these usually require much higher levels of education. In addition, there is concern about the unnecessarily high level of language requirements set by employers, on the one hand, and, on the other, employees’ and researchers’ assessment of what language abilities are needed.

In the UK, in particular, ESOL in the workplace is under-researched almost to the point of non-existence and this reflects the very low level of provision over the last fifteen years. There are, however, important lessons to be learnt from North America and Australia.

Main elements of research

This review includes research from countries where English is the dominant language and where multilingual workforces are commonplace: the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Sources from the following categories have been consulted:

- Academic research literature
- Government and employer reports
- Communications audits and evaluation reports produced by employers, unions and educationists.

References and further reading


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The full report will be available from 31 July 2003 in PDF and Word formats from NRDC’s website at www.nrdc.org.uk

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