

Linguistic and communicative requirements in vocational education and training

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Abstract

The objective of the research project of BIBB is to investigate the linguistic and communicative (l-c) requirements trainees have to manage at the two learning venues of the German dual system of vocational education and training (VET). We will specify what trainees have to read, write, speak/talk and listen. Contextual, situational conditions and personal factors that influence the l-c requirements are to be revealed as well. A broad, explorative approach is applied. We use documentary analyses, participant observation and qualitative interviews to detect l-c requirements of three occupations of different branches. The analyses of curricula regulating VET demonstrate that the documents contain multiple, but vague information about l-c requirements. The investigation is still going on.

Introduction

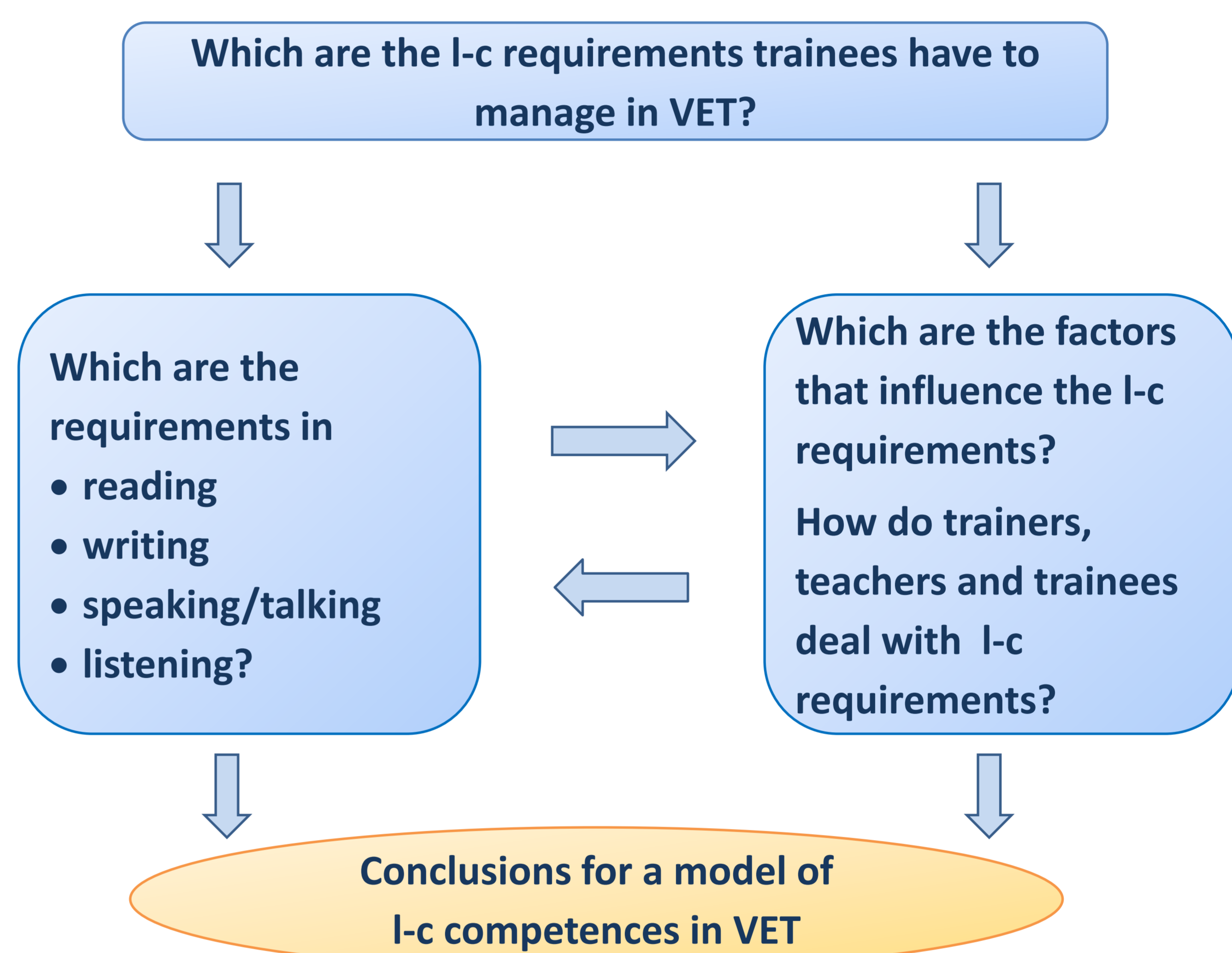
Linguistic and communicative competences are highlighted as a key-competence that individuals need for personal fulfillment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. In education, training and profession l-c competences are fundamental for learning and communication in the workplace. However, VET research focuses mainly on particular issues, e.g. on reading at work or on specific communicative situations like conversation with costumers to sell a product. Up to now there is little research on l-c requirements bringing together all the four aspects mentioned above and their influencing factors in different training occupations. We focus on the requirements to outlining a model of the l-c competences. Here l-c competences are regarded as the ability using language appropriately in oral and written forms at work and VET-school.

Objectives

- to reveal the oral and written requirements trainees have to manage at part-time vocational schools and companies
- to identify factors influencing the l-c requirements
- to explore how trainees, trainers, and teachers deal with l-c requirements

Analysed training occupations

- Motor vehicle mechatronics technician
- Medical assistant
- Management assistant for retail services

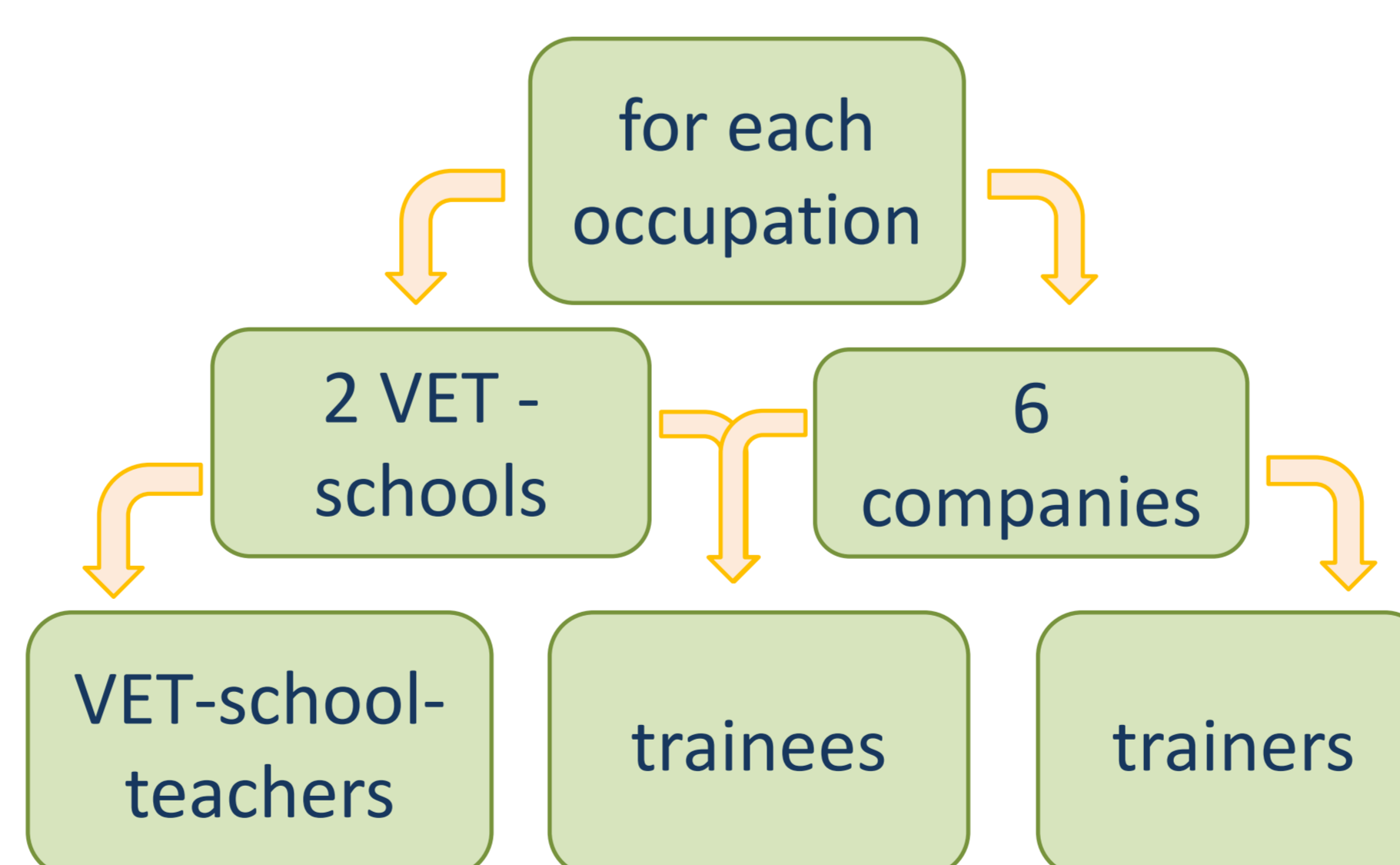


Research assumptions

- In VET trainees have to cope with diverse l-c requirements depending on
 - occupation-specific content and activities → For each occupation a profile can be condensed.
 - contextual, situational and personal factors → L-c requirements vary.
 Although there are occupation-specific l-c requirements, requirements vary within a training occupation as well as between training occupations.
- The importance attached to language and communication competence in the company and VET-school differs. In companies little attention is paid to language skills or shortcomings while in VET-schools targeted activities are initiated to develop l-c competences.

Method

- A multi-method-design is applied:
- documentary analyses of current literature and of VET-curricula
 - participant observation in training companies and VET-schools
 - qualitative interviews with trainees, trainers and VET-schoolteachers



Results

- The *documentary analyses* of the VET curricula show:
- They contain multiple cues to l-c requirements. Trainees have to, e.g.
 - organize work by planners,
 - document the results of their work,
 - give advices to customers and patients.
 - Most of the cues are vague, e.g.
 - Discrimination between oral and written requirements is hardly possible.
- VET documentary analyses are a first step. The results have to be complemented by participant observation and qualitative interviews.

References:

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BIBB research project: Linguistic and communicative requirements in vocational education and training (01/2013 - 03/2015): www.bibb.de/sk-anforderungen
SKiBB – Sprache und Kommunikation in der Beruflichen Bildung (www.berufsbildungssprache.de)

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