

Course
Stepping Out
ENG P105-4

Presecondary



“To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.”

Anthony Robbins (1960 -)

Presentation of the Course *Stepping Out*

The goal of the course *Stepping Out* is to help adult learners use oral and written discourse to deal competently with real-life situations related to exploring employment and educational options.

This course develops adult learners’ language proficiency by involving them in a variety of listening, speaking, reading and writing activities that provide an opportunity to put language skills into practice when investigating job opportunities and educational options.

By the end of the course, adult learners will be able to understand and produce a range of informative and expressive texts related to employment and educational options. They will, for example, produce short, formal letters and simple résumés and keep notes and records. As well, they will be able to understand texts such as simple documentaries, job postings, newspaper inserts and short notices in order to obtain information and advice. They will be able to ask for and give information; express their needs, preferences and concerns; discuss their past employment and educational experiences and talk about their educational and professional long and short- term goals.

Dealing with Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are detailed in their respective rubrics.



Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

This course addresses a single class of situations: *Using language to explore employment and educational options.*

This class includes a wide range of real-life situations in which adult learners are required to ask for, obtain and give information, assistance and advice regarding employment and educational opportunities, either orally or in writing. Dealing competently with these situations requires familiarity with vocabulary related to employment and education. It also requires the ability to express interests, needs and concerns in an effective manner, make requests and understand oral and written texts that contain advice

and information regarding possibilities for employment and education.

Some examples of these real-life situations include exploring different job possibilities, finding out about required practices and procedures for submitting job applications, exploring different educational choices, and finding out about registration requirements and the possibility of obtaining government financial assistance.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Using language to explore employment and educational options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploring job possibilities ▪ Exploring job availability and demand ▪ Finding out about common tasks associated with different jobs ▪ Examining working conditions ▪ Volunteering in a work environment ▪ Examining qualifications required for different jobs ▪ Finding out about required practices and procedures for job applications ▪ Exploring course/training availability ▪ Exploring different educational offerings ▪ Finding out about registration requirements ▪ Finding out about government assistance

Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category across a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interacting orally to explore employment and educational options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asks for, obtains and gives information (e.g. regarding qualifications, working conditions, transcripts, attestations, school fees, courses, loans, bursaries) ▪ Asks for, obtains and gives assistance and advice (e.g. regarding career choice, course options) ▪ Expresses needs, concerns, preferences, interests (e.g. time restraints, finances, employee benefits, courses) ▪ Expresses thoughts and feelings (e.g. long- and short-term goals, hopes) ▪ Networks with friends/contacts (e.g. to learn about job opportunities, openings and requirements) ▪ Requests records and documents (e.g. regarding education, work experience, letters of reference) ▪ Requests assistance (e.g. from friends, job counsellors, Emploi Québec) ▪ Describes past work and school experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening to informative texts to explore employment and educational options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listens to recorded messages (e.g. regarding school matters, employment opportunities) ▪ Listens to videos (e.g. regarding interviewing skills, job search techniques) ▪ Listens to presentations (e.g. at open house information sessions, career fairs, government agencies) ▪ Listens to public announcements (e.g. at job fairs, employment agencies)

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading informative texts to explore employment and educational options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reads job postings (e.g. on web sites, in newspapers, on bulletin boards) ▪ Reads brochures, pamphlets, newspaper inserts (e.g. on educational programs, careers, interview tips) ▪ Reads notices (e.g. at employment agencies, guidance counsellors' offices, in newspapers) ▪ Reads web sites (job-postings) ▪ Reads letters and e-mails (e.g. reply, reference)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing informative and expressive texts to explore employment and educational options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writes lists (e.g. of schools, programs, courses, fees, skills, interests) ▪ Fills out forms (e.g. employment, registration, bursary/loan applications) ▪ Composes a simple résumé ▪ Writes short, formal letters, e-mails (e.g. application, thank you, request) ▪ Keeps records and logs (e.g. regarding potential job opportunities, completed applications) ▪ Writes journal entries (e.g. ambitions, hopes, fears)

Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course.

Class of Situations

Using language to explore employment and educational options

Categories of Actions

- Interacting orally to explore employment and educational options
- Listening to informative texts to explore employment and educational options
- Reading informative texts to explore employment and educational options
- Writing informative and expressive texts to explore employment and educational options

Operational Competencies

Communicates

- Determines a purpose for communicating
- Listens actively to the interlocutor
- Sustains conversation by responding suitably to the interlocutor's interventions
- Adapts language to the roles, status and needs of the audience
- Adapts language to the degree of formality of the situation

Acts methodically

- Uses pre-reading/listening/writing techniques to predict content and to explore and organize ideas
- Observes conventions for initiating, maintaining and closing the exchange
- Varies strategies, techniques and procedures while speaking listening, reading or writing according to purpose and type of discourse
- Systematically applies rules of grammar and syntax in creating and interpreting meaning

Essential Knowledge

- Types of discourse (informative and expressive)
- Discourse cues and features
- Speaking, listening, reading and writing strategies techniques and procedures
- The writing system
- Language functions
- Sociolinguistic features
- Grammar and syntax
- Vocabulary pertaining to employment and educational options

The end-of-course outcomes describe how adults make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal competently with the class of situations *Using language to explore employment and educational options*, adults use language resources to explore job opportunities and educational options. Whether they are speaking, listening, reading or writing, adults determine a purpose for communicating.

While interacting orally, adults use language to ask for, obtain and give information, assistance and advice as well as to express their needs, preferences and concerns related to employment and educational options. For example, they share their thoughts and feelings and discuss their interests and past experiences regarding employment and schooling. They discuss their short- and long-term goals, explaining the possible constraints they might experience. They may also network with friends and contacts, using speaking techniques such as reformulation and requesting repetition to ensure comprehension. They actively listen to their interlocutor, sustain conversation by responding suitably to their interlocutor's interventions and observe the appropriate conventions for initiating, maintaining and closing the exchange. They use discourse features such as transitional devices to ensure the comprehensibility of their communication.

They listen to informative discourse such as public announcements at job fairs or presentations at school information meetings, using prelistening techniques such as establishing a purpose to predict content. While listening they use techniques such as appealing to visual and auditory cues or asking for repetition. They attend to discourse cues such as key words and phrases and verbal features such as stress and intonation patterns. They read a variety of informative texts such as job postings, school brochures, newspaper inserts and pertinent web sites. They use prereading techniques such as surveying titles to predict content, and while reading, they use techniques such as rereading, pausing and making comparisons.

Adults also write a variety of informative and expressive texts using prewriting techniques such as free-writing to explore and organize ideas. For example, they write letters to request specific information, keep notes and records of their research, fill out application and registration forms, and keep journals to record their thoughts and feelings about their experiences exploring job opportunities and educational options. As they write, they apply techniques such as using formulas and models to guide the organization of their text. They correctly use features of the writing system such as spelling and punctuation and systematically apply rules of grammar and syntax in creating and interpreting meaning. Whether they are speaking, listening, reading or writing, adults constantly vary their strategies, techniques and procedures according to their purpose and the type of discourse. They respect the sociolinguistic features of discourse by adapting their language to the roles, status and needs of their audience as well as to the degree of formality of the situation. They also use vocabulary associated with employment and educational options.

Evaluation Criteria

- Interacts adequately in everyday situations using simple oral texts
- Understands simple, everyday oral texts adequately
- Reads simple, everyday texts adequately
- Writes simple, everyday texts adequately

Operational Competencies

The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations of this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competencies are addressed: *Communicates* and *Acts methodically*.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Communicates*

The operational competency *Communicates* is the capacity to express meaning intelligibly and to understand the meaning that is expressed by others. It is solicited in all real-life situations in which people exchange meaning and is linked to the class of situations *Using language to explore employment and educational options*.

Adult learners exercise their communicative competency by determining a purpose for communicating. When interacting orally, they listen actively to their interlocutor and sustain conversation by responding suitably to their interlocutor's interventions. At all times, they adapt their language to the roles, status and needs of their audience as well as to the degree of formality of the situation in order to achieve their communicative purposes in real-life situations related to exploring employment and educational options.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Acts Methodically*

The operational competency *Acts methodically* involves the effective identification, selection and use of appropriate strategies, techniques, procedures and rules in order to achieve a specific purpose. It is solicited in all real-life situations linked to the class of situations *Using language to explore employment and educational options*.

Adults act methodically when they use pre-reading/listening/or writing strategies, techniques, and procedures such as surveying titles, setting a purpose, mapping to predict content and explore and organize ideas. They vary their speaking, listening, reading and writing strategies, techniques and procedures according to their purpose and the type of discourse in the real-life situation concerned. These include speaking techniques such as rehearsing before making a routine request for information or assistance; and listening techniques such as taking notes while listening to presentations on employment opportunities or availability of courses; reading techniques such as rereading, pausing and making comparisons when consulting material related to educational options; and, writing techniques such as using models and formulas when writing letters of application or simple résumés. Acting methodically also involves observing conventions for initiating, maintaining and closing the exchange as well as systematically applying rules of grammar and syntax in creating and interpreting meaning.

Essential Knowledge

The essential knowledge for the presecondary level courses is found at the end of the presecondary courses.

Attitudes

The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults to become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

<p style="text-align: center;">Tolerance for ambiguity</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Perseverance</p>
<p>Tolerance for ambiguity involves the willingness to accept a degree of uncertainty or lack of clarity and to respond constructively. Such an attitude helps adult learners experience learning as positive rather than threatening. An adult learner who shows tolerance for ambiguity considers several perspectives when looking at a problem and uses different strategies to find solutions to specific language challenges.</p>	<p>Perseverance can be defined as persistent determination. Adults who persevere continue their language studies even though they may sometimes feel discouraged. They are committed to hard work. This attitude allows adults to learn from their mistakes and to purposefully participate in learning activities to increase their level of competency. Perseverance is a key attitude for the development of language and lifelong learning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Openness</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Respect</p>
<p>Adult learners manifest openness when they show interest in learning and accept new situations without making any assumptions based on values or beliefs. By questioning and challenging different interpretations and points of view, adults explore and integrate aspects of language in a variety of real-life situations in order to further develop their understanding of themselves and others. Openness empowers language learners to expand their cultural and linguistic horizons.</p>	<p>This attitude allows adults to construct language knowledge in a safe learning environment, one that encourages tolerance, acceptance, and common decency to all. It provides for concrete, practical outcomes that build and implement strategies for expanding and diversifying communication across new linkages with the workplace, the local community, and the wider environment.</p>

Complementary Resources

The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Community centres▪ Libraries▪ Educational institutions▪ Government agencies▪ Non-government agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Dictionaries▪ Thesauri▪ Glossaries▪ Grammar reference books▪ Other reference materials (e.g. encyclopaedias, maps, government documents)▪ Writing models▪ Web sites▪ Authentic teaching materials▪ Multimedia materials (print and non-print)

Andragogical Context

It is understood that for learning to take place, adults must perceive it as meaningful and relevant to their life. It is from this perspective that the English, Language of Instruction program of study has been developed. The content of the courses in the program has been organized around the real-life situations of the learners. Consequently, in order to make learning concrete and useful, all learning situations are based on these real-life situations.

Learning situations target the construction of the essential language knowledge and the development of the operational competencies necessary to deal competently with real-life situations. Adults develop these operational competencies with the help of the teacher who calls particular attention to the significant actions associated with them by engaging the adults in meaningful speaking, listening, reading and writing activities. As a result, adults build essential knowledge, solicit the appropriate operational competencies for the given real-life situation, and reflect upon their learning, the strategies used, the reinvestment and transformation of their existing knowledge and the attitudes adopted.

In this learning context, teachers play the role of facilitator, mediator and guide. They establish a safe learning environment for adult learners where mutual respect and trust create a climate conducive to learning. With the support of the teacher, adult learners share responsibility for their learning. They define their learning needs, taking into consideration their existing knowledge and experience. Emphasis is placed on the learning process used to construct the essential language knowledge and to develop the operational competencies. It is therefore important that the learning situation be

linked to the needs of the adult learners. By participating in the learning situation that is linked to a real-life situation, adult learners perceive the relevance of their learning to their life, which in turn stimulates their motivation and involvement.

The learning situation occurs in the adult's place of learning. It is not specific to the needs of a particular adult; rather it is sufficiently open and global to allow all adults to explore important aspects of language related to dealing competently with the real-life situation. Throughout the learning situation, teachers observe the adult learners in action, whether they are in small or large group discussions or interacting with peers. They guide and advise them on the appropriate strategies for constructing the necessary resources and give specific instruction to individuals and groups as needed. The teacher encourages the learners to make links between new knowledge and existing knowledge, and to reflect on and evaluate their learning process and the degree to which they have developed their competencies. At the presecondary level, an example of a learning situation is provided in the course *Lifestyle Options*. It demonstrates the possible interaction between a teacher and learner(s) and the integration of the compulsory elements pertinent to the learning situation.

The courses in the English, Language of Instruction program of study are especially designed to promote adult learners' active participation in their own learning. It encourages them to develop their autonomy by providing them with the opportunity to build the language skills required to function competently in real-life situations.

