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Linguistic Abilities: From Workplace Situations to Training

To say that work is changing considerably from now on, is less than obvious. Among the numerous restructurings that can be observed, one will be studied here: the restructuring of linguistic activity, both oral and written, of the agents of work.

The linguistic dimension of work, or the linguistic part of work, has been the object of numerous analyses and descriptions within the group "Language and Work". We will evoke some of the workplace situations studied by the group in order, on the one hand, to show the different levels where language activity occurs (within Taylorian organizations as well as within newer forms of work organizations) and, on the other hand, in order to highlight the emergence of new abilities in language: abilities to communicate orally, as well as written abilities. Among the numerous questions which this passage from writing to communication of nearly all salaried workers raises, two will be addressed here:

- What kinds of (sociolinguistic) analyses can be proposed from this rise in the strength of linguistic abilities in the workplace?
- How can training institutions respond to this evolution and prepare the salaried workers of the future (all the while being confronted with the rise in illiteracy)?