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Guidelines for  
educators/trainers and  
training providers  
on how to implement  
non-formal learning  
activities  
in the language  
provision to  
migrants/refugees

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1

Framework

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## About the guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to advise educators/trainers and/or training providers on implementing non-formal learning activities in the language provision to migrants/refugees. The objective is to provide guidance and ideas on how and what they can implement with individuals or groups of migrants/refugees in terms of nonformal learning language activities.

### 1. The Framework

In order to provide a framework for these guidelines, we will present, in simplified form, some concepts and considerations that should be taken into account.

#### 1.1. Migrant/refugee motivation to learn languages

In order to develop a programme for the learning of the host country's language for migrants/refugees we need to understand what motives lie behind language learning. Acquiring the language spoken in the host country is a prerequisite for any other activity and facilitates the daily life of the target group in many ways. The reasons why a migrant/refugee decides to attend a language programme vary widely, but the most important ones are as follows:

- To seek, obtain, and maintain a good job.
- To meet their daily needs.
- Socialising and participating in social life.
- Becoming active citizens.
- Supporting their children and other family members.
- Multicultural exchange.
- Mental health.
- Further training.
- Successful achievement of the objectives (Beacco, J. 2014).

## 1.2 Characteristics of migrants/refugees as learners

Migrant/refugee adults have specific characteristics derived from their identities as adults and migrants.

Adults:

- are used to being in control of their learning.
- They draw on life experiences as they learn.
- their learning orientation is task-related or/and problem-centred.
- have many roles and responsibilities.
- are ready to learn what they need to know to deal effectively with life situations.
- have busy lives, often combining learning with work and other commitments, including caregiving and family responsibilities.

Migrant adults:

- have considerably different language skills. Linguistic heterogeneity is much more substantial among migrants - because they have extremely different language biographies, depending on their first language(s) in the country of origin, other languages they have used, and the language level in the host society.
- come from war-affected countries and have often experienced trauma, tragedy, persecution, and prolonged stay in transit camps.
- want to learn things quickly and specifically that will make their daily lives easier.
- require practice within the classroom and are not very willing to have homework.
- are more aware of the reasons why they enter a learning process, but this does not mean that they really want to learn.
- are used to formal learning methods and can be suspicious when they first try non-formal learning methods.
- are usually less patient and are more easily disappointed if they do not see immediate results.

### 1.3 Distinction between Formal, Non-formal, and Informal education

At this point, it is helpful to give an overview of the distinction between formal, non-formal, and informal education.

Formal education:

- Usually accompanied by adjacent rules and regulations
- Based on a hierarchical and chronologically designed structure
- Deterministic design of curriculum and resources
- Planned and deliberate grading and assessment system
- Subject-oriented and topic-based
- Information is validated and taught by professional and certified teachers.

Non-formal education:

- Oriented towards a specific outcome
- Occurs outside the formal education system and is complementary to it
- Flexibility (age, curriculum, and time)
- Organized process but usually learning outcomes are not formally assessed
- It aims to effectively rescue essential values for the formation of citizens who are protagonists of their own lives, bringing to them the practice of citizenship, social apprehension, professionalization, school reinforcement, and sociocultural dimension, among others
- Diplomas and certificates are not essential

Informal education:

- A lifelong process and a natural way
- Free of formalities, rules, and regulations
- It does not have a defined programme or curriculum
- It is independent of any set of spaces or specific people

- Is not planned in advance and does not have a particular timeframe
- It can occur from any source, such as the media, life experiences, friends, family, etc.

#### 1.4 Specific features of non-formal education

- **Learner Focus:** In non-formal education, the learner is at the center of the learning process. Learners' perspectives should be heard and respected and bottom-up approaches should be followed.
- **Learning by doing:** In non-formal education, the focus is on concrete doing and not on learning theory. Learning, most of the time comes from what learners do and not from what the educator does or says.
- **Learning as peers:** Non-formal education is based on active methods of cooperation and dynamic group processes. Educators/trainers and learners are partners in a learning process in which they assume different roles and responsibilities.
- **Active participation of learners:** In non-formal education, learners should be active cells in the process.
- **Close to real-life concerns:** Non-formal educational activities should be as close as possible to the real-life concerns of the learners. The whole process should help learners to understand clearly how learning will benefit them personally, socially, and professionally.
- **Decision-making is democratic:** In non-formal education, all decisions should be taken democratically with the participation of all parties involved.
- **Self-evaluation:** One of the main aspects of non-formal education is that learners acquire knowledge through experimentation and self-reflection. Learners should be actively involved, share responsibility in the evaluation process, and provide regular feedback.
- **Variety of learning techniques:** Non-formal education is interactive, activity-based, and experiential, linking individual and group learning. Different learning styles - visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic - are addressed through a contiguous variety of learning approaches.



- Flexible curriculum: Non-formal education is not based on a curriculum that has to be strictly followed. The curriculum, when it exists, is very flexible and is being adapted to the needs and interests of the specific learners each time, before the educational activity and during the activity.

### 1.5 Competencies of the educators/trainers in non-formal education

Carrying out non-formal education is a really challenging task and it becomes even more challenging when migrant/refugee adults are the learners. For an educator/trainer in non-formal education to handle the agenda in the best possible way and to effectively serve the different roles assigned to him/her, it is important to have or develop some particular competences and skills. In fact, the educator/trainer becomes an intermediary, an adviser, and a mobilizer. It is she/he who reinforces the learners in order to develop their competencies. According to the booklet "Non-formal Pathways in Language Teaching", these are the characteristics a teacher/trainer should possess if she/he is to engage in non-formal teaching.

Firstly, a fundamental and essential characteristic that a teacher/trainer must have is to be communicative and friendly. Creating a pleasant and friendly atmosphere is the first step. A good communicator is a good listener who pays close attention to what the students say and responds appropriately. Of course, besides verbal communication based on language, communication is also non-verbal. A relaxed and open attitude and a friendly tone help learners to feel more comfortable, even subconsciously. In this way, the learner feels that he or she is being appreciated, and it is more possible to be more open and express needs or to be encouraged to participate more in the learning process.

The ability to take up intercultural discourse, accept diversity, reflect critically, and distance oneself from stereotypical perceptions and views is essential for an educator/trainer in non-formal education and migrant classes. A successful educator/trainer embodies respect for others and cultural awareness and can manage discriminatory experiences through effective intervention among learners.

The educator/trainer must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the learning theories central to non-formal education and the principles governing their application. She/he must be able to reflect and integrate the values and principles underlying non-formal education into educational activities. In addition, she/he should be familiar with a variety of non-formal techniques, be able to use them effectively, and choose appropriate ones based on learners and educational objectives.

The abilities to effectively assess learning needs and set learning objectives are crucial, while organising each activity in advance and being able to foresee obstacles or misunderstandings are also very important.

The educator/trainer must be creative to provide appealing, appropriate and effective educational materials that can attract learners' attention while achieving educational goals. As a result, an essential skill is to be creative and think outside the box.

Flexibility and adaptability are key for the educator/trainer in a non-formal learning environment. Heterogeneity is certain, so one should be able to make changes and adjust in different situations. In non-formal learning, there are people of different ages, cultures, and backgrounds. Therefore the use of methods and techniques based on reaction and interaction always gives unpredictable results.

The educator/trainer needs facilitation skills to create the process, adjust it, keep it moving in the right direction and, most importantly, keep people connected to it. She/he must be able to keep the course focused and moving and ensure learners' participation.

The educator/trainer must skilfully help the learners to understand their common objectives and that through collaboration the team will increase their performance. To achieve something like this, the educator/trainer must promote the idea of acceptance and be willing to accept the fact that everybody is different and that this is not an obstacle or something terrible.

With the exception of group learning and teamwork, the teacher/trainer must be able to support individual learning processes, support learners in identifying and pursuing their learning needs and styles, support learners in overcoming barriers in their learning process, and explain the different dimensions of learning.

The educator/trainer must be open to new knowledge, capable of critically distancing him/her from his/her role fixation, and willing and ready to take on new roles.

Non-formal education is open, participative, and free. The teacher/trainer should be able to create space for interaction and participation and be ready to accept different opinions and thoughts.

Educators/trainers should be able to effectively use and incorporate ICT sources in the educational process. At the same time, they should be able to provide learners with online and innovative materials and resources.

Being able to promote democratic and inclusive practices, build trusting relationships, create inclusive environments, and identify and combat oppressive attitudes, behaviors and situations are necessary skills for working effectively with multicultural groups in a non-formal setting.

The trainer needs to be aware of situations that can provide learning experiences, able to analyze different needs and learning styles, and apply appropriate educational approaches and methods.

The teacher/trainer needs the ability to apply appropriate evaluation methods and to use any evaluation results effectively for the improvement of the educational programme.

The teacher/trainer must have the willingness to resolve conflicts, read and understand conflict situations, refrain from accusations and generalizations, and see an argument from various perspectives.

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**2**

**Non-formal  
learning  
methods/  
techniques**

## 2. Non formal learning methods/techniques

The presentation of these methods and techniques can be done in various ways, so we have chosen to present them based on the booklet developed within the project "Incorporate non-formal Methods into Language Education for Immigrants" called: "Non-formal Pathways in Language Teaching".

### 2.1. Based on dialogue and verbal communication

This category includes samples of techniques based on oral communication among learners to promote learning and acquire new knowledge. When using dialogue and verbal communication with non-formal education, the educator/trainer must be aware of the skills and language limits of learners as this kind of technique requires a basic knowledge of a language or the use of complete grammar structures.

#### a) Roleplaying

It is a widespread technique used to simulate a real situation to practice concrete vocabulary or grammar structures. Learners receive different roles that they need to play to learn by experience, with the use of the knowledge acquired in previous parts of their learning process. Within non-formal education, this is a quite useful technique to practice second languages, but also an excellent tool to promote empathy among learners by providing them roles that are far from their personality, culture, status, or social behaviour.

#### b) Brainstorming

It is a technique based on sharing information and freeway ideas related to a concrete topic or obstacle proposed. Its main aim is to promote learners' creativity by problem-solving while they train their imagination and group consciousness. One of the main aims of the process is to teach learners how to expose ideas and compare them with others'

points of view to establish strategies to act and avoid the frustration or blocking that a creative process can produce.

### **c) Human libraries**

It is a technique based on interviewing but with very specific characteristics. Human libraries are spaces in which people with something to tell about an issue (normally because they have a wide life experience or knowledge on it) are invited to share it with others: They are called “human books”. “Human books” can be demanded in this kind of space by “readers” or people who aim to know more about a concrete topic, culture, historical period, etc. During a non-formal learning process, this is an excellent technique to allow learners not only to acquire new knowledge but also to invite them to act as “human books” to practice a new language, how to speak in public, and how to organize their stories, etc.

### **d) Language/culture tandem**

We define it as a tandem dialogue between two people with a common interest and who aim to exchange points of view or information about it. According to this, language tandem is a technique in which two people from different cultural backgrounds want to learn about the language and culture of the other empirically. Even if this technique demands that learners have linguistic competencies in several languages, it is an excellent non-formal way to learn not only about communication and improve listening skills, but also to discover peculiarities about a culture, its story, traditions, and those living in it.

### **e) Debate**

It is a communicative act for expressing opposed ideas that promote a discussion about an open topic among two or more people. It aims to expose ideas and postures by using arguments to reason them. Debates are a perfect non-formal technique to acquire new knowledge and competencies related to speaking and listening skills (E.g. speaking in public, sharing feelings, exchanging points of view, planning strategies, etc.).

### **f) Speed dating**

It is an easy technique based on promoting the exchange of information among learners about a topic, problem to solve, or just to get to know each other (it can be conducted in pairs or groups). The difference with interviews or tandems is that learners are sitting face to face at a table but they only have a very short period to obtain the information that they need (E.g. 5 minutes). Thanks to this technique, learners learn about each other and practice on how to synthesize or express ideas directly.

### **g) Storytelling**

It is the art of telling a story or tale by speech. What is shared can be planned but also improvised, which makes it a very good tool in terms of non-formal education as it can improve oral skills but also other ones such as improvisation or creativity.

## **2.2. Based on drama, body language, and physical expression**

Drama, theatre, mimicry, and body language have become very useful techniques when dealing with non-formal education as they suppose the use of a wide variety of communication channels or codes. Techniques based on drama can promote, depending on their complexity, very different competencies or skills in terms of communication, reading comprehension, pronunciation, interaction among participants, empathy, sharing social realities, speaking in public, intercultural understanding, etc.

### **a) Imitation or mimic**

It is the most basic technique in the theatre field. The idea is to use the body and not the language skills to share or show reality or its elements and try to transmit it to others. Besides concrete activities based on this technique, mimicking or gestures are excellent support for verbal communication and quite useful when the educator/trainer or the learners have very different linguistic skills as it reinforces visually the message that it is supposed to be transferred.

## **b) Shadows theatre**

It is based on the use of optical effects achieved by combining lights, shadows, and shapes or silhouettes made out of a malleable material (E.g. carton, cardboard, wood, etc.). It is a very useful technique as although its implementation is quite simple, the visual results obtained are extremely rich, which helps to awaken and promote the imagination, fantasy, and creativity of both performers and the audience. It allows sharing stories, exercising oral communication, learning about new realities, or promoting project-oriented learning processes with a common goal to encourage synergies and cooperation among the learners (to develop a shadow play).

## **c) Dancing and music**

The use of music and dance is a didactic and integrative technique that promotes human capacities that cannot be developed by other learning approaches such as rhythm, coordination, body expression, or movement.

### **2.3. Based on the use of new technologies**

This category contains techniques whose main aspect in common is the use of new technologies to provide an added value to the non-formal learning process. According to this, it brings together ways of learning that are supported by devices that allow the learners to 1) discover new concepts or express their ideas, 2) acquire competencies related to these technologies that are also needed in learners' real life (E.g. typing, using the internet, record videos, fill in documents online, etc.)

Besides the mentioned values, the use of new technologies adapted to the learners' skills can increase the efficiency of the learning process, generate new dialogues and develop critical thinking. It also prepares learners for the use of equipment and devices that are present in all the fields of everyday life in Western societies.



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#### **a) Movie or short movie**

Creating a movie provides learners with a new way to express ideas, stories, or personal experiences in a very visual way. It requires learners to develop a common result or product that implies an appropriate preparation and to coordinate very different logistic aspects such as equipment, scenarios, casting, edition, production, etc.

#### **b) Digital Storytelling**

Digital storytelling is a new term and technique, which describes the practice of everyday people telling a story or presenting an idea by using digital tools. A digital story can combine many different formats and it can be interactive. It can be a very useful and entertaining tool to enhance learners' learning experiences.

#### **c) Radio program**

It is also a quite good technique if we aim to teach or improve learners' competencies in writing, reading, or speaking but in a new format than the one used in the class and avoid boredom. Besides learning how to use all the equipment related to a radio station, learners

are provided with a new channel to share their experiences or thoughts to a community while they contribute to it by entertaining or informing its citizens.

#### **d) Blogging**

Writing a blog (private or public) is a technique that can be easily implemented as a complement to a learning process. Even if learners must be trained before using a blog (there are lots of booklets online about this issue), it provides them with an attractive tool that not only allows them to write but also to support their stories or text with images or videos. It is a technique that learners can use at home to practice and improve their writing, vocabulary, and grammar and apply the knowledge regularly acquired in the class (E.g. in a language course, learners can use this system to reinforce their linguistic skills and notice the weaknesses that they can have in a language to solve them).

#### **e) Online platforms:**

The Internet is crowded with websites full of information and online platforms with exercises to practice online about different issues (especially language). According to this, inviting learners to make online research about a topic or providing them links to specific sites to practice, can reinforce their learning process outside of the class while they learn how to use new technologies.

### **2.4. Based on the use of board games**

Board games are those that are traditionally based on the use of counters that move through a board organized concretely. Traditionally created as leisure time entertainment, each board game has its own rules and instructions that players should follow to play it properly. Depending on the aim of each board game, it will promote the use of different skills in its players such as logical thinking, deductive capacity, memory, etc.

### **a) Block Construction**

They are games whose main goal is to build a structure or object by stacking, fitting together, and combining blocks (normally made out of plastic or wood). The constructions to be done can have a concrete form and instructions to be built or abstract concepts that players can create by combining the blocks in a freestyle way and according to their criteria. It is a technique that not only develops the fine motor abilities of users but also other cognitive ones such as creativity, imagination, or physical-spatial intelligence. As blocks normally have different colours, sizes, and geometrical forms, it is an excellent tool for those language learners with basic knowledge as they can learn those words related to these fields while using blocks to express their ideas or show points of view about how an object can be seen.

### **b) Quizzes**

They are games in which players or teams have to give answers to different kinds of questions to evaluate or measure the knowledge that they have about concrete topics in terms of culture, sports, personality, history, vocabulary, etc. They can offer questions with no answer options (that must be guessed by players) or multiple choice solutions among which the players must choose. The topic to ask about can be easily modified by the educators and related to their goals questions should be included (E.g. about vocabulary in a second language or how to conjugate a verb). Besides being suitable to learn about general concepts in a concrete field, they are also good to improve competencies such as concentration, memory, rapidity, mental agility or just studying the role of each player within a group.

### **c) Puzzles**

They aim to put pieces together to build an image or figure. Each piece is different and can only match with others made to fit together. They are a very good tool to promote psychomotricity among learners or reinforce their logical spatial intelligence. Pieces' shapes and forms can be used to create dominos or games based on matching vocabulary

(E.g. synonyms and antonyms), concepts (E.g. a word with its drawing), or languages (E.g. one word in Spanish with its equivalence in English).

#### **d) Bingos**

A very funny way to allow learners to practice their pronunciation and especially their listening skills. They are recommended especially for teaching languages and can be utilized by using cards composed of drawings or numbers (depending on the learning goal of the exercise and the educator/trainer).

#### **e) Uno**

It is a card game whose main aim is to get rid of the cards that are given to each player at the beginning of the game. Its use in non-formal education is quite effective as it allows participants to train in an enjoyable way in basic concepts related to numbers, colors, counting, or basic actions to interact among them.

### **2.5. Based on the use of handcrafts**

Handcrafts are activities combining physical and mental exercises that stimulate abilities related to cognitive, socio-affective, or psychomotor facets of the individual. Within the field of non-formal education, their use facilitates and reinforces the learning process while learners improve their visual memory, concentration, reasoning, and creativity. If we focus on the field of language learning by non-formal approaches, handcrafts can be considered a good alternative at the first stages of linguistic knowledge acquisition as they provide a channel and a way to express and efficiently share feelings or ideas.

### **a) Puppets**

Its use as a non-formal learning technique is based on two main aspects. On the one hand, their creation by the learners provides them a common task to learn in a joyful way multidisciplinary fine motor skills (E.g. cutting, painting, designing, sewing, etc.) and at the same time a framework to interact as a group. On the other hand, performing with puppets helps learners to externalise feelings, share experiences, or propose unsettled situations. For new learners of a language, these cooperative tasks help them to develop skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

### **b) Drawing**

Painting or drawing is one of the main techniques in non-formal education and is normally used with several aims. For learners with limited use of a language or non-literate, it offers a channel of communication to express themselves while they use their creativity (reinforcing at the same time their motivation and amusement). The results obtained are also easier to be shared with other learners as drawings can be understood in a very fast way.

### **c) Modelling**

It is a very good technique to practice fine motor and allows using different kinds of raw materials to express ideas and feelings or creatively share something. Elements such as plasticize, wax, clay, gypsum, plaster, etc. can be used. This technique helps the learners by observing the educator/trainer's modelling process, listening to his/her instructions, and improving their competencies to reproduce images or concepts. By copying and applying these guidelines, they can learn new vocabulary such as materials, tools, actions, ideas, etc. Moreover, they can explain their modelling process and objects to the rest of the participants to practice different communication skills.

#### d) Collage

It consists of making an artistic composition by mixing different techniques such as cutting pieces of paper from magazines or newspapers, drawing, using natural elements (E.g. grass, rocks, sticks, etc.), and sticking them all into a framework or paper. It is a very creative tool and it also allows working in groups or through a task division among the members of a team (E.g. some can search images in a newspaper, others can cut, others can stick, and others can distribute the elements on the paper, etc.). Learners improve their language and communication skills by using newspapers, magazines, etc. They can start to read, recognize words and make connections with the image to embrace new aspects of the language. It is also very useful to understand grammatical structures by inviting them to create sentences based on words cut from magazines or to learn everyday life vocabulary using other paper sources (Ex. using paper ads from supermarkets and inviting them to create and name their shopping basket).

#### e) Comic or cartoons

The use of comics or comic strips is quite well known to tell a concatenation of facts, episodes, or actions linked within the same story or timeline. For learners who aim to share their background or life experience and do not have the linguistic competencies to do it or are not good at speaking in public, it is an excellent tool.

### 2.6. Based on the participation in open activities

In terms of language learning, such activities can create a safe and secure environment in which the learners can apply and practice the developed linguistic skills and interact with native speakers. Moreover, the preparation, design, and implementation of these activities contribute to the visibility of migrants in host societies and make them face real language and cultural challenges outside of the classroom. Even if these kinds of activities cannot be considered the only tool to teach a language, they offer a wide variety of dynamic

activities that can complement the regular language courses offered to a group. They are also very useful for those educators/trainers aiming to implement in their language courses a “flipped classroom” model on which the learning experience must take place both inside and outside the classroom and far from the traditional pedagogical models.

Besides that, participation in open-air activities (especially in groups) promotes a peer learning model in which learners learn from each other. This is especially important when dealing with languages and migrants as this model puts them in real-life scenarios and allows them to share their experiences or methods of adaptation to the new host community, its culture, and society.

#### **a) Active open activities**

They are those in which learners are involved in all their processes: preparation, design, implementation, and performing. Learners can acquire during these stages very different competencies while creating a final result that not only display their knowledge or skills but it also impacts the local community (by entertaining its members or raising their awareness about concrete issues).

- **Film competitions:** It is a contest in which participants use their own recorded films. The films are judged by other people and the main goal is the learning process of the learners during the preparation and recording of their films. The learners of a new language can use this activity for discovering new vocabulary although they can also improve teamwork, communication, and expressing ideas or personal experiences through the characters of a film.
- **Photovoice:** It is a method to show a social action or cultural difficulty to raise awareness of a problem or situation by using photography. Participants should prepare and share a group of photos which represent a concrete theme. This group of pictures can also include a narrative part. The most interesting benefit of using photovoice is the wide variety of points of view that can be shown. It can be used with the purpose of learning languages in the first stages of the process when the

users do not have enough skill to reproduce a speech but they can use the photovoice to transmit some problems through images.

- Music events: It is a live performance where participants play different compositions. The learning process is appreciated in the entire musical process such as how to use different instruments, interact with the rest of the members of a band, repeat new vocabulary, etc.
- Sports tournaments: It is a competition through different kinds of physical activities. The participants learn and/or improve on how to play sports and their rules, and they interact with the rest of their colleagues or competitors. This kind of activity can help to learn a new language through communication with colleagues. Sports are also basic expressions of a culture that can help them integrate into a local community and interact with it.
- Cooking or food festivals: it is an entertaining event centered on the different ways to cook, in which participants elaborate on different recipes to let people know aspects or characteristics of a concrete theme or culture. As a language learning tool, this kind of activity is an excellent way to learn all the vocabulary about food, cooking, shopping, etc. while at the same time the participants acquire cultural facts related to the host country and can express those related to their countries.

## **b) Passive open activities**

The difference from the previous category is that this one includes activities in which learners do not have a very active role. However, they open themselves to new realities and environments and are called to interact with other target groups.

- Study visits: It is an instrument for getting information about some practices among peers, organizations, or people. It consists of visiting and observing the place where the practice is developed and learning how things are done. It can help language learners discover new job positions, industrial processes, public services, etc., and all the related vocabulary or processes.



- Job shadowing: It is a way of training that consists of going to the place of the hosting entity or body for a while and observing what the people there are doing to learn how to do or develop a task in a real way.
- Cultural trips: Making a trip to a cultural place can also help language learning by promoting their interaction, learning about a concrete theme, and a better understanding of a host country's culture to interact better with its community afterward. It could be a great opportunity for the educator/trainer to introduce vocabulary related to history and culture.
- Lectures, conferences, or roundtables: are events in which participants listen, debate, and/or discuss a concrete topic. It consists of a speech of someone with knowledge in front of an audience that interacts with him/her through questions.
- Attend exhibitions of photos or videos (also going to the cinema or theatre): when learners visit an exhibition about a topic or watch an audiovisual material, they learn by watching what is shown. As it offers visual support, it helps the learners understand new concepts or terms by linking them to images, movements, or episodes without having previous linguistic knowledge about the name of the things they are interacting with.

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**3**

**Resources and  
Activities**

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### 3. Resources and Activities

Before we present some proposed activities that are based on the mentioned learning methods and techniques, we consider it very important to clarify the following points related to their application:

- They can be used as they are or modified according to the needs and skills of the learners, the educational aim, and the skills/wishes of the educator/trainer.
- The time suggested for each activity should not be considered something extremely strict.
- When an educator/trainer chooses to follow one of the activities, it is essential to be well organized and take all the parts into consideration. One should keep in mind that every person and every group reacts in varied ways. During the implementation of each activity, flexibility should be one of the priorities.
- The proposed activities do not form a sequence of lessons. Each one is a unique activity with different topics and educational aims.
- Most of the activities can form a complete lesson but they can also be combined with traditional teaching techniques. In this way, they can serve the role of the practical exercise of knowledge gained before.
- The aims of each activity are multidimensional and also cover areas other than language acquisition, related to the personal and social development of the learners.

The activities presented below were taken from the booklet “Non-formal Pathways in Language Teaching” - Published in 2017 in the context of the project Incorporate non-formal Methods into Language Education for Immigrants and from the Online Platform of Open Educational Resources on introducing migrants and refugees to national language: <http://online-platform.layteachers.eu/>.

## Activity 1: Fun Drama Activities for Dynamic Language Learning: Charades

TIME	40 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on the use of board games Based on the use of drama, body language, and physical expression
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noun, verb and adjective flashcards (one word per card)</li> <li>• Two decks of playing cards (per above instructions)</li> <li>• Egg timer</li> </ul>
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	
OBJECTIVES	<p>Reinforcement of the connection between body language and spoken language. The activity is especially useful for vocabulary review. To combine verbal and non-verbal communication To focus on contextual meaning To increase learner’s motivation and interest To shift responsibility of practicing from the teacher to the learners</p>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>Preparation Beforehand, count out one card for each student from a regular deck of playing cards. Then, from a second deck, make a pile of those exact same cards. If you have 20 students, for example, you should have two identical piles of 20 cards—made from two different decks. Put the students in a semi-circle with space in the middle for the charade. Description From the first prepared deck, randomly hand out one playing card to each student. You should have the same cards in your own, second prepared deck. Shuffle your cards, take the first card from the stack and call out the card. The student with that card is the first up to act. Hand that student a flashcard. The student should begin with an agreed gesture to indicate noun, verb or adjective. Give the student one or two minutes to act out the word and use your timer to do this. The student can’t make a single sound while miming. The rest of the group should try to figure out the word being acted out.</p>

## Activity 2: Travel Agency Posters

TIME	60 minutes preparation + 30 minutes presentation
CATEGORY	Based on the use of handcrafts
MATERIALS	A list of target language traditions, such as wedding ceremonies, coming of age ceremonies or specific local celebrations A number of pulp magazines with pictures to cut out Local newspapers to cut out letters or words Poster board, crayons or markers, scissors, paste or glue
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	Active learning
OBJECTIVES	Learn language through active learning - Earn communicative language competences: Linguistic (lexical, grammatical, etc.) - Interculturality
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>Explain different types of traditions celebrated in the local culture. Give several examples and do your best to compare local traditions to your students' own cultures. What are some good similarities to look out for? This will help create a cultural connection. Description of the process., including different steps or phases</p> <p>Give or randomly choose one tradition for each pair or small group to cover. Tell the students that they're making destination posters for a travel agency to attract tourists. Posters should include the name of the tradition and pictures that represent the tradition. As students prepare their posters, you should walk about the room, sharing more details of each of the traditions. Make sure students know how to ask you well-made questions in the target language, such as: "How do they dress?" "Where do they meet?" "How much does it cost to....?" Give your students a couple of sessions to complete their posters. One entire class could be devoted to this, but it's more fun to spend a small chunk of time in multiple classes leisurely making crafty posters. It gives them something cool and low-pressure to look forward to each day. Once the posters are finished, hang them around the room. Have one member of each group stand by their posted to give a quick explanation to anyone who comes to look. Have the rest of the class move from poster to poster while the creators explain the points on the poster and answer any questions from the others.</p>

### Activity 3: The drawing

TIME	40 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on the use of handcrafts
MATERIALS	A4 papers Pens/pencils/markers
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	Experiential learning
OBJECTIVES	This exercise contributes not only to the improvement of the language skills of the students, but also to the creation of a secure bond within the team. More specifically, carrying out this experiential activity also checks the Listening skills of the migrant/refugee students, as well as their comprehension of the new language they are being taught.
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	The trainer should pair off the students and describe an image to them. The students then should turn the description of the image into a simple drawing. For this activity, we need an even number of participants so that everybody can have a partner. If that is not possible, then one group of 3 students can be made. The trainer should describe the image in steps. Between each step, a small gap should be given to the Students, so that they can all have the time to talk with each other and draw what was asked. The Listeners collaborate at the end of every step of the description of the image, in order to turn this description into a drawing. Since the language skills are really basic or none, the migrants/refugees will help each other, in order to achieve the completion of the image.
	The trainer should describe the image in steps. Between each step, a small gap should be given to the Students, so that they can all have the time to talk with each other and draw what was asked.
	The Listeners collaborate at the end of every step of the description of the image, in order to turn this description into a drawing. Since the language skills are really basic or none, the migrants/refugees will help each other, in order to achieve the completion of the image.

### Activity 4: Days of the week

TIME	60 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on dialogue and verbal communication
MATERIALS	• Hats/cups • Cut papers with sentences describing a weekly program
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• Speed dating
OBJECTIVES	• Practice the days of the week • Practice verbs in simple present • Be able to talk about the weekly program and know each other better • Learn new verbs/practice known ones • Practice reading, listening and speaking
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	Before the activity • Write down 2-3 different weekly programs (depending on the number of the learners) using sentences with the days of the week (e.g. On Monday I work, On Tuesday I clean my house, On Wednesday I go to the supermarket, On Saturday I go out, etc.). Daily activities chosen should be as close as possible to reality. • Cut the sentences and put them in the hats or cups. Each hat/cup must have 7 different sentences with all the days of the week. During the activity • Divide the class into 2-3 groups and give each a hat/cup with the sentences. Explain to them that there are some sentences with daily tasks in the hat/cup and they have to put them in the correct order to form the whole week. • Give the learners some time to read the sentences and to cooperate to put the daily tasks in order. • When they finish, ask the groups one by one to present their weekly program reading it out loud, and make any corrections. • Sum up the vocabulary by writing on the board the days of the week. • Speed dating: Divide learners into pairs and let them for a few minutes to share with each other one daily task by using the format “On..... ( day) I do ..... (task)” • Shift the pairs as many times as you wish.

### Activity 5: Expressing feelings

TIME	40 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on drama, body language, and physical expression
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cards with faces having different expressions</li> <li>• Vocabulary Cards expressing feelings (happy, sad, angry, etc.)</li> </ul>
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of photos</li> <li>• Mimic</li> </ul>
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn vocabulary related to feelings</li> <li>• Connect expressions with words.</li> <li>• Enhance learners' creativity.</li> <li>• Promote communication through body language</li> </ul>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stick the cards with the faces on the wall. Below each one stick the word card that matches with the feeling expressed in the relevant face card.</li> <li>• Let the learners observe for some minutes the cards and then take the face cards and put them on a table.</li> <li>• Ask the learners to stand up one by one and take by luck one face card.</li> <li>• After examining the card, s/he has 5 minutes maximum to do a pantomime describing that feeling. Speaking is totally forbidden.</li> <li>• When the audience guesses correctly the feeling the learner sticks the face above the right word card on the wall and the next one stands up.</li> <li>• Continue till all the face cards have been played.</li> <li>• Sum up the daily vocabulary.</li> </ul>



### Activity 6: Going to the supermarket

TIME	2 hours
CATEGORY	Based on dialogue and verbal communication
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos of vegetables and fruits and word cards</li> <li>• A quiz on fruits and vegetables (for the educator)</li> <li>• Color cards (color-word)</li> <li>• Video with dialogue for grocery shopping</li> </ul>
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactive quiz</li> <li>• Audiovisual material</li> <li>• Simulation</li> <li>• Experiential learning</li> <li>• Role play</li> </ul>
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn vocabulary related to fruits &amp; vegetables and colors</li> <li>• Practice basic phrases related to grocery shopping</li> <li>• Practice listening and communicative skills</li> <li>• Prepare the learners to do their shopping in the grocery and prepare the shopping list.</li> <li>• Improve writing skills</li> </ul>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>Before the activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stick on the walls the fruits and vegetable photos and the colored ones accompanied by the related word cards.</li> </ul> <p>1 st stage: Interactive quiz</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let the learners observe the images and the words on the walls for a few minutes.</li> <li>• Ask the learners questions like “it is red and we use it for salads” and let them find the correct fruit or vegetable.</li> <li>• Each learner that guesses correctly takes the picture.</li> <li>• Continue till all the pictures have been taken.</li> </ul> <p>2 nd stage: matching colors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give one color card to everyone randomly. By making questions to each other they have to find and take the equivalent color card with their fruit or vegetable. For example, if someone has a tomato but has a green color card s/he could say: “I have a tomato, I want the red card” or “I have the green color card, who wants it?”</li> <li>• When everyone has the correct color card let them speak. Each one has to say the fruit/vegetable and it’s color that holds. “I have a red tomato” etc.</li> </ul> <p>3 rd stage: grocery shopping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play a short video in the fruit &amp; vegetable market with a dialogue between a grocery man and a customer. Write the important phrases on the board (how much is it? I would like some tomatoes etc.) and explain if there are any unknown words.</li> <li>• Make groups of 2 and give each a role. One is the customer and the other is the grocery man. Let them practice the dialogues. Circulate and help them. They can use the phrases from the board.</li> <li>• Tell the learners to write a shopping list with fruits &amp; vegetables that they need to buy.</li> <li>• Go altogether to a nearby grocery store to practice the dialogues.</li> </ul>

## Activity 7: Playing UNO

TIME	40 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on the use of board games
MATERIALS	• A block of UNO cards
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• Game
OBJECTIVES	• Learn the numbers and the colors • Enjoy while learning • Create bonds between the learner's
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	Note: this activity is very simple and intends to help the learners to learn the numbers and the colors in an enjoyable way and in the first stages of the learning process that their language skills are very low. • Explain the rules of the UNO game in a medium language. • Let the learners play the game for some rounds and you should indicate the numbers and the colors in the target language. • After some rounds invite the learners to say loud both the numbers and the colors. • Sum up on the board the vocabulary of the day.

### Activity 8: Daily activities

TIME	45 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on the use of new technologies
MATERIALS	• Videos with daily activities and hobbies
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• use of audiovisual materials
OBJECTIVES	• Practice present tense • Learn hobby and daily activities vocabulary • Enhance learner's creativity • Promote body language expression
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	• Show the video with daily activities and hobbies. In each pause ask them what the people are doing. If there are any unknown words write them on the board and explain. • Then you can tell your daily activities and hobbies using the present tense and ask them to tell their own. • All of them have to stand up in a circle. Explain to them that each, one by one has to mime an activity or hobby. You start miming an activity (brushing your teeth). The person on your right has to find and shout the activity/hobby in the target language. The one on the right, who found it, is the one who must mime another activity/hobby and the one beside him/her has to do the same. This goes on until all the learners participate. It is better not to repeat the same activities.

### Activity 9: Treasure hunting

TIME	Before the activity: 1 hour During the activity: 45 minutes (or more depending on the number of the clues)
CATEGORY	Based on dialogue and verbal communication
MATERIALS	Piece of paper with written clues • A “treasure” (chocolate, book, etc.)
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• Group exercise
OBJECTIVES	• Practice instructions and reading comprehension • Increase collaboration between the learners • Enhance their vocabulary • Increase their communicating skills
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>Before the activity: • The educator must find some hiding places in and outside of the classroom (a corridor, a yard or even shops you can find around the neighborhood). • Write on pieces of paper clues that will help the learners to find the hiding places in order to find the treasure in the end. For example: “Outside of the class there is a poster with a bus” behind the poster with the bus you will stick another piece of paper: “Go to the place where a tomato could find a potato” meaning the grocery store. In this case, the grocer man should be informed in order to give them the next clue. • Choose what the treasure would be. Chocolate/ a meal / a book in the target language / a fancy notebook etc.</p> <p>During the activity: • Separate the learners into groups of 3-4. Explain to them that they have to find a treasure by reading and following instructions from one place to another even outside of the class. To avoid all groups starting at the same time and following each other, give each a different clue in the beginning so they will go around in a different order. You explain that after 30 minutes (or more) they have to be back even if they did not find the treasure. • When all are back you discuss the experience and ask if there were any unknown words or any kind of difficulties.</p>

### Activity 10: People's characteristics

TIME	50 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on dialogue and verbal communication
MATERIALS	• Pictures of people
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• Group exercise
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn adjectives and vocabulary related to appearance.</li> <li>• Learn to describe a person's appearance in the target language</li> <li>• Improve writing, listening and speaking skills</li> </ul>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>Preparation before the activity • Put the pictures with people on the wall. Each picture has a name and a characteristic figure (e.g. a very tall person) • Write the adjectives and some vocabulary of the description on the board (e.g. tall-short, handsome-ugly, long-short hair, etc.) During the activity: • You show the pictures to the learners and ask them to describe them by collecting the right words from the ones written on the board. (e.g. His name is John, he is tall, thin and he has short hair). • After some practice, you tell the learners to choose a picture without saying which and write down a description of the person in the particular picture (minimum 3 characteristics). Circulate and help them if they need it. • When they finish ask them to give you the description. • Separate the learners into groups and ask them to stand one next to the other. • Give to each learner in each group a paper with a description from the ones the learners wrote in the previous stage. • Ask the first learner to read the description on the paper and then say the description to the learner on his/her right secretly (in the ear) without being heard. • The second one should do the same and so on. • The last one should say out loud what s/he heard and show the picture that s/he believes matches the description. • Read and compare the written description by reading it out loud. Repeat the game with different descriptions.</p>

### Activity 11: Searching for words

TIME	50 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on dialogue and verbal communication
MATERIALS	• Papers with word categories and letters • Pens
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• Group exercise
OBJECTIVES	• To enhance vocabulary • To recall words • To list words by theme • To cooperate
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	Before the activity: • Divide the board into categories based on the educational aims of your course. An example could be fruits, colors, countries, clothes, etc. • Prepare papers with the same categories for the learners. During: • Divide the learners into groups of 2-3 and give each group a paper with the categories. • Give random letters of the alphabet to the learners. • The groups should write, each time a letter is given, a word of each category starting from this letter. Give 5 minutes for each letter. • When they finish one representative of each group should say aloud the words of each category. • Each word is one point. If more than one group has the same word none of them takes a point. • The group that will collect more points will be the winner of the game.

## Activity 12: Let's go shopping

TIME	60 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on dialogue and verbal communication
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint with shopping vocabulary</li> <li>• Pictures of different shops and buildings (post office, bakery, pharmacy, etc.)</li> <li>• Shopping lists</li> <li>• Real or fake shopping products or toys (plastic bread, aspirins, a piece of cloth, etc.) based on the shopping lists</li> </ul>
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team learning</li> <li>• Role playing</li> <li>• Simulation</li> </ul>
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice and increase communicative skills</li> <li>• Learn and practice vocabulary about shopping</li> <li>• Promote interaction and team building</li> <li>• Simulate an everyday situation</li> <li>• Be able to ask and give information about products</li> </ul>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the powerpoint of shopping vocabulary. Ask them if they know the words and write them on the board and practice.</li> <li>• Distribute the tables in the class. Each table is a different shop (bakery, pharmacy, etc.). Put on the tables the pictures (of the bakery, pharmacy, etc.) and the different products or toys to make the simulation more real.</li> <li>• Nominate some of the learners to run each shop and give the rest a shopping list with things they have to buy from different shops. Each learner should visit the different shops and ask for the items on their list. Let them interact and speak to each other.</li> <li>• After a while, ask the learners to change the roles (shopkeepers will be customers and customers shopkeepers) and repeat the activity.</li> </ul>

### Activity 13: Learning about jobs

TIME	40 minutes
CATEGORY	Based on dialogue and verbal communication
MATERIALS	• Job flash cards • Tools/objects flash cards (related to the jobs)
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• Group exercise
OBJECTIVES	• Learn job vocabulary • Improve reading and speaking • Exercise yes/no questions • Encourage group cooperation
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>Note: It would be better if the jobs presented are based on the learners' profession and interests. • Show the flashcards in pairs (job-tool/object) to the learners and ask them if they know the vocabulary. Either the job (e.g. taxi driver) or the object. Write the words on the board. • Ask them again. Now it will be easier and they will find the correct word on the board. • Put the flashcards with the jobs on the wall or on the board the one below the other and give the learners the flashcards with the tools/objects. Ask them to stand up and match the object with the related job on the board (e.g. chef – food). When they match it, they must say out loud the job and the object. If they do not remember it, others can help them. • Take all the flashcards and give one to each learner. The others mustn't see. Some of them have job flashcards some of them are object flashcards. They have to find their pair by asking yes/no questions. They can circulate around the class and ask everyone (e.g. are you working outdoors? do you cook? etc.)</p>



### Activity 14: The story behind the portraits

TIME	2 hours
CATEGORY	Based on the participation in open activities
MATERIALS	• A notebook and a pencil/pen for each
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	• Outdoor activity • Cultural visit • Group exercise • Story telling
OBJECTIVES	• Feel creative using the target language • Increase learners ability to express their feelings and thoughts in the target language • Increase learners' comprehensive and speaking skills • Raise learners' cultural awareness
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>You have organized a visit in An exhibition/museum of the city where you can find portraits (photos or paintings) • Before entering the museum you explain that they have to observe the works of art and write down notes on what they see and how they feel during their visit. Encourage them to choose portraits. If it is allowed they could even take some photos. Give them some time to go around the exhibits. • Gather all the learners in a place inside or outside the building where you can discuss. Each one must describe a portrait that s/he saw in the museum and express how s/he felt. If there is a photo s/he can show it to all. • Now they must imagine a story hiding behind the portrait. The story can be anything (a simple daily story, a crime or anything else). The person in the portrait is the main character. Give them some time to think about it and make notes if they need to. • Make groups of two. Each one has to narrate the story to the other. Circulate, listen and help.</p>



If you want to add more activities, please feel free to do it using the  
templates:

Activity number: Title:

TIME	
CATEGORY	
MATERIALS	
LEARNING TECHNIQUES	
OBJECTIVES	
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY	

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**5**

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