

Pilot Partnership Report
Practical activities
suggested by
“Guidelines for
educators/trainers
and/or training
providers on how to
implement non-formal
learning activities in the
language provision to
migrants/refugees

1. INTRODUCTION

The present report has the goal to present and discuss some practical activities suggested by MUFOCOM's "Guidelines for educators/trainers and/or training providers on how to implement non-formal learning activities in the language provision to migrants/refugees". Each of the countries involved in the project was asked to test with a group of migrants at least 6 activities described in the guidelines. The activities could be carried out in one session or in several sessions as the organisations deemed appropriate. The level of language proficiency would also be determined by the organisations according to the target audience and the activities developed respecting this aspect.

- Participants (characterisation of the target group)

Luxembourg: 12 people took part in the pilot in Luxembourg. Participants were refugees and migrant women from Syria, Morocco, Somalia, Iran and Nigeria. These women have been living in Luxembourg for a minimum of 4 years. They were all part of the dancing and sewing activities organised by the Kopplabundz association which is an organisation active in the social and professional well-being of women. All the participants had the A1 level in French.

Portugal: 8 participants from different nationalities and ages. For these activities, we had one participant from each of the following countries: Morocco, the United States, Argentina, Venezuela, Russia, Turkey, India, Afghanistan. The group had 2 men and 6 women. Most of them are unemployed and job seekers.

Italy: The activities were conducted with 8 migrants (2 women and 6 men) from different countries (Morocco, Guinea Bissau, Romania, Gambia, Ivory Coast and Senegal). The activities have been conducted in Italian with some translation for those in need. But in general, all the participants can speak Italian, even if it is at a basic level.

France: In France the work was developed with 3 groups. 10 people in the first group, 20 people in the second group and 7 people in the third group. Students from Morocco, Ghana, Chechen, Albanian and Afghan.

Greece: The activities were conducted with 18 refugees, all women, from Ukraine. Participants were divided into classrooms according to their level of understanding of the Greek language. Thus, there were three levels, Beginner – Intermediate – Advanced. The activities were conducted in the Greek language and adapted according to the level of the participants. Participants were recruited via an open call. Ukrainian refugees are those who responded to the call, as a newly arrived population with high language education needs.

- Scope and Duration (date, time and place etc.)

Luxembourg: The pilot took place from January 9th till February 22. 5 sessions were planned and the duration of each session was 2 hours, from 10 am to 12 pm. The activities were supervised by at least 2 educators. The pilot took place in Luxembourg city on the premises of the Kopplabundz association.

Portugal: The group participated in 8 face-to-face sessions throughout 5 weeks, from the 16th of May to the 15th of June 2023. The duration of these events, which occurred on Tuesdays and Thursdays, was 1 hour each. For each session, APX developed session plans in order to define all the tasks, activities and materials needed for the sessions. Before and after the learning activities, the participants filled a questionnaire to evaluate the progression of their learning process of the language.

Italy: The group participated in 8 face-to-face sessions throughout 8 weeks, from the 3rd of April to the 5th of June 2023; each session was on Monday and lasted 2 hours. We conducted the sessions in our office and others in the “Sai Casa Futura” building. The same trainer conducted each session, that is also a literacy teacher, who provided session plans to have all the activities and materials clear.

France: For approximately 3 months the groups carried out their activities. The first group once a week, the second group also once a week and the third group twice a week.

Greece: During the period from March to July, the groups were involved in the face-to-face language lessons. Within the given timeframe, five sessions were specifically dedicated to piloting the MUFOCOM activities. These piloting sessions were conducted in March and June, with three sessions taking place in March and two sessions in June. These sessions likely served as a means to test and evaluate the effectiveness of the MUFOCOM activities in supporting language learning.

- Processes involved (e.g. describing the face-to-face sessions; interactions with the trainees, etc)

Given that it was possible for the participating organisations to organise the course of their pilot sessions in terms of timetables, frequency, number of participants and groups selected, it was decided not to describe their specificities in this document. It is therefore requested to consult the reports of the national pilots if you wish to know the procedures.

2. KEY OUTCOMES

- Positive feedback

1. The overall evaluation of these sessions was extremely positive.
2. There was general understanding of the sessions even though the participants were from different nationalities.
3. This type of training wasn't new for the participants.
4. The activities were more active, and everyone was able to contribute, and that this way of teaching is simpler and more fun.
5. This type of training helped to learn a lot of new words to use in their daily lives.
6. Overall, very helpful and tailored activities.
7. They get knowledge of online learning platforms and tips for learning alone.
8. Increase in confidence to pronunciation and speaking.
9. The positive aspect of these activities lies in the involvement of the participants.
10. The activities were interactive, clear and, above all, fun.
11. The multicultural factor was crucial: although they were all of different nationalities, this was not a problem at all; on the contrary, it was an added value, an enrichment.
12. Participants feel a strong urge to learn the language of the host country.
13. Improved Language Skills: the MUFOCOM activities, tailored to their levels, likely offered a more interactive and engaging learning experience.
14. Enhanced Practical Application: The hands-on learning activities, such as role-plays, simulations, and group projects, provided opportunities for the participants to apply their language skills in real-life situations. This practical application likely improved their ability to communicate effectively in the target language, as they had to engage in conversations, problem-solving, and collaborative tasks.
15. Increased Collaboration and Communication: The group projects and interactive tasks fostered collaboration among the participants. By working together, exchanging ideas, and solving problems, they have developed their communication skills. This collaborative learning environment likely facilitated peer interaction, allowing them to practice language skills and gain insights from each other's perspectives. This aspect has contributed to their overall language proficiency and communication abilities.
16. Good or outstanding progress was characterized by clear links between the teachers' demands and opportunities for the students to speak in meaningful situations. Cues and information gap activities prompted creative speech, gradually moving students towards spontaneity: that is, being able to say what one wants to say.

“fun, interesting and easy” (Portuguese trainee)

“I found it interesting” (Luxembourgish trainee)

“It was very helpful” (Luxembourgish trainee)

“We appreciated the combination of computer, paper and writing” (Luxembourgish trainee)

“Innovative. Working with the computer was very helpful”. (Luxembourgish trainee)

“In traditional classes, I did not understand the teachers and did not follow the lessons”.
(Luxembourgish trainee)

- Negative feedback

Overall, we did not receive any negative feedback on the content and methods. Participants wished to have more sessions because the approach we used allowed them to improve and to gain more confidence in their speaking. Therefore, what can be considered as negative feedback is the limited duration of the pilot. However, to keep the participants in the learning process, a number of online learning resources and platforms were recommended to them. We also gave them learning tips for learning alone.

Even though no negative aspects were pointed out by participants in the focus group, we would like to point out some aspects noted during the sessions that could be improved. The first one is related to the fact that some of the activities require a certain familiarity of participants with one another, for example to share personal information or to mimic/dance. Another aspect that can be improved is that for some of the developed activities, the proposed time duration turned out to be insufficient. Therefore, the trainers must pay attention to the possibility to improvise and change the configuration of it during the sessions, for example.

Concerning the online learning and gamification, the difficulty came from the fact that most of the participants were illiterate or have a very low level of education in their mother tongue and that most of them have never used a computer for learning.

Regarding the traditional teaching method(hangouts) the difficulty was also related to the low level of education of the participants. Many participants could not recognize the written words to find out in the puzzle and many participants were not familiar with the methods of finding words in puzzle. The first time this strategy was used, they took much time. However, when they understood how it works, they began to develop strategies for searching words faster.

3. CONCLUSIONS

For Luxembourg the online learning and gamification methodology is not suitable for the general population of immigrants surely because of their insufficiency in digital skills and their level of

education. However, the combination of both technology and the traditional methods allowed them to acquire new skills.

For Portugal the fact that the group was made up of a range of people from different cultural backgrounds and nationalities proved to be an advantage rather than a barrier, since it allowed interesting interactions between them. Apart from a few improvement suggestions, it is possible to say that the promoted sessions were very successful, and the activities were very useful and appreciated by them.

For Italy, in general, it can be concluded that the activities experimented on within the Io2 of the project have certainly been positive. The added value is to teach the language, culture and traditions non-formal, therefore in a light and engaging way for the participants. Furthermore, although the group's heterogeneity in terms of age, gender and origin might seem like a limitation, it was not. Indeed, the multicultural part that characterised the group favoured certain activities and fostered exchange and curiosity.

For Greece the hands-on activities allowed for practical application of language skills, enhancing their speaking, listening, and comprehension abilities. The collaborative learning environment fostered peer interaction and communication. Additionally, dedicated piloting sessions helped evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the MUFOCOM activities. Overall, this approach showcased the value of combining various resources, practical application, and collaboration in language learning for refugees, resulting in tangible language skill development and increased confidence in real-life communication.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integration of a variety of resources: Future language lessons should continue to incorporate a variety resources, such as videos, audio clips, and interactive exercises. These tools enhance engagement and provide a dynamic learning experience.
2. Practical application and hands-on activities: Hands-on learning activities should be a consistent component of language lessons. These activities should encourage practical application of language skills, such as role-plays, simulations, and group projects. They provide learners with authentic contexts to practice their language skills and enhance their confidence in real-life communication.
3. Differentiated instruction: Language lessons should be tailored to the individual needs and proficiency levels of the learners. Grouping participants based on their language level allows for targeted instruction and ensures that learners are appropriately challenged. Providing

differentiated materials and activities within each group fosters a supportive learning environment and maximizes the effectiveness of language instruction.

4. Continuous assessment and feedback: Regular assessment and feedback mechanisms should be implemented throughout language lessons. This allows instructors to gauge learners' progress and identify areas for improvement. It also provides learners with valuable feedback on their language skills and helps them set goals for further development.

5. Collaboration and peer interaction: Promote collaborative learning environments that encourage peer interaction and communication. Group projects, pair work, and interactive tasks foster opportunities for learners to engage with one another in the target language. This collaboration enhances language proficiency and facilitates the sharing of ideas and cultural experiences among learners.

6. Ongoing Professional Development: Language instructors should engage in continuous professional development to stay abreast of the latest teaching methodologies and approaches. Attending workshops, conferences, and training sessions focused on language instruction enables instructors to enhance their teaching skills and incorporate innovative strategies into their lessons.

7. Flexibility: Trainers must be absolutely flexible in conducting the activities and scheduling the sessions (you may have fewer participants for the planned activity and therefore have to postpone or reorganise it, for example). Be aware that the necessary time for each activity may change according to the profile of the group. For example, if participants are very active and cooperative, sessions will probably take longer than they would take for a class that is shy and less participative.

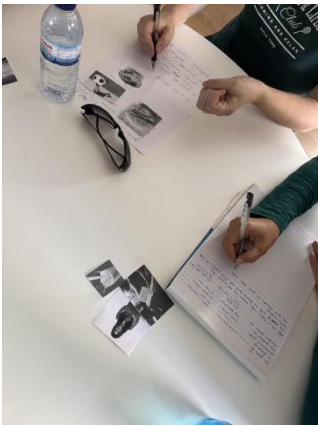
8. Security: ensure that all participants feel comfortable in the activities and that no one feels forced or obligated. Before promoting activities such as mimic or dance, in which participants must move and stand in front of others, it is vital to create a comfortable and safe environment for everyone.

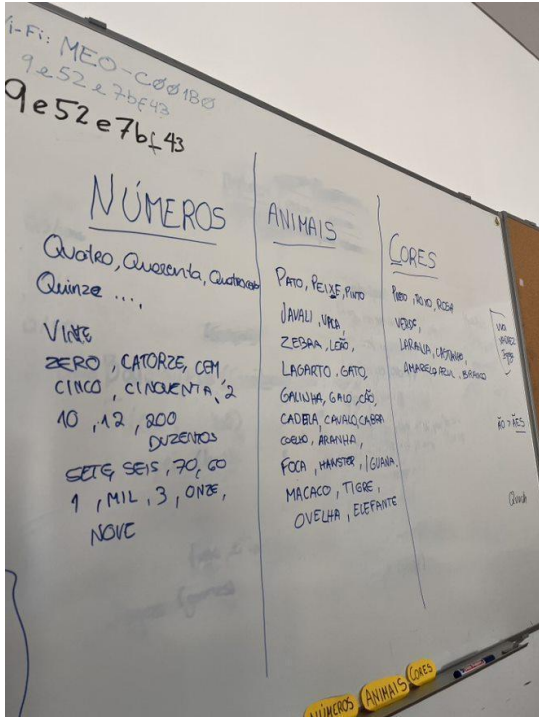
9. Technology incorporation: improving the current methodology by incorporating technologies that can help people individually in the private setting and everywhere. Regarding the fact that the presence of teachers is also fundamental in these situations.

10. Evaluation: Provide an impact evaluation with a questionnaire *before* and *after* the activities in order to monitor the progression of the learning process and to adjust them according to the needs of the participants, if needed.

5. PICTURES







PARTNERSHIP



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