

What enhances or inhibits communication between Poles and Norwegians in workplace interaction?

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A project on second-language communication in workplace settings in the case of Polish migrants in Norway (NorPol) financed by the Research Council of Norway is currently going on (the period of 2020-2024) at the University of Oslo.

Poles are the largest migrant group in Norway (between 100 000 and 200 000 depending on different statistics and estimates) and are employed in all types of professions at the Norwegian labour market, most often in construction works and service. The aim of the project is to examine the interaction between Poles and Norwegians in workplaces that have been less investigated until now, i.e. as physicians, architects, kindergarten ladies, yoga and MMA instructors and more (some of the aspects of the Poles' communication in other professions, as e.g. construction work, are already investigated, cf. Kraft 2017, Urbanik 2020, 2021).

The aim of the project is to find out (1) which types of linguistic practices are especially challenging for Polish L2 speakers of Norwegian, (2) what are the characteristics of Poles' L2 Norwegian, and (3) to what extent do different stereotypes of Poles and Norwegians affect negotiations of legitimacy and agency in interaction. At the same time, the project intends to identify and explain communication styles and linguistic patterns when the Poles use their L2 in and across professional settings, to evaluate which factors account for (un)successful communication in L2, to examine the communicative interplay between Polish migrants and their Norwegian interlocutors, and to extend knowledge about the character of intercultural interactions across professional settings. Hopefully, the results can also help to suggest implementation of the findings in future Norwegian L2 training.

The talk will focus on presenting the data sources, the findings, and the experiences made in the project so far and a special attention will be given to the results from two very different groups of informants, physicians and sport instructors.

References:

- Kamilla Kraft. 2017. *Constructing migrant workers: Multilingualism and communication in the transnational construction site*. PhD dissertation. Oslo: University of Oslo.
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- Urbanik, Pawel Kazimierz. 2021. "Directives in the construction site: Grammatical design and work phases in second language interactions with crane operators." *Journal of Pragmatics*. vol. 178:43–67.