

- **Language and intercultural communication**

Intellectual Output 3: PPT 4, course material unit 2.1

● 2.1 Learning goal

The participants will be able to recognize challenges in intercultural communication and supportive strategies to manage language asymmetries in CGC



1.3 The process of learning a second language (Article 1)

the ability to link words to their meaning develops gradually:

We recognise words before understanding the meaning
incomplete picture of a word's meaning to start with

Research on multilingualism shows that it takes about:

1 to 2 years to develop a everyday language
6 and 8 years to master a subject language



Language in CGC conversations can be regarded as a subject language

Linguistic and emotional insecurity in communicating on a second language

● Language asymmetries – challenges in CGC

1. The uncertainty about understanding – (*"I can pretend to listen and smile and understand but in my body, in my brain, I'm thinking of something else."*)
2. Difficulty for migrant clients to express themselves
3. Advanced language in CGC - the conversation can create a "communicative burden". (Handout 2, T11, Career language and concepts)

● The intercultural dimension of a CGC conversation, 1

When we communicate with people who are very different from us, and who also have limited access to the language, we can run into difficulties concerning our conclusions about what other people mean and feel (Article 1).

- Cross-cultural stereotyping
- Communicative misunderstandings
- Interpretation of personality and intentions instead of communication style - "strange person"
- Difficulties to perceive "the person"

The intercultural dimension of a CGC conversation, 2

The counsellor's lack of personal experience of migration seems to affect the ability to understand when clients make the migrant position important in thoughts about the future (Article 1).

S It's good for me to do practice work, I feel better.

C So **the practice work** is a bit like what you feel and you get a job that feels good.

S Then **I'm into society**, with the people.

C If you do another year of Language Introduction course, do you think you would feel safer about doing the Social program? In that case would you be better, and not feel it was so difficult to take the Social program?



Research shows

counsellors might have difficulties to understand migrant clients' feelings and situation (use empathy)

Conclusions

- **Keep in mind that you may have difficulties in perceiving the feelings and circumstances of your clients**
- **Learn about migration conditions; emotional and cognitive aspects.**

● Basic communication tools to manage language asymmetries (Summary from article 1, 2, O2 report)

Conversational support

- Communication skills: paraphrasing and summarising
- Linguistic breaks
- Meta communication about language and the counselling process.
- Language openness, for example switching between languages

Clarity

- Clear language and adapted pace.
- Clarify and simplify choice situations.
- A clear framework regarding the CGC function
- Recurrent reconciliation of the client's understanding

● the question about language in CGC:

It is not only about assessing client's skill of the receiving country's language and coping with a setting of counselling where both partners speak different mother tongues. It's also about taking into account what being a beginning speaker of the receiving country's language means to the self-esteem of people, to the probability and effects of misunderstandings in every sphere of life (occupational and private), to ensuring the functionality of communication in counselling itself, in communication with network partners, in supporting measures, especially in training courses for clients, in the educational system and in the vocational system clients want to be integrated in.

Kohn (2017)

- It seems to be vital that the counsellor observes not only the language aspects of understanding but also that second-language speakers face the difficulty of making themselves understood with their own wishes, dreams and feelings about the future. Here, it is important for counsellors to notice when students make their migration experiences relevant for their future.

(Article 1)