



L2 NURSING TRAINEES IN HOSPITAL

Learning professional language in interaction

Inkeri Lehtimaja, Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE

Professional language skills require handling multifaceted communication situations at the workplace, which is a major challenge for L2 nurses (Malthus, Holmes & Major 2005).

Workplace training is a key moment for evaluating and learning professional language skills. This study examines what kind of professional language learning situations the supervised hospital encounters are for a L2 nursing trainee.

CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Language learning happens in interaction when new topics and activities create new needs and afford the use of new resources, and over time, this leads to increasing fluency (Firth & Wagner 2007). New needs become visible when there is a gap of knowledge revealed and made relevant in interaction. The sharing and appropriation of new resources can be studied with conversation analysis. These moments are an opportunity for language learning, even if the participants orient to the main activity, not the language.

DATA

The data of this study consist of 2,5 hours of video-recorded supervision encounters on a hospital ward in Finland. The training is part of either nursing studies or new employee orientation.

SHARING AND APPROPRIATING RESOURCES IN INTERACTION

1. Supervisor's advice

S: ja sit se kannattaa aina vähä (.)
and then it's good always a bit (.)
potilas ↑**tarkistaa** että on oikea mies,
the patient **to check** that it's the right man

- Supervisor reveals a gap in trainee's knowledge
- Supervisor gives advice about what should be done

2. Linguistic models

S: että vaikka sä- et **kerro** vaikka
so even if you- so **tell** for example
syntymäaika meille ni,
the **birthday** for us so
T: joo ei ***kerro** vaan niinku
yeah no **tell** just like
*T turns to P
sun, (.) **syntymä, aika**
your (.) **birth day**

- Supervisor offers a linguistic model
- Trainee modifies and recontextualizes the model

3. Trainee's questions

T: ja ↑**miks**. (0.3) hän tarvi kaks.
and **why** (0.3) he needs two
S: se on ihan siel **leikkurissa** ku hänet
it's just **in the theatre** when he
on nukutettu, et jos he joutuu
has been anaesthetized so if they have to
laittaan **vikon** vaikka toiseen käteen
put **a viggio** for example in one hand

- Trainee asks for information
- Supervisor gives an explanation to trainee in specialized language

4. Recycling

T: ja tää o vaan vo- niinku
and this is only like
varmuuden vuoksi jos **ne** laita niinku
just in case if **they** put like
toinen niinku **kanyyli** tai jotain
another like **cannula** or something

- Trainee recycles the information
- Trainee gives an explanation to patient in standard language

CONCLUSIONS

The supervisor's turns are resources for the trainee, available in interaction. There are different ways of offering and seeking for support in supervision situations. Language, practical tasks and professional knowledge are intertwined, and language learning cannot be separated from learning the practical work. The examples show how the trainee learns to perform new tasks with language. This can be considered as professional language learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The supervisors can support professional language learning during training through:

- Identifying needs (language awareness)
- Giving opportunities for the trainee to rehearse in advance
- Offering linguistic models
- Giving opportunities to use the language in real situations and giving support if needed
- Giving feedback and opportunities for reflection about language issues

REFERENCES

- Firth, Alan & Wagner, Johannes 2007. Second / Foreign Language Learning as a Social Accomplishment: Elaborations on a Reconceptualized SLA. *The Modern Language Journal* 91:5, 800–819.
- Malthus, Caroline – Holmes, Janet & Major, George 2005. Completing the circle: Research-based classroom practice with EAL nursing students. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics* 11:1, 65–89.