically attracted to the French and German language courses which I enrolled for. Both courses have opened so many new opportunities for me.*

*Many unemployed people feel a lack of self worth and confidence as depression can gradually take over, often without the individual realising what is happening to them. The pleasure of language learning boosts confidence and gives the individual new opportunities for work here and abroad.*

*The RAOUL project is proving to be an invaluable asset. My recent visit to Mulhouse clarified that as a communicator of French and German, opportunities for employment are not limited to just English speaking communities. I have gained the confidence I need to broaden my horizons and have now opened communications with European websites and organisations with very positive employment prospects for the future.”*



Teresa at the project meeting in France

## Key messages

- Although people who offer learning courses produce advertising about their products it is personal contact that is most effective in attracting learners. Why? Because people have the opportunity to try things out, to discuss exactly what they might be signing up for and to make their wishes and preferences known before joining a course.
- Networking and partnership mean that people who have learning to offer can reach out to a wider audience than is possible by simply relying on media publicity. Networking and partnership also help more people to understand exactly what is involved in learning a language and decrease the risk of inaccurate information for potential learners.
- Direct contact with people results in learning that fits properly with their needs and wishes. A specially designed course will be more attractive and more successful in recruiting new learners.
- Although e-learning and new technologies are useful ways of learning and making and maintaining contact, they are not as important as face to face communication. Language learning can seem a daunting prospect and people who experience barriers to learning respond better if they can discuss their concerns and ask questions in person.

## Over to you

Now you have seen how other RAOUL partners go about finding new learners and starting them off on their language learning journey, what are you going to do in your area/country? Discuss and/or note down the answers to the following questions to get you started.

- Who do you think are the people most at risk in your area – those who are not keen on learning a language?
- Where might you get in contact with these people?
- Which individuals and organisations will be able to help you?
- Is there anyone you work with who might be able to help out?

# Languages and Work

## Introduction

There are a number of jobs and professions where employees' ability to use another language underpins success. There is also a bank of research information and data that confirms that companies and organisations under perform when they overlook the impact of language competence on their business. (For example, Effects on the European Economy of Shortages of Foreign Language Skills in Enterprise (ELAN) European Commission project December 2005) By and large, employers acknowledge and use the language skills that employees bring with them to work. There are examples of advantage in the recruitment process and financial remuneration for those ready and able to conduct business in languages other than their mother tongue.

Workplace training in languages is rare. The individual is expected to come to the job already linguistically competent or to take responsibility for acquiring the language skills at his/her own cost and in his/her own time.

The kind of language competence necessary varies from country to country, from workplace to workplace and from job to job. The prevalence of English as a trading language and as the lingua franca of many multi national companies means that English speakers, for example, do not necessarily have to aspire to the same levels of fluency in another language as their European co-workers. There is specific technical and job-related language demanded by individual roles and positions in companies and organisations. The frequency and nature of contact will determine the range and level of communication necessary for individual workers.

The case studies below illustrate how languages are used in work places in the RAOUL partner countries.

## France

### Living on the borders

French people who live in Alsace on the German-speaking Swiss and German borders have the potential to seek work in three countries. But, in order to do so, it is compulsory for them to master German, both the standard form of the language (Hochdeutsch) and sometimes even the dialect (Schwytzerditsch).

Recent published studies and surveys show that jobs in Switzerland are now more likely to go to German applicants because of their superior knowledge of German. The job market is in decline in Alsace but young people from the region are missing out on nearby opportunities through their lack of competence in German.

### PNEUMAX France

BERNARD Claudel, manager of the PNEUMAX company in Selestat, has enrolled on a course with his employees.

He and his employees need to communicate every day with suppliers, other managers or clients from abroad either by mail or on the phone. Orders, price offers and inquiries are all in English. They also need to speak English when they attend trade fairs in France or abroad.

Bernard selected an e-learning course for him and his employees. Why?

He and his employees live far from a language school and it would have been difficult for them to attend classes regularly. An e-learning course allowed them all to work during coffee breaks, lunch breaks and/or tea-breaks and some carried on studying before and/or after work. They followed their teacher's advice to do several short English sessions every day.

### Air France

Martine Kaeuffer is a commercial agent in the freight services of AIR FRANCE CARGO at the Mulhouse-Basle airport.

Up to now she has been using English to communicate by mail with suppliers and clients, but in three months' time she will get an internal promotion. This will mean she will have to speak English on the phone, attend international meetings and take part in video conferences. She believes the four months' e-learning course that she followed from November to February has allowed her to revise and refresh her knowledge of the language. She is now following a complementary course (a 'booster course') to acquire fluency in spoken English.





## Germany



**Dr. Bernd Stein, supports language learning.**

Dr. Bernd Stein *“Language competence has always been a valued skill in our company”*

Dr. Bernd Stein, Technical Director of ZAHORANSKY AG, always supports his employees whenever they set out to learn another language. He speaks English and Chinese fluently and knows very well how much speaking the language

of a business partner contributes to business success.

ZAHORANSKY AG was founded in 1902 in Todtnau, a small town in the Black Forest. What began as a small workshop developed into a leading company in the brush machine sector. Today the company with 550 employees, 320 working in the headquarters in Todtnau, has partners all over the world. The following languages are used to conduct company business: English, Spanish, Chinese, French and Italian. There are native speakers of all these languages employed by the company and involved in direct business contacts with the corresponding international partners. English is the most widely spoken language and international business contacts frequently use English as the functional language for business communication. ZAHORANSKY has run in-house English courses for more than 15 years at the same time as financially supporting individual language learning initiatives undertaken by employees.

**Technical apprentices at Zahoransky preparing for the BEC examination.**



A new strategy includes special courses for technical apprentices in the company. Designed to develop the language competence that apprentices bring with them from school, the courses revise basic knowledge if necessary, widen vocabulary to include the business context, adapt the language to the workplace and focus on a final examination as proof of a successful learning process. Learning the language in context like this has greatly improved the motivation and efforts of the apprentices.

## Kerstin Calambria

*Participant in a Hungarian Course at the VHS Schopfheim*

I work for a big international company called DSM Nutritional Products. The company has a number of sites in the Rhine valley. As a systems analyst I'm responsible for customer service and marketing. The company has contacts all over the world – the region I'm responsible for is Europe. My task is to coordinate the computer system for all the European partners. I analyse their problems, work out solutions, test new programmes and organise training courses if necessary. All this is done in English which is the work language of our partners in Italy, France, Denmark, Spain, the UK, Poland, Turkey, Belgium, and Hungary.

I mention Hungary, in particular, because - out of personal interest - I started to learn Hungarian on course at the VHS Schopfheim. We have business partners in Hungary who we meet on a regular basis. I wanted to be able to say something in their language. My experience is that this opens doors. Even with e-mails, if you add a few words in the partner's mother tongue the partner reacts promptly and in a more direct way, is more open

to your ideas and prepared to follow your suggestions. This is even more the case when taking part in a personal or a web meeting. I have also learned French and Italian. Those two help a lot as well. But Hungarian is the challenge for me. It is very special compared to other European languages and Hungarians, as

recent members of the EU, seem to be more than happy if you speak their language.



**Kerstin Calambria (on the right) and her Hungarian language teacher.**

## Hungary

*“English is essential for my work”* says the branch manager of the ADECCO Office in Debrecen.

Most of the client companies (large, medium-sized and small) in our area are in foreign hands. In many cases the managing directors or company representatives are foreign, so discussion and talks are held in English. Contracts are drawn up in English, and the language of correspondence is English.

Our clients expect our workers to have a good knowledge of English. We routinely test applicants on their knowledge when they apply for work. Staff members are encouraged to participate in training courses abroad and language learning is financially supported by our company.

SEI Europe Kft., has its headquarters in Debrecen, Hungary. It provides technology support services for leading multinational companies around the globe. Foreign language skills are a vital and indispensable tool for success in this multilingual help desk environment.

Those who seek expert help on phone or email are often perplexed, stressed out and want proper answers and solutions – immediately. The resolution of any technical problem begins with communication between the technician and the user. In order to project a professional image and increase customer satisfaction, our colleagues need to have excellent verbal and written skills in a foreign language. Expressing themselves on a basic level, with core words, wrong intonation and simplified grammatical structures would never lead us to success in this industry. Our technicians must understand, identify and demonstrate different communication styles to fit the situation. To sum up, effective other language use enhances SEI's competitiveness.

## Italy

Maurizio Briguglio  
Financial employee



I'm an employee in a multinational insurance and financial company.

I studied just a little English at high school and I needed to improve it for my job because I had to report to my boss every week in Germany and I had great difficulty in doing so. I faced the same difficulties when I visited Denmark for my honeymoon. I could not have a simple conversation nor understand others.

For these reasons I decided to improve

my English. I contacted the Impegno Civile association and had a meeting with a mother tongue teacher who explained the course and her teaching methods.

I've attended the Friday evening courses with two colleagues of mine and with my wife as well. It was exciting, useful and fun too.

Thanks to this English course my life at work has improved. Now I'm able to speak almost fluently with other people and to hold telephone conversations too.

Sergio Carpo  
Administrative employee



I work in administration and I'm interested in computer software and information technology.

I attended a Basic English course when I was at school so it was very difficult for me to understand the language of English software.

During a conference at my work place I heard about English courses so I decided to enrol. I've attended lessons on Friday afternoon after I leave work. I've met so many nice people who have become my friends.

At the beginning I was a bit ashamed about speaking with my classmates and with my teacher too, because my English was so bad and I wasn't able to have a simple conversation.

Now I am more self-confident with English and I can deal with computer problems and resolve difficulties better than before.

Giovanni Smiroldo  
Teacher in a secondary school



I'm a music teacher in a secondary school and I attended an English course together with other employees in public administration.

I attended this course because these days it's necessary to be able to communicate with foreign people and to know English, in particular, very well.

The courses were held late in the evening in order to help workers attend. As well as studying English we learned vocabulary specific to public administration.

The results have been good because most of us, who already knew some English from school, had improved this basic knowledge by the end of the course.

## UK

LUBRIZOL Limited – An East Midlands company

Lubrizol has for the past three years been offering language training to its employees as part of a drive to develop a European identity for its site near Belper in Derbyshire. The company believes that equipping staff with language skills is key to creating this identity and has introduced a language policy, outlining its commitment to developing employees' foreign language capabilities. The organisation employs 270 people at Belper and is part of the Lubrizol Corporation, a global provider of speciality chemicals, in particular lubricant additives for engine oils and other transportation related funds. Approximately 25 employees are currently receiving language training in French, German and Italian, delivered on site.

Debbie Maitland, Learning and Development Manager was determined that staff should take ownership of languages training, rather than see the initiative as an imposition from the human resources department. Individuals took responsibility for their own progression and formed small study groups with colleagues from different departments. The experience has clearly been very positive, with increased communications and better relationships developing with overseas clients. Some managers can now conduct meetings in another language and other employees were already using their basic knowledge of French or German to develop contact with customers and colleagues in other European countries.

Fogarty – The Master Quilt & Pillow Makers

Fogarty is a major UK manufacturer of bedding products, such as quilts and pillows, employing 320 people. Our main international markets are in the EU, Middle East and Asia Pacific regions.



Little Fogarty Anti Allergy Range

In house we have capabilities in French, German and Spanish, which are used in communication with some of our customers within Europe. The main demand is for sales packaging information in local languages, which we work on in co-operation with our partners for use at point of sale in languages such as French, Dutch, Portuguese, Greek, Arabic, Chinese and Japanese.

In the 21st Century we inhabit a shrinking world

which is characterised by the technological advances in methods of communication and movement of goods, services and ideas commonly referred to under the general heading of globalisation.

For companies like Fogarty to grow and prosper in this highly competitive and mobile environment embracing the advantages to be gained through cultural and linguistic awareness is a significant factor. A combination of linguistic ability within the company and close co-operation with our partners in our target markets around the world ensures that the message concerning the benefits of our products is clearly understood by local consumers.

Being able to communicate in another language leads to a greater awareness of cultural differences and enables us to match product specifications to different environments, resulting in improved sales. It also provides us with a better understanding of product developments and source materials within those markets, which we can incorporate into our own future plans.

Gerry Blacoe, Export Manager

Steven Moore - Computer Programmer - Leicester, UK

*Why did I start learning a language?*

Two years ago I began working for a company that is part of the steel industry and has a range of international connections with a head office in Austria. My job involves dealing with German speaking people



on a regular basis and although many of them speak excellent English, I felt that I was missing an excellent opportunity to learn a language and benefit from native speakers. The gains in being able to get about while abroad for both business and pleasure and the possibility of working there for an extended period are well worth learning a language especially with a qualification to put on my CV.

*What happened next?*

I had not studied for a language past the age of 13 at school so this would be something new. I was fortunate in May 2006 to attend an introduction to the German language for a free week of evening classes. This led me to start a full year's German Beginners course in September. I have since used my German successfully to get by on my business trips to Linz, I managed a basic telephone conversation with a German speaking customer and I welcomed visitors to our company in the UK. This seems to impress as people don't expect it!

## Key messages

- Speaking other languages in work places contributes to business and individual success
- People derive benefits from being able to communicate with other colleagues on a personal level too. They enjoy more trusting relationships and things get done quicker
- Lack of language competence can harm your chances in the work place either by preventing you from getting a job or by slowing down your promotion opportunities
- In some work places the ability to use another language is an essential part of the job, in many others it is an advantage to be able to do so.
- Even though English is very important to many European-based companies and organisations, the ability to communicate socially with colleagues using their mother tongue is considered important in the creation of effective working relationships.

## Over to you

What do you know about the language requirements of workplaces in your area/country? If you are able to use a language other than your mother tongue or are thinking of taking up language learning it's important to have an idea about the employment opportunities that may be open to you as a result. See if you can discover the answers to these questions:

- What companies and organisations in your area/country rely on employees who can speak languages other than their mother tongue?
- Which languages are the most important for business?
- What specific jobs or positions make use of language competence?
- What level of competence is required?

# Learning languages

## Introduction

Language learning is not always popular. For some it can seem difficult, academic and time consuming. Success is not necessarily immediate and being able to use another language is one of those skills that needs pretty constant attention. It's a lifelong activity which does not mean that it's a life sentence!

There are many ways of learning another language. You can join a class or learn on your own. You can use books; TV; radio; internet; DVDs; CDs; friends; relations; journeys and study time abroad. You can spend more time learning to speak and listen first or you might prefer learning to read and write. You can begin with grammar or not. You can study the culture of a country through the language. You can set yourself short and long term goals.

With all these choices selecting the right language learning package can become a complicated process. Spend time working out what exactly you'd like to be able to do with the language (or what you need to be able to do to get that job); think about how long you are prepared to learn for and how much you can afford to spend; think about how you like learning and what kind of learning works for you. The next step will be to discuss your language learning needs in more detail with teaching professionals. They will be able to advise you about your best options.

Language teachers need to know about the requirements of language learners to develop new courses and ways to learn that will be successful. As well as individuals' needs there are a number of other factors that impact on course development: timing; length; cost; resources - to name but a few. The teacher's task is to come up with solutions that will most closely meet the needs of the learners and therefore create a relevant experience for them.

Below you will find examples from the RAOUL partners showing how they have gone about the process of creating new courses

### France

#### Key considerations of course design for people in work:

- appropriate delivery modes – intensive; flexible
- appropriate days and times - late evening for people working far away or Saturday mornings
- adapting teaching methods – tailor made courses

- meeting the needs of individual participant as closely as possible and meeting the needs of the work place

Key considerations of course design for learners who are financially disadvantaged:

- a course offer that is affordable
- making payment easy – in instalments, for example
- developing learning that is not reliant of the purchase of expensive resources

### English by e-learning

An e-learning course provided the answer for 4 people working for a company where knowledge of English was required.

Véronique and Patricia were beginners, Bernard and Martine improvers. A course for the four of them at the company was impossible because of:

- different language levels (2 beginners and 2 intermediate)
- different jobs within the firm
- different working hours .

For financial reasons the company would not fund a private course for each employee. Instead they joined the e-learning project.

Our e-learning course connects learners to a language learning platform. A diagnostic test on the platform confirms the level of the learner and then schedules work. A specialist tutor monitors each participant's progress (30 minutes per learner per week) and can be contacted whenever necessary. E-learning proved really appropriate for these learners giving them:

- the opportunity to learn wherever they wanted: at work, at home, elsewhere (hotel, public transport ...) since, by using their individual passwords, they could access the platform from any computer.
- the opportunity to learn at any time : during working hours or free time; while travelling
- constant monitoring and feedback by the tutor, through the platform or by e-mail
- individual learning tasks and activities, designed and uploaded by the teacher
- constant assessment of progress
- practice for oral comprehension through videos and recordings made to fit with work place requirements
- practice in oral expression through self-recording; exercises to improve accent and pronunciation; exchanging oral messages to aid fluency .

## Germany

### Key considerations of course design for people in work

- Appropriate timing to suit the needs of the employer and the employees
- “Share the load and share the benefit”. Setting up a give and take partnership between employers and employees around time management and costs
- Formal verification of course outcomes: examinations and certificates
- Appropriate teaching methods: integrating language teaching and e-learning

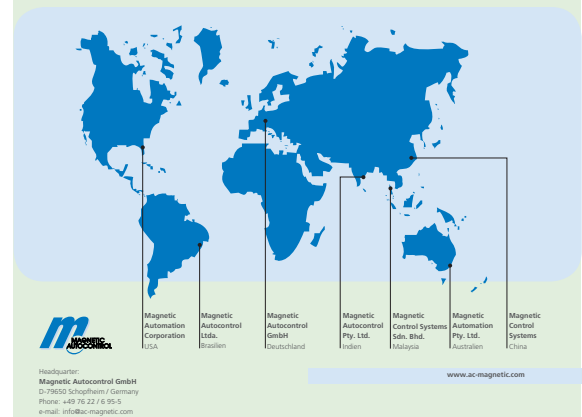
### Working with learners who are disadvantaged by location, finance and/or previous educational experience

People can be reluctant to attend courses at the VHS. They may have experienced problems with educational institutions when young. They may not wish to “waste” the little money they have on a language course. Direct contact is crucial to explain the value of language learning. Contact is made through schools (before young people leave full time study), through kindergartens (with parents), in companies (particularly where unskilled workers might profit from further training), at social institutions where potential learners seek general advice. In all of these places, intermediaries are able to pass on information and encourage people to take the first step into learning a language.

Consideration of reluctant learners’ needs continues within the classroom. Teachers must take steps to overcome lack of confidence and suspicions about learning. People should be made to feel comfortable. They must be able to trust the teacher and sign up to the principles of the institution. Course topics should meet learners’ needs and embrace their personal interests if motivation is to be maintained. Small, progressive steps and active participation build up self confidence and encourage people to think more positively about the notion of life long learning. Costs must be transparent and reasonable. Cooperation between institutions that leads to the co-financing of courses can be helpful.

## Bringing down the barriers to language learning

Dieter Schwald,  
Managing Director  
of the Magnetic  
Autocontrol GmbH,  
supported language  
learning initiatives for  
his employees.



Magnetic Autocontrol is a leading manufacturer of barriers, security gates, turnstiles, parking systems, etc. The company operates worldwide. It has sites in Germany, Australia, China, Malaysia, India and the USA. In 2003 the firm was taken over by an Irish company and most business now takes place in English. In 2006, Dieter Schwald, Managing Director, offered training in English to his employees. The result: 50 of 100 enrolled.

The VHS offered three courses at three different levels: A Business English Refresher Course for technical and business managers (B1 level). This course is run by a native speaker teacher who puts participants through their paces in authentic work situations (phone calls and meetings, for example). Learners are trained to give presentations and encouraged to practise and maintain general English language competence.

The second course (A2 level) is for false beginners who would not have taken English up again without this initiative. Some are receptionists, workers and accountants and all are now more able to undertake work place activities in English.

The third course is for real beginners (A1 level) or those who have experienced difficulties learning a language in the past, for example, migrants, unskilled workers, and people from isolated rural areas. They have benefited from a year of study

and can now explain the function of a (“their”) product in English when visitors come.

Courses run after work on company premises. As well as ensuring progression in language competence they contribute positively to the social ambiance of the company.

“Company topics” that are part of the lessons, create interest and bond departments together. Content related to the firm’s production and organisation makes language learning relevant and motivates everyone to practise regularly in the workplace. Language training is an important part of Magnetic Autocontrol GmbH’s success story. As a result of growing demand and improved production the company is planning an expansion of its Schopfheim plant.

## Hungary

### Key considerations of course design for people in work

Finding out all about the learners is critical to designing successful learning. Through questionnaire or interview it is important to establish:

- The learner’s current knowledge – what can he or she already do?
- The reasons why people want to learn
- What work functions the language will be used for (emailing, telephoning, negotiating, making presentations...)
- What contexts the language will be used in (health, law..)
- What kind of learning is preferred (size of group, resources, native speaker teachers, e-learning materials....)
- How long and how intense a period of study is required

### New courses, new qualifications

Our normal class size is 6 – 8 learners so on the day our first “English for Health” course started with 15 students we decided we had to change our approach.

People had come because they believed that their professional progress would be greatly improved if they were able to speak another language.

Our first course lasted for 10 weeks (40 meetings) and learners covered basic work place situations.

The course created such a stir in the town that

new learners appeared daily at the language school asking us to organise more groups.

Courses were extended to last a year at the end of which participants sit a language exam, recognised by the Hungarian Government.

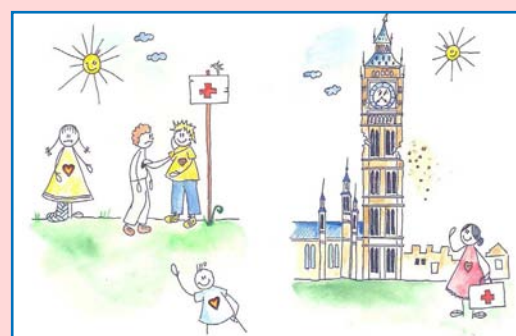
Inspired by this success we introduced other courses and now offer language training in six contexts: health, law, telecommunication, economy, office skills, and business.

For each context we have a specially designed curriculum (levels A1-C1), and learners can measure their progress by taking formal exams - an important factor in Hungary for language learners.

At present the number of learners on contextualised language courses is triple that of learners on general English courses.

## The Language Competition

A competition was launched in Debrecen inviting learners, teachers and employers to express in words and pictures why it is useful to learn languages. Here are two of the creative contributions that were sent in by language learner Tóth Ilona Csilla.



## Italy

### Working with reluctant language learners

People who join our new language courses are enjoying a very different way of learning. At school they experienced language learning based on theory and grammar. We concentrate on speaking and encourage conversation.

At the outset we noticed our learners were reluctant to talk to each other. They were uncertain and preferred to remain quiet rather than saying something that might be wrong.

We try to persuade them that it's OK to speak even if what you say is not grammatically correct. During the lessons, we talk as little Italian as possible. We have simple discussions that include everyone. We use repetition to improve pronunciation and to learn new vocabulary.

We watch English films with Italian subtitles first time round and then again with English subtitles. In this way people pick up accent and pronunciation.

Our learners listen to music too. We give them texts of well-known songs, so they can read while they listen. They translate and sing along too. This is fun and seems to work well when it comes to remembering language.

## UK

### Key considerations of course design for new language learners

- Be mindful of potential barriers to learning.
- Cost - free provision cannot usually be sustained but can support the initial motivation of people who are not sure whether language learning is 'for them'.
- Length – short, intensive courses let people pick up a range of useful words and phrases and get an idea of what it's like to learn a language without committing themselves to the "unknown".
- Publicity – traditional means of publicising courses may not be enough to tempt new learners. Targeted leafleting and word of mouth may be necessary too.

### Really successful language courses

We offered three free intensive language courses for beginners in French, German and Italian. All were oversubscribed and drew in a range of different learners. Some wanted to learn for work, some were unemployed, some were from ethnic minorities, some were disabled and others were older learners.

### Publicity

We tried a number of different strategies to publicise the courses and attract new learners. The German course, for example, took place around the time of the Football World Cup in Germany, so we used this as a theme for advertising.

Get ahead of the game through  
**'Vorsprung durch Deutsch'**  
our FREE German intensive course for beginners. Learn some phrases useful for meeting people, making arrangements and finding your way round. Useful language for the world of work, the World Cup and the world in general.  
4 meetings Monday 12th June, Tuesday 13th June, Wednesday 14th June and Friday 16th June - 5.30 - 8.00pm

For the French and Italian courses we sent flyers to community and job centres and libraries. For these venues we created a leaflet that was eye-catching and straightforward. Complicated language on glossy paper can be a barrier in itself! One of the learners had picked up the leaflet in a local church.

### Intensive mode of delivery

The learners liked the idea of a short intensive course – concentrating for a week on just one thing. They focused more, learned a lot and remembered better.

### Different ways of learning

Teachers experimented with web based learning



to give people the opportunity of continuing to study after the course had ended. Culture and fun were included by providing food and drink from the target language countries.

### What the learners said

*"I liked the interaction and the way the session was broken up with speaking and computer work."*

*"It was good to know about on-line information"*

*"It was good fun and we used different ways of learning. The computer was good but the best way was talking with other people."*



Italia in Europa course



Accents d'Europe course



RAOUL project learners on-line



RAOUL: buffet German style

### Key messages

- Teachers should always ensure that language learning is relevant, purposeful and fun for the people who are undertaking it. This involves: talking to learners; choosing topics that match their interests and needs; helping people to overcome their fears of language learning; monitoring progress and celebrating achievement; boosting self-confidence and providing entertaining and enjoyable learning
- There are a number of barriers to language learning that must be overcome. Cost; timing; style of delivery; length; previous educational experience; disability; age might all be reasons for people failing to join in with a learning opportunity.
- Learners need to be encouraged and helped to say what exactly they want to learn and how. Face to face conversations with learners is the best way of going about this
- Learning that is created to meet the wishes of the learners is successful. This success stretches beyond the individual and can impact on work forces and communities.

### Over to you

So now you really want to learn another language. It's time for reflection and research.

- What kind of language learner are you? What do you want to learn and how?
- Where could you learn languages in your area? What kind of learning happens? Does it fit your requirements?
- Who can you talk to or what references can you use for more information about language learning opportunities?

## Useful Contacts

Here is a list of contacts in each of the partner countries. These are national, regional and local organisations that support and promote language learning and use. They will be able to provide further information should it be required.

### France

**Université Populaire du Rhin** is a member of **AUPF** ( Association des universités populaires de France ) and **EAEA** ( European Association for Adult Education )

For information visit :[www.universitepopulaire.fr](http://www.universitepopulaire.fr)

Other language centres in Mulhouse

#### **ELSE formation**

120 ave Robert Schuman  
68100 Mulhouse  
03 89 57 16 98

#### **inlingua**

65 rue Jean Monnet  
68100 Mulhouse  
0389 56 65 10

#### **Integra langues**

15 rue frères Lumière  
68200 Mulhouse  
03 89 33 35 28

#### **Nova langues**

Ave Pierre Pfimlin  
68 Sausheim  
03 89 61 94 03

#### **Intermediaries**

##### **A.N.P.E ( employment agency)**

105 ave de Colmar  
68100 Mulhouse  
03 89 33 22 00

##### **Direction déléguée du Bassin Sud Alsace**

8 Avenue du Rhône  
68100 Mulhouse  
03 89 56 98 00

##### **Centre de réadaptation de Mulhouse**

57 rue Albert Camus  
68200 Mulhouse

##### **Centre hospitalier Emile Muller**

20 Ave Dr René laennec  
03 89 64 64 64

##### **Usine Peugeot**

68 sausheim  
[patricia.fettig@mpsa.com](mailto:patricia.fettig@mpsa.com)

### Germany

*Organisations offering language training*

#### **DVV: Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V.**

Transnational association providing life long learning – training in languages is the largest sector  
[www.dvv-vhs.de](http://www.dvv-vhs.de)

#### **Volkshochschulverband Baden-Württemberg e.V.**

Association in Baden Württemberg providing life long learning – training in languages is the largest sector  
[www.vhs-bw.de](http://www.vhs-bw.de)

#### **VHS Schopfheim**

Language courses and examination preparation  
[www.vhs-schopfheim.de](http://www.vhs-schopfheim.de)

#### **VHS Rheinfelden**

VHS quality language courses and examination centre for Cambridge ESOL.  
[www.vhs-rheinfelden.de](http://www.vhs-rheinfelden.de)

#### **VHS Lörrach**

Language courses  
<http://vhs.loerrach.de>

#### **DHV - Berufsbildungsstätte des DHV (**

Deutscher Handels- und Industrieangestelltenverband )  
Trade Union offering low cost training courses for employees  
[www.dhv-cgb.de](http://www.dhv-cgb.de)

#### **IHK: Industrie und Handelskammer Hochrhein – Bodensee**

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry runs language courses and provides certification in various sectors .  
[www.ihk.de](http://www.ihk.de)

#### **ifas GmbH**

Language courses for migrants and specific target groups, focus on German as a foreign language.  
Brombacher Str.1, 79539 Lörrach, Tel. 07621 / 94074 – 30

#### **Intermediaries**

##### **WSW: Wirtschaftsregion Südwest GmbH**

Marie-Curie Str.8, 79539 Lörrach  
[www.wrdh.de](http://www.wrdh.de)

##### **IOW: Initiativkreis Oberes Wiesental e.V.**

Postfach 9 , 79670 Todtnau  
[www.i-ow.org](http://www.i-ow.org)

**GAL: Grundsicherung für Arbeitslose im Landkreis Lörrach**

Specialises in longterm unemployment issues  
Brombacher Str.2, 79539 Lörrach, Tel. 07621/  
178 488

**ARGE: Arbeitsagentur Lörrach**

Brombacher Str.2, 79539 Lörrach, Tel.  
0180/00253550-700  
www.arbeitsagentur.de/loerrach

**Ausländeramt Lörrach**

Landratsamt Lörrach, Palmstr.3, 79539 Lörrach,  
Tel. 07621/ 410 2343  
www.loerrach-landkreis.de

**Caritas Lörrach**

Luisenstr.9, 79539 Lörrach, Tel. 07621/ 927511  
www.caritas-loerrach.de

**Diakonie Schopfheim**

Hauptstr.94, 79650 Schopfheim, Tel.07622/  
2720  
www.diakonie-schopfheim.de

**Gewerbeschule Schopfheim**

Bannmattstraße, 79650 Schopfheim, Tel.07622/  
682 114  
www.gewerbeschule-schopfheim.de

**Kaufmännische Schule Schopfheim**

Schwarzwaldstr.31, 79650 Schopfheim, 07622  
/ 682200  
www.ks-schopfheim.de

**Montfort - Realschule Zell**

Scheffelstr.8, 79669 Zell, 07625/7141  
www.morz-lernserver.de

**Schulzentrum Steinen**

Eisenbahnstr.26, 79585 Steinen, Tel. 07627/697  
www.schulzentrum-steinen.de

**Hungary**

**Unemployment Agency Of Hajdú-bihar County**

54 Piac Street Debrecen, 4024  
Www.hajdummk.hu

**Refugee Centre Of Debrecen**

149 Sámsoni Road Debrecen, 4033  
Www.bmbah.hu

**Mayor's Offices Of Hajdú-bihar County**

20 Piac Street Debrecen, 4024  
Www.debrecen.hu

**Adecco Human Resources Company**

15 Barna Street Debrecen, 4025  
Www.adecco.hu

**Sei Europe Ltd.**

48 Erzsébet Street Debrecen, 4025  
Www.sei-it.com

**Roc Development Hungary Ltd.**

2 Vágóhíd Street Debrecen, 4034  
Www.rochungary.hu

**Ygomi Europe Ltd.**

48 Erzsébet Street Debrecen, 4025  
Www.ygomi.hu

**Connexis Ltd.**

48 Erzsébet Street Debrecen, 4025  
Www.connexis.com

**Italy**

**Associazione Internazionale Impegno Civile**

Via Maisano 16 – 98122 Messina 0942745300  
Via Puliatti 133 – 98027 Roccalumera Prov.  
Messina

*Other language centres in Messina and  
Province*

**AUCIS - Ass. Universitaria per la cultura  
1'informazione e gli scambi**

Via Comunale Zafferia Messina

**Associazione Linguistica Stafford**

Via degli Astronauti 13 – 98026 Nizza di Sicilia  
Prov. Messina

**INLINGUA**

Viale s. Martino 62 –98123 Messina Tel  
090710238. www.inlingua.com/it

*Intermediaries*

**Consorzio per la Pomozione e la  
Valorizzazione della Terra Impareggiabile di  
S. Quasimodo**

Piazza Mons. Francesco Maria di Francia sn  
98027 Roccalumera Prov. ME Tel. 0942745300  
Sede operativa: Antica Stazione Ferroviaria  
- Via Aurelio Di Bella 98027 Roccalumera  
Messina. www.parcoquasimodo.it

**Centro per l'impiego Assessorato Regionale  
al Lavoro**

Via Rotonda sn 98100 Tremestieri Messina.  
www.regione.sicilia.it/Lavoro/new.htm

**Club Amici di S. Quasimodo**

Torre Saracena sn 98027 Roccalumera Prov. ME

**Consorzio Universitario per la Formazione Professionale e l'Imprenditoria giovanile**

Via Ghibellina 46- 98100 Messina Tel 090663680

**Federazione Italiana strutture ricettive**

Via Regina Margherita sn 98028 Santa Teresa di Riva Prov. ME Tel. 0942794301.  
www.sicilyhotelsonline.it

**Comune di Mandanici**

Via Roma sn 98020 Mandanici Prov. ME Tel 0942781010

**Comune di Roccalumera Ufficio Europa**

Piazza Mons. Francesco Maria di Francia sn 98027 Roccalumera Prov. ME Tel. 0942744950

**Comune di Santa Teresa di Riva Agenzia per la Formazione**

Piazza V Reggimento Aosta sn 98028 Santa Teresa di Riva

**Adecco Italia Spa**

Via Imbriani Matteo Renato 181c – 95128 Catania Tel. 095437404. www.adecco.it

**CONFARTIGIANATO**

Via Ettore Lombardo Pellegrino sn Messina www.confartigianato.it

**LEGA COOP** Via Tommaso Cannizzaro sn 98100 Messina. www.legacoop.it

**Connexions** / 'Working in languages' booklet / Publication aimed at 13–19 year-olds with fourteen case studies of jobs using languages / www.connexions.gov.uk

**Institute of Linguists** / Serves the interests of professional linguists throughout the world / www.iol.org.uk

**Institute of Translation and Interpreting** / The independent professional association of practising translators and interpreters in the UK / www.itl.org.uk

**Language Advantage** / Languages portal with information on careers with languages and on learning languages / www.languageadvantage.com

**Languages for Life** / Languages careers website with career profiles of languages graduates from Aston University/ www.les.aston.ac.uk/langlife

**Regional Language Networks** / Supporting CILT's mission in the English regions, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland / www.cilt.org.uk/rln

**Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies** / Promotes high quality learning and language teaching across all UK higher education institutions / www.llas.ac.uk

**University Council for Modern Languages** / Membership organisation for higher education language lecturers and associations / www.ucml.org.uk

**National and Local Intermediaries**

**APEX Provides education**, training, employment preparation, advice, guidance and support to those excluded or otherwise disadvantaged in the labour market. <http://www.apex-works.co.uk>

**VAL** /Voluntary Action Leicester/ Helps voluntary and community groups and charities both funded or unfunded <http://www.voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk/>

**JSP** /Jobs Service Partnership/ The Job Service Partnership (JSP) is a new innovative project in Leicester that helps people into real jobs. <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council--services/advice-and-benefits/advice-services/job-service-partnership>

**Jobcentre Plus** provides help and advice on

**UK****National Languages Organisations and Websites**

**Association for Language Learning** / Membership organisation for teachers of modern foreign languages / [www.languagelearn.co.uk](http://www.languagelearn.co.uk)

**BBC Languages** / Site for language learners – test your knowledge on-line and find learning resources / [www.bbc.co.uk/languages](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages)

**Channel 4 Languages** / Site for language learners – interactive and other learning resources / [www.channel4.com/languages](http://www.channel4.com/languages)

**CILT**, the National Centre for Languages / Promoting a greater national capability in languages / [www.cilt.org.uk](http://www.cilt.org.uk)

jobs and training for people who can work and financial help for those who cannot.  
[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

**Next Step** / Helps adults (aged 20 plus) to develop their potential and meet labour market needs, by undertaking courses or training, and to be engaged in meaningful and satisfying employment. <http://www.nextstep-leics.org.uk>

**NIACE** /The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education - England and Wales/  
Promotes the study and general advancement of adult continuing education  
<http://www.niace.org.uk>

**Local Languages Providers in Leicester**  
**Leicester Adult Skills and Learning Service**  
<http://www.leicester.gov.uk>

**The University of Leicester**  
[www.le.ac.uk/ml/lal](http://www.le.ac.uk/ml/lal)

**WEA**  
<http://www.wea.org.uk/Contact/eastmidland/index.html>

## Over to you

One of the best ways of promoting and supporting language learning is by word of mouth. Local examples of good practice and success provide a forceful argument for engagement. The stories and experiences of language learners; the routes they have chosen for learning and the outcomes they have achieved can provide just the inspiration necessary to encourage those who may be uncommitted or reluctant to participate.

- Create a local list of organisations and services that support language learning for adults
- Talk to local language learners about their experiences.
- Invite language learners to share their experiences with others and learning providers to talk about what they offer.

## Conclusion

There has been a consistent message in the work of the RAOUL partnership – language learning is very much up to the individual. Although there are high level European and national strategic statements and policies regarding the ability to use languages other than one’s mother tongue, these do not translate as yet into universal and prescribed access to language learning for adults. The focus has been on the spread of language learning in schools to ensure that future generations of Europeans are language competent when they come out of the cycle of statutory education.

So there remain generations of adults with varying experiences of language learning and competencies ranging from none to fluency. Many are in work; many are seeking work and work

places are increasingly global in composition and in outlook. Migration and ease of travel within Europe means that Europeans are much more likely to come across each other wherever they might live. The notion of cohesion within the Union and inclusiveness within each of the European states is predicated on understanding and communication.

The RAOUL partnership’s work has been all about raising awareness of the importance of other language use. Given its critical place in the future economic and social well-being of Europe together with the fact that the responsibility for learning is an individual one, the partnership seeks here to provide information that will help people to access this key skill.



