

Language discussion 2: Support for language learning

Agreeing on working language(s)

Agree on working language(s) ahead of the discussion. Make sure that everyone may use a language that allows them to express their opinions relatively easily. You can also agree on the use of language coordinators or voluntary interpreters in advance so that everyone can understand and be understood.

Working objectives

Discuss objectives that best suit your work community. Here are some suggestions:

The work community identifies the best means of supporting Finnish-learners, finds solutions to language learning problems, and identifies practical measures for implementing support for language learning. In addition, everyone identifies their most natural role for learning the language or supporting the learners.

Introduction to the topic

Language learning at work

What kind of language learning feels nice and meaningful to you? You can select multiple options.

- I learn the language best on a course under the guidance of a teacher.
- Independent study using online materials (such as YLE Kielikoulu) and self-study materials suits me well.
- I study the language myself using a textbook and a dictionary.
- I learn and practise the language by listening. I listen to music, podcasts, conversations, etc.
- I learn and practise the language by watching TV shows, movies, YouTube videos, etc.
- I learn and practise the language by reading (plain) news or headlines, magazines, texts in my own field, blogs, etc.
- I learn and practise the language by reading and writing in informal situations, such as WhatsApp messages and social media.
- I like language games and language applications, such as Wordle and Duolingo.
- I like learning language in social situations, for example while visiting a shop/café, talking to friends or clients, at work and in my free time.
- I like to experiment and use my existing language skills boldly in all situations.

Compare your answers in pairs and then in small groups. What kinds of language learners can be found in your work community?

Joint work

Answer the following questions depending on whether you are a language learner or a Finnish language expert.

Language learner: Which of the following would be most beneficial for your language learning at the workplace? Circle the options that best suit you (circle as many as you want).

- Language courses
- Using plain language
- Voluntary language buddy activities (leisure time activity)
- Language support at work (during working hours)
- Making the objectives of language learning visible: part of the employee performance review
- Rewards for language learning
- Monthly/weekly/daily language coffee breaks
- Regular language workshop (discussion and study circle on workplace communication scenarios, language and communication culture)
- Language learners' peer group
- Interpretation, translation of materials
- Multilingual meetings (linguistic flexibility in the work community, mixing languages)
- Self-study material
- "Language internship" in certain tasks (using Finnish, receiving feedback, reflection)

Finnish language expert: In what way could you offer language support to a colleague? Circle the options that best suit you (circle as many as you want).

- Voluntary language buddy activities (leisure time activity)
- Being a language coordinator at work (during working hours)
- Monthly/weekly/daily language coffee breaks
- Regular language workshop (discussion and study circle on workplace communication scenarios, language and communication culture)
- Interpretation, translation of materials
- Multilingual meetings (linguistic flexibility in the work community, mixing languages)
- The support of "language internship" in certain tasks (using Finnish, receiving feedback, reflection)
- Compiler and admin of the model answer bank curates a model answer bank that includes lists of words and phrases for challenging situations, frequent routine interactions, and interactions important for work tasks. (Where will the bank be compiled? Is it accessible to everyone? How will the bank be updated?)

Compare your answers in pairs or in small groups. Then discuss the support methods for language learning in small groups or together with the entire group.

Summary: Agreements and proposals

Compile five most useful support measures to promote at your workplace. What would be the next steps in implementing these support measures?