



DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

Employment and Language Models

June 2016



Purpose of Presentation

- Present key models of workplace focused or employer supported language training and skills development models for those with limited official language proficiency and
- Solicit feedback on additional examples.

Background

- Official language skills are recognized as a fundamental component of meaningful employment and economic integration in Canada.
- As the Government of Canada has worked to fulfill its commitment to resettle Syrian refugees, increased attention has been directed towards programs that target newcomers' language skills and their economic integration, particularly for those with limited official language proficiency.

Employment and Language Discussions

- In February 2016, the National Settlement Council identified a need to create an inventory of workplace-based and/or employer supported language and skills development training for immigrants and refugees with multiple settlement barriers, including many of the Syrian refugees.
 - Through discussions with some Newcomer Language Advisory Body members, IRCC has explored a variety of initiatives that seek to address newcomers' language training as well as their economic integration needs.
 - The main objective of this work has been to review and identify key models and best practices to inform settlement policy development.

- Discussions have revealed a range of program models across Canada.
 - Key characteristics that varied among projects included: *focus of training, program length, target clientele, level of employer engagement, type of service provider, funding model, and funders.*
- Recognizing the variety of programming available, the range of projects discussed have been narrowed and classified under three broad categories.

Three Models

Employment Focused
Language Training
FOR the Workplace

*Language training
pre-employment*

Employment Focused
Language Training IN
the Workplace

*Language training
while employed*

Learning by Doing: On-
the-job language
development

*Language
exposure/development
through work*

Each model involves a degree of language training ranging from general classroom-based formal language training prior to employment, to customized language training courses in the workplace, or informal language acquisition through interaction with peers in a workplace setting.

Employment Focused Language Training FOR the Workplace (pre-employment)

1-Key Driver : Service provider targets newcomers interested in language training and creates employment linkages with specific sectors/labour market opportunities.

2-Main Features:

- Classroom or online-based general language training combined with occupation specific language training for specific employment sectors (mainly entry level occupations)
 - Some CLB-based language training (others do not reference CLBs)
- Potential safety training (e.g. workplace or occupational), specialized training or certification component
- Potential Bridge-to-Work or Job Placement component with employers

3-Funding Model: Primarily publicly funded (IRCC and/or provincial funders)

4-Occupational sectors targeted: childcare, retail, hospitality/service industry occupations, construction, trades and materials handling

Employment Focused Language Training For the Workplace Programs are already in place to support newcomers:

The NS provincial Government funds the **ISANS Bridge-to-Work** project, which seeks to provide lower language level newcomers (CLB 2,3,4) with skills for the workplace (including communication skills) and respond to high demand from employers in the service, hospitality, trades and construction fields. Participants learn about Canadian workplace culture, learn English vocabulary and may receive technical or safety training. Placement opportunities may also lead to paid employment.

The **IWORK** Program in Windsor, Ontario is designed to assist newcomers to Canada (CLB 3-5) enter the labour market. It provides specialized language training and work placements targeting (but not limited to): retail industry, food service industry, hospitality and manufacturing.

Employment Focused Language Training IN the Workplace (while employed)

1-Key Driver : Employer driven to address workplace communication issues

2-Main Features:

- Customized curriculum developed with employers and offered primarily at client's place of work
 - Language training varies from formal CLB-based instruction to informal/conversational interaction led by tutors in the workplace
- Often includes workplace safety components and specialized vocabulary
- Employees may be paid to attend training
- Some evidence of online delivery models

3. Funding Model: Various funding models including cost-sharing with employers and public funding (includes IRCC, ESDC OLES and Canada Job Grant Funding)

4. Occupational Sectors Targeted: manufacturing, hospitality, food processing

Employment Focused Language Training IN the Workplace Programs are already in place to support newcomers:

IRCC and employers currently co-fund the **English at Work** program in Manitoba wherein language classes are offered in the workplace and target newcomers' functional language skills in English (interactions with co-workers, supervisors, management and the community), cultural skills and employment connections. Employers share in costs and allow some paid time for employee participation in training. Course development costs (training materials, e.g. picture dictionaries) are developed by the service provider and paid for by the employer.

Highline Mushrooms in Leamington, Ontario funds its own off-site ESL and literacy programming for their employees at a local high school.

Learning by Doing: On-the-job language development/exposure (through work)

Note: Limited project examples

1-Key Driver : Service provider identifies clients and potential social enterprise/business opportunities

2-Main Features:

- On-the-job paid training to work in specific sectors
- Informal language learning, “learning by doing” approach through interaction with peers in a workplace setting

3-Funding Model: Potential social enterprise model with some government funding

4-Occupational sectors targeted: hospitality/commercial kitchen

“Learning by Doing”: On-the-job language development/exposure projects are already evident

EthniCity Catering is a non-profit social enterprise of the Centre for Newcomers, providing Canadian workplace experience and training to immigrants (CLB 3+) in their transition to Canada. As trainees working in a commercial kitchen environment, newcomers are exposed to and practice English, receive support in workplace essential skills, learn about safe food handling and gain Canadian work experience. They also receive support for their job search, as well as a potential reference for future employment.

Success Factors:

For all models, there is a need to ensure a comprehensive, “client centred” approach to language training and employment programs that takes into account newcomers’ broader settlement needs outside of work. Additional success factors for each model include:

Model	Success Factors Identified
Employment Focused Language Training <u>FOR</u> the Workplace <i>(pre-employment)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening criteria for participants: interest in work in specific sector/occupation • Appropriate occupational/employment sector focus: tied to local labour market opportunities and appropriate language requirements • Employer engagement to identify work placement opportunities for clients
Employment Focused Language Training <u>IN</u> the Workplace <i>(while employed)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs assessments for curriculum development (employer and employee needs) • Employer commitment • Flexibility in offerings (online, evening courses, etc.) • Potential use of native language for instruction • Workplace diversity training for non-ESL/FSL staff, including realistic expectations of learner progression for those with limited official language proficiency • Mentoring opportunities, job shadowing
Learning by Doing: On-the-job language development/exposure <i>(through work)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening criteria for participants: interest in work in specific sector/occupation • Employer commitment/viable social enterprise model

Next Steps

- Information Sharing Venues

- Inform service providers, employers and newcomers of opportunities in employment and language program models and potential funding mechanisms

- Pilot Tests: Key Models

- IRCC can explore further expansion of program models and their enhancement through the incorporation of best practices (e.g. client centred approaches, appropriate curriculum development)

- Policy Development: Call for Proposals (CFP)

- Building upon the models explored in this review as well as the results of potential pilots, outline key priorities for employment and language projects specific to this client group (newcomers with low official language proficiency) for a future CFP

ANNEX – PROJECT EXAMPLES TABLE

	1. Employment-Focused Language Learning <u>FOR</u> the Workplace (pre-employment)	2. Employment-Focused Language Learning <u>IN</u> the Workplace (while employed)	3. On-the-Job Language Exposure/Development (while working)
Key Drivers	SPO-driven to prepare newcomers for employment in specific sectors	Employer-driven to address workplace communication issues and train employees	SPO driven to identify clients and potential social enterprise/business opportunities
Funding Models	Publicly funded (IRCC and/or P/Ts)	Cost-sharing between employers and government (includes IRCC as well as ESDC)	Social enterprise model, with potential government or community funding supports
Success Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screening participants with interest in sectors / occupations Strong linkages and continued buy-in from employers so clients attain paid employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of customized curriculum that meets both employee and employer needs Sustained employer commitment (funding, time-in-kind) Flexibility of training (online, onsite, offsite, etc.) Incorporation of native language during instruction Realistic expectations of learner progression for those with limited official language proficiency Mentoring and shadowing opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screening criteria for participants: interest in work in specific sector/occupation Employer commitment/viable social enterprise model
Sectors and Language Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicable to most skill levels & sectors including regulated occupations (project examples included specific target groups (e.g. women), language levels CLB 3+)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low to intermediate language levels in manufacturing, hospitality, agriculture, food processing (project examples included a range of language levels from literacy learners to CLB 7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupations requiring low language proficiency levels (project example required “basic” language skills, CLB 3+)