

Some strategies that are especially useful for ESL workers are:

- Using authentic language in the workplace.
- Placing the learning in workplace and other adult contexts relevant to the lives of learners, their families, and friends.
- Using visual stimuli for language learning, where appropriate, and progressing from visual to text-oriented material. While effective for all language learners, this progression taps into the natural learning strategies of low-literate individuals who often use visual clues in place of literacy skills.
- Emphasising paired and group work, because learners acquire language through interaction with others on meaningful tasks in meaningful contexts. It also sets the stage for teamwork in the workplace.
- Adopting a whole language orientation-integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing-to reflect natural language use.
- Choosing activities that help learners transfer what they learn in the classroom to the worlds in which they live.
- Treating the learning of grammar as a discovery process, with a focus on understanding the rules for language only after learners have already used and internalised the language. In this way, grammar is not a separate part of the curriculum, but rather is infused throughout.
- Integrating new cultural skills with new linguistic skills. Learners acquire new language and cultural behaviours appropriate to the U.S. workplace, and the workplace becomes a less strange and frightening environment.

## Some other suggestions

- At one worksite, learners trying to speak English at team meetings reported being laughed at by native English-speaking co-workers for demonstrating non-native like pronunciation. Additionally, one's co-workers who speak the same native language may also apply pressure to continue to use the native language rather than English on the job. Educate everyone about the process of learning a second language and adopt a policy of "English and only English on the job"
- Educators report the value of using "shock language" classes (a short lesson taught entirely in a language unknown to anyone in the room except the instructor) with employers to give them a brief introduction to what foreign-born workers face in an English-speaking environment (Schrage, 1997). Giving natives-speaking co-workers a shock-language experience could also increase their understanding of the complexity of learning a new language and might make them more supportive of the immigrant workers' attempts to try out new language and behaviours on the job. Such encouragement might also make the immigrant workers more willing to use their new learning on the job.