



Supporting the learning of local languages



Inkeri Lehtimaja 9.6.2023
Erasmus Staff Training Days /
Integration and inclusion of international staff



Challenges for multilingual universities

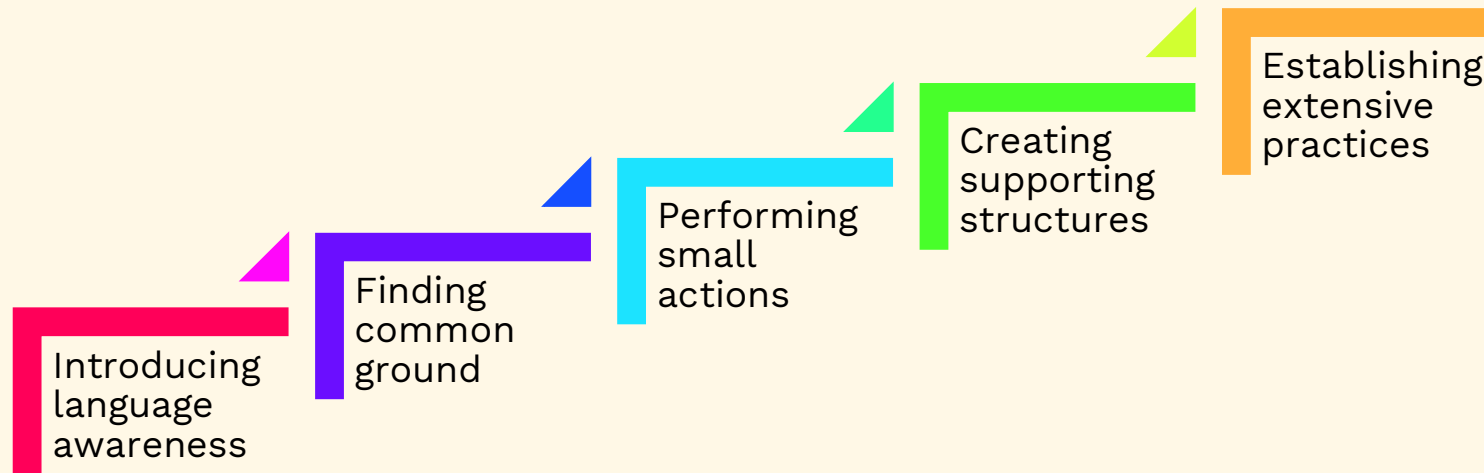
- Internationalisation, mobility
- Securing participation of all members of the community



- Maintaining the role of national languages
- Supporting language learning of international students and staff (integration, employment)

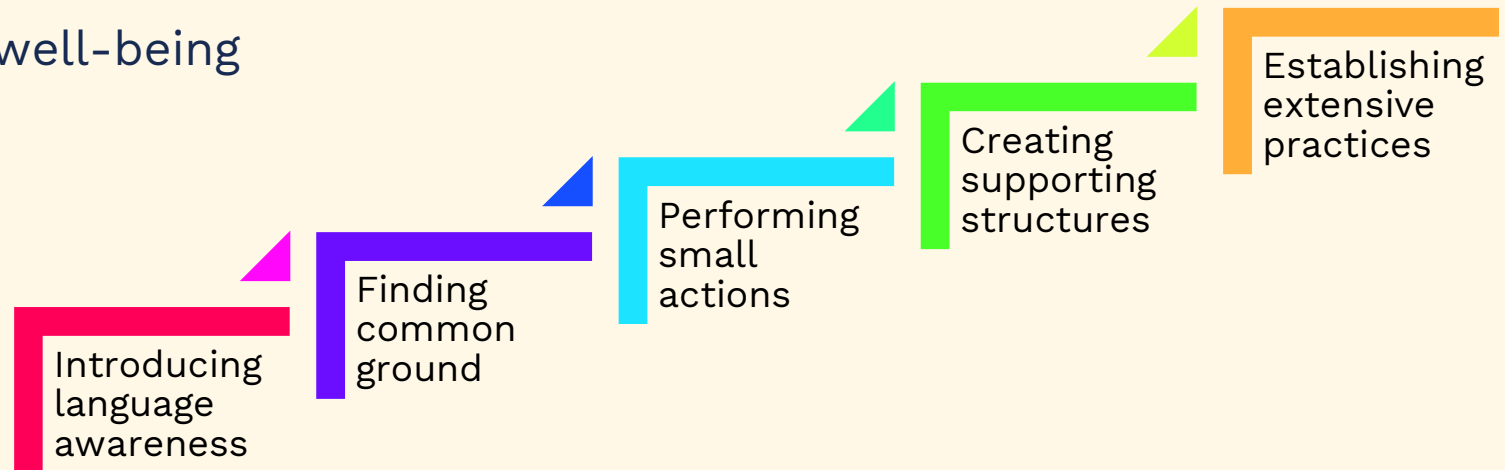
Steps toward a language-aware workplace


- A tool for evaluating and developing language practices
- A tailored solution for each workplace



Key principles

- Language learning is a shared responsibility, not an individual's task
- Language-aware structures support work itself, language learning and well-being





Introducing language awareness

- No supporting structures or resources for enhancing multilingualism / language learning
 - No systematic knowledge of the situations or needs of the employees
 - External language courses as a solution for language learning
 - A need for change arises: e.g. changing situation, dissatisfaction with current practices
- E.g. inviting an external expert on language awareness



Finding common ground

- Discussing language issues
 - "Linguistic map": language backgrounds and skills
 - Identifying needs, wishes, problems
- E.g. a discussion led by an external facilitator
- A plan for developing language practices
- Voluntary "language contracts" between individuals?



Performing small actions

- Keeping the door open for the local language
 - Making language learning visible
- Some common practices, e.g.:
- Agreeing on the working language(s) in the beginning of meetings
 - Parallel language use in routine situations
 - Regular social occasions for practising
 - Teams channel for language questions



Creating supporting structures

- Investing resources on multilingual practices and language learning
 - Tailored language courses / language workshops during working hours
 - Trained peer language mentors at the workplace
 - Language learning discussed in performance appraisals, support for achievement of goals



Establishing extensive practices

- Documentation of language policy
- Language issues taken into account in recruitment and orientation
- Language skills and language work is recognised (professional competence)
- Language recognised as part of well-being at work

Toward a workplace, where...

- The competences are recognised regardless of language skills
- Employees can develop their language skills
- Language issues are discussed in an open and constructive way
- Language(s) can be used in a safe atmosphere

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Kiitos! Thank you! Tack!

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