INNOVATIVE WAYS FOR MOTIVATING ADULTS FOR LEARNING

BASIC SKILLS FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

COSTS AND BENEFITS

BIOGRAPHIC WORK: ASSOCIATIVE PICTURE CARDS

ONLINE CAFÉ IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

COMMUNITY MAPPING

FILM AS A TOOL OF MOTIVATION

READING WITH PREDICTION

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN OSH

STEPPING IN THE PICTURE

Editors:
Ariana-Stanca Vacarețu
Franjo Steiner
Maria Kovacs

Authors:
Irmgard Demirol and Franjo Steiner
Petra Beck and Margit Kreikenbom
Alessandro Melillo and Marie Marzloff
Maria Kovacs
Simona-Elena Bernat
Inguna Irbite and Sandra Kalnina
Daiva Penkauskienė
Azucena Martínez Asenjo
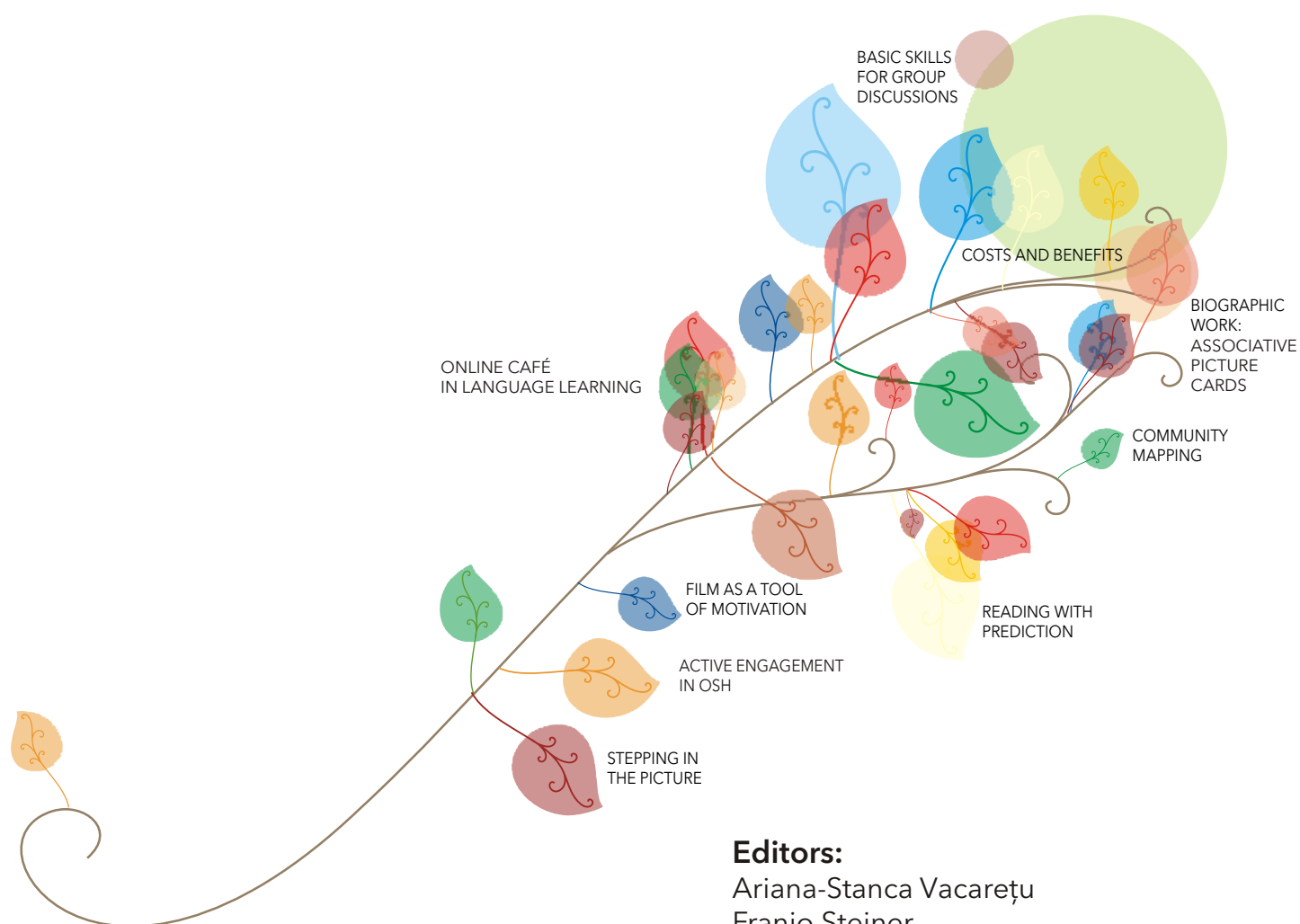Alica Petrasova and Marcela Maslova

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I. Introduction

In the last decade, a number of changes have occurred in adult education. Adult learning has become one of the important components of lifelong learning. The 2006 European Communication on Adult learning *It is never too late to learn* emphasises the key role of adult learning in developing citizenship and competences. The general objective of the Action plan on adult learning *It is always a good time to learn* (2007) is the implementation of the five key messages in the communication *It is never too late to learn*: (1) to remove barriers to participation; (2) to increase the quality and efficiency of the adult education; (3) to speed up the process of assessment of skills and competences and their validation and recognition; (4) to ensure sufficient investment; and (5) to efficiently monitor the adult education sector.
One of the key elements in the implementation of the Action plan on adult learning is the professional development of adult educators, trainers, teachers, as they are the leading agents of change. This guidebook will support adult educators in their efforts of removing barriers to participation and of increasing the quality of adult education by better motivating adults for learning.

1. The Create-Motivate-Learn project

1.1 Background and objectives of the CreMoLe project

In the 21st century, individuals should be able to cope with constant changes. Our rapidly changing world causes a large share of its population to be forced into new and challenging working environments, which call for new skills and attitudes. In many European countries, teaching has been geared towards preparing individuals to become lifelong learners by helping them develop learning skills as early as in primary school. Some EU member states' educational systems are more advanced in implementing an engaging style of teaching and in supporting the development of learning skills, including in the case of adult education, while other systems lag far behind. The implementers of the Create – Motivate – Learn (CreMoLe) project, a wide partnership of ten Eastern, Central and Western European adult education organizations, initiated the project with the aim to identify key factors related to motivating participation and persistence in lifelong learning processes of a wide range of adult learners.

During the project's lifetime we worked to accomplish its six objectives:

- To improve teaching competences for adult-teachers/ tutors

We invited the partner organizations' adult educators to put their creativity to work to make a contribution to the improvement of teaching competences of the staff of adult education provider institutions and organizations, to impact both the content and the delivery mode of adult education in order to better motivate their adult learners.

- To improve the content and delivery of adult education

Within the project, we have developed and are promoting innovative strategies for in-service training of adult educators with a view to enhancing adult learners' motivation and active engagement in lifelong learning.

- To provide adult educators with a set of creative and critical thinking strategies to use in adult learning contexts

To do so, we *promote creativity by creating* innovative learning strategies. Within the project, we have developed, tested and shared a set of innovative strategies to increase adults' intrinsic motivation for learning, ensure profound learning and transfer of new acquisitions by means of developing metacognitive skills.

- To improve the accessibility of learning opportunities for adults

Our goal is to develop and disseminate strategies to stimulate demand for learning among adults reluctant to engage in lifelong learning.

- To enhance the adults' motivation for lifelong learning

We envisage that as a result of our project, learning will be more attractive and accessible for all adults, and therefore they will feel more inclined to seek out learning opportunities, and realize that lifelong learning is not only a *must* if one wants to be a productive and active citizen, but also an enjoyable experience.

- To provide trainers/ tutors the opportunity to share experiences and practices from the participating countries and to work together with European colleagues for improving adult participation in lifelong learning

More specifically, we have facilitated the sharing of experiences and practices of adult educators and learners from eight EU member states and Switzerland. The innovative practices will be made widely known to European networks of adult educators.

1.2 Project work and outcomes

The main stages of the CreMoLe project implementation as well as the major deliverables of the project are shown below.

First draft of innovative practices & internal piloting Report on action research Workshop –sharing of innovative practices

Plan for cross-piloting innovative strategies Revised innovative strategies

Survey report Collection of best practices Workshop

Workshop Guidebook of innovative approaches Grundtvig course

Develop & pilot innovative strategies

Revise the set of innovative strategies

Study – how adults learn Collection of best practices

Disseminate the innovative strategies/ practices

website www.cremole.eu

Start of the project

End of the project

Project implementation stage

Project deliverable(s)

Figure 1: CreMoLe Project implementation plan

What is it that makes some adults want to learn and engage with groups that come together with the clear purpose of learning? And what is it that makes some others steer clear of anything that may even distantly resemble a learning environment? These were the big questions we attempted to find answers to by setting up and carrying out a survey in all project countries.

We looked at the current state of adult education in the partner organizations' countries by researching existing documents revealing both policies and practices. To narrow down our focus, we then investigated training programmes that were recommended to us as good practices. While doing so, we wanted to see things from a double perspective: that of the trainer, and that of the learner.

In the survey to identify good practices in motivating adults for participation and persistence in lifelong learning, our partnership contacted a total number of 25 adult education centres; one national level Adult Educators' Association, and a university. In the same survey, 41 trainers and 85 adult learners were interviewed.

All the training practices collected have been assessed inside the proponent organisation and a total of 20 good practices were subjected to peer evaluation in order to be eligible for publication in the *Motivating Adult Learners' Participation and Persistence in Lifelong Learning Processes - Collection of best practices* (2010).

The survey methodology as well as the description of the 20 good practices preliminarily identified have been published in the *Survey report – Best Practices of Training Methodologies and Learning Techniques in Adult Education* (2010).

All the selected training practices share an innovative approach to teaching adults, or else they would not have been included in this selection. Characteristics such as innovation, transferability and motivating are met by each one of these practices. Some other common features of the identified methodologies that counted as good practice are:

- use of interactive methods;
- hands-on activities;
- frequent use of group work;
- trainees' ample guidance and/ or mentoring (especially for small size groups of trainees;
- explicit use of trainees' prior knowledge;
- sharing and reflection of trainees;
- responding to the learning needs – target and goal oriented;
- positive and constructive training environment;
- applicability of knowledge – personal and professional meaning;
- Self-directed learning.

After having identified the core ingredients of the kinds of training programmes that keep adults engaged in learning and motivate them to search for new learning opportunities, we wanted to take a closer look at some examples of outstanding practice so as to be able to describe them in a manner that would inspire adult educators beyond our group.

16 practices which had obtained the highest scores in the self- and peer evaluation process were carefully described and included in the *Motivating Adult Learners' Participation and Persistence in Lifelong Learning Processes - Collection of best practices.*
Once we have found out what works, we were ready to create new strategies, methods and learning activities to increase adults' motivation for learning.

Based on the identified factors, we developed a set of creative and critical thinking strategies to be used by adult educators so that they may more successfully motivate adults to participate in lifelong learning.

2. Create – Motivate – Learn Project Consortium

Our project could not be done in one country or region, or by one organization, as it requires a wide outreach to adult education institutions and organizations in a variety of settings. Indeed, there is a lot of diversity within our partnership in terms of geography, experience in Grundtvig project implementation, and areas of major interest within adult education. Clearly, the benefits of and need for European cooperation in this project are self-evident. The project partnership consists of ten partner organizations from nine countries:

Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking International Consortium, based in Romania is an international association of organisations and individuals committed to the promotion and implementation of the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) program and its philosophy around the world. It supports the member organizations' joint efforts to promote quality education for all, critical thinking and active learning, civic literacy, and international collaboration among educators with a view to continuous professional development and innovation in education.

Thüringer Volkshochschulverband e.V. Jena, Germany. It is the umbrella organization of 23 regional adult education centres from communities and major cities in Thuringia and promotes adult education. It is involved in the implementation of LL through raising consciousness among the wider public and working on the basic conditions for it. It does pedagogical work in the fields of politics, society, the environment, cultural education, healthcare, languages, vocational education and literacy learning.

Iberika Sprachschule Berlin, Germany. Iberika is a private language school from Berlin, Germany. It provides Spanish, English, Portuguese and German language courses. Most of Iberika's students are adults and working people who want to obtain further education for private or career-related purposes.

Instituto de Formacion Integral S.L.U. Madrid, Spain. It runs training activities all over Spain, offering more than 200 training courses per year, addressed to enterprises, Employers' Associations, Trade Unions, organisations and individual workers.

Centro Studi ed Iniziative Europeo, Trapetto (PA), Italy. It works towards the promotion of cultural, educational, scientific and economic development at both local and international levels through the employment of innovative and participative tools and methodologies.

Education Development Centre (EDC), Riga, Latvia. It operates in the field of civic, intercultural, inclusive and development education and provides for the further development of an educated, democratic society in Latvia by promoting increased professional capacity, competitiveness, and cooperation.

Modern Didactics Centre (MDC), Vilnius, Lithuania. It operates in the field of non-formal adult education. Its main target groups are teachers, school specialists, and adult educators. MDC aims to encourage and to support the initiatives of the academic community designed to bring about changes in higher education and teacher training and foster democracy and cooperation.

Interkulturelles Zentrum, Vienna, Austria. It promotes the development of relations between people of different cultural origin and trains people to carry out practical intercultural work, in particular cross-border co-operation between schools, international youth work, as well as intercultural education and diversity management in Austria. In general the target groups of IZ trainings are pedagogues, youth workers, employees interested in intercultural issues, multipliers, experts.

Orava Association for Democratic Education, Bratislava, Slovakia. It serves the professional development needs of Slovak educators and it works to improve education in Slovakia by supporting the broader educational community of teachers, parents, school administrators, university faculty, Ministry of Education leaders, interested community leaders and students.
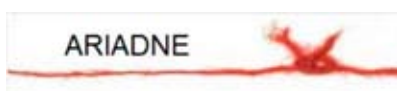
Ariadne Hess, silent partner, Zug, Switzerland. It offers consulting in learning and project management in the field of education and pedagogy. It targets schoolchildren, students, adults in further education as well as seniors and minority ethnic people in all areas. ARIADNE works in the area of ageing, physical and mental well-being and ethnicity in Switzerland and across Europe.

3. The Guidebook "Innovative Ways for Motivating Adults for Learning"

3.1. Why develop a Guidebook?

This guidebook has been developed as part of the EU-funded project Create – Motivate – Learn with the aim of disseminating the innovative strategies, techniques or learning activities developed and tested within the partnership. The dissemination targets mainly adult educators, trainers and teachers. Our experience shows that adult educators use guidebooks as resources to find new methods, strategies or learning activities when they intend to change something in their trainings or to adapt their teaching to challenging groups of learners.

The ways of learning and teaching we found motivating for adults are described in detail, resources are provided when necessary, and the testing experience is also shared. Nevertheless this guidebook is not an ABC for adult learning methodology; the authors believe that adult education methodology is known to adult educators and the correlation between aims, content, methods and assessment is familiar to readers.

We encourage adult educators to take what is useful from this guidebook to enrich their own teaching strategies and combine it with material or procedural resources they have found useful in the past.

Our partnership relies on the belief that good adult educators make a significant difference between highly motivated adult learners and poorly motivated ones. Good educators are familiar with a wide range of strategies to be able to adjust to a variety of learning styles and dispositions.

The innovative strategies, techniques or learning activities shared in the guidebook were tested on diverse target groups, people of diverse socio-economic background, including disadvantaged groups, as we intended them to be of most use to those educators who work with poorly motivated adult learners.

The examples we introduce in this guidebook have resulted from testing the teaching-learning methods, techniques and activities in our trainings. Hence, there is a large variety of learning contexts, types of adult learners or content of training programmes that were used in testing. We encourage our readers to be creative and to adapt our approaches to a certain learning context, specific group of adult learners and content.

Even if the approaches were tested on at least two groups of adult learners in two quite different contexts, we would very much appreciate to receive adult educators' feedback on the experience they may have had when using them. On page 86, the readers will find a feedback sheet. We would be very grateful to those readers who want to share their comments and learning experience with us by filling in the feedback form and sending it to us.

We want to share with adult educators, teachers, trainers the innovative strategies we developed and tested. The guidebook, which is one of the main dissemination instruments, will be available on the project website. It will also be used as training material in the Grundtvig course we will develop and offer to adult educators.

3.2. Target group of the Guidebook

This guidebook is targeted at practicing and prospective trainers involved in adult education who work with adults reluctant to engage in lifelong learning. The methods, strategies and learning activities described in this guidebook may be used in both formal training programmes and in non-formal learning settings. Some of the methods and learning activities might inspire teachers that work with teenagers or school teachers working with parents.

The guidebook offers practical ideas to better motivate adults for learning.

The guidebook might also prove useful for organizations that are interested in organizing professional development events for adult educators or for adult education providers interested in improving the quality of their services.

3.3. How to use the guidebook

The guidebook is organized in two chapters. The first introductory chapter presents the Create-Motivate-Learn project and partnership, as well as some basic information about this guidebook. The second chapter starts with our definition of "innovative strategies" and with the motivation factors in the field of adult education. After presenting an overview table of the innovative ways CreMoLe partnership developed for motivating adults for learning, each innovative method, technique or learning activity is described, firstly by giving basic information about it and secondly, by introducing examples of practical use, summarizing the results of testing activities and concluding by introducing our findings and recommendations for transfer. Resources for implementing the innovative ways are provided in the Annexes of the guidebook.

This guidebook contains 9 diverse methodological approaches:
  ▪ worksheets and/ or short activities which may be easy to use in a training;
  ▪ exercises/ learning activities which need some previous experience in using the constructivist three-phase approach (Anticipation – Building Knowledge – Consolidation or Evocation – Realization of meaning – Reflection);
  ▪ full descriptions of training programmes or a chain of learning activities, which might be used as described, which needs several days of training to deliver.

Basic information about each method, techniques or learning activity is provided in a "recipe"-like format for trainers -- a concise expression of what an adult educator who wants to use the method/ technique or learning activity should do. On the right side of the page you can find the keyword strip. The keywords are related to:
  ▪ targeted competences and skills: competences and skills that are targeted by the training where the described method/ technique or learning activity is recommended;
  ▪ targeted motivation factors: motivation factors that are targeted by the described method/ technique or learning activity;
  ▪ targeted learners/ groups: age and/or profession of learners for whom the described method/ technique or learning activity is recommended;
  ▪ organisation of learning, group size: way of organizing the learning and the group size for which the described method/ technique or learning activity is recommended;
  ▪ time requirements: the time needed by an experienced adult educator when implementing the described method/ technique or learning activity;
  ▪ necessary resources/ materials: types of resources/ materials that the adult educators need when implementing the described method/ technique or learning activity.

The keywords that seemed to us to be relevant to any particular method/ technique or learning activity are highlighted.

For each innovative method/ technique or learning activity we have provided a brief theoretical frame which explains why a certain approach was thought to be effective in increasing motivation for and persistence in learning. This section is followed by a compact statement of the suggested procedure. For ease of use under workshop conditions, as a rule, the text is arranged so that the summary of the procedure is completely contained on one page.

The examples of practical use come from testing of the methods/ techniques or learning activities. They contain background information concerning the piloting and cross-piloting activities that were implemented within the CreMoLe project and the description of the testing activities. These examples of practical use together with the *evaluation* and *conclusions* sections offer some more practical tips/ ideas for the intended users of the method/ technique or learning activity.

3.4. Development of this Guidebook

The process by which this guidebook has been developed started, during the *Workshop for adult educators* organized within the framework of the CreMoLe project, hosted by the Italian partner organization Ce.S.I.E. in Palermo, September 2010. During the workshop we shared some effective practices identified during the survey stage, we defined the concept of *innovative strategy* and we detailed the plan to develop the innovative strategies.

Each partner organisation created at least one innovative strategy/ technique or learning activity to better motivate adults for learning. Then, we tested them first on groups of learners in the country where the innovative approach to teaching-learning was developed. The testing of the new strategies has been done in the frame of small scale action research projects carried out by the adult educators involved. By early February, when we organised the conference entitled *Sharing innovative strategies and reflections - Seminar and partnership meeting* in *Riga* (February 2011), we were ready to share with the partnership the outcomes of our action researches. We described the innovative strategy and shared the findings of the action research project in a manner that allowed other organisations to pick one strategy to *test* it on their own learners.

We supported each other within the partnership by cross-testing the approaches on different groups of learners in a country other than the one where the strategy was developed. There were two exceptions to this:

- the innovative approach created by the Spanish partner organisation; this innovation was designed specifically for motivating and increasing engagement of construction workers during their compulsory training in occupational safety at work . As no other partner organisation delivers compulsory training, the partnership decided that the Spanish organisation would re-test the same innovative approach on a different target group;
- both organisations from Germany developed a set of innovative learning activities by using on-line platforms for language learning. They worked together, one of the partners implemented and tested one innovative learning activity on their Moodle platform, and the other organisation peer-tested it.

In brief, our general approach was to look at what is already good or very good practice, create something new using core ingredients of these practices, and attempt to validate the new approaches. The pedagogy we employed relies on evoking prior knowledge, building meaning, and facilitating reflection on the newly acquired knowledge and skills.

4. Innovative strategies

4.1. What motivates adults to learn?

Extensive research has proved it that intrinsic and autonomous types of extrinsic motivation are conducive to long-term engagement in learning in all educational contexts, adult education included. Learning is a lifelong process in which people make contact with their environment and assimilate it. Learning is one of the most natural processes: the tendency to explore and to assimilate is innate. One of the major theories used for framing motivational studies – the *self-determination theory* (Deci and Ryan, 1985) – also assumes that the propensity to be curious about one's environment and interested in learning and developing one's knowledge is inherent in human nature. However, in most organised especially group learning settings external controls are introduced into the learning environment, which can undermine the psychological processes involved in high-quality, deep learning. Evidence suggests that conditions supporting students' experience of *autonomy*, *competence* and *relatedness* foster the highest motivation and engagement, including self-regulation for learning, enhanced academic performance, persistence in learning, creativity and wellbeing.

In this publication, we have used the following motivation factors as the focal points of the innovative training strategies, methods or activities that have been developed, all of which are subsumable to the three pillars of the self-determination theory:

- Self-directedness (autonomy);
- Shared ownership of training organization (autonomy and relatedness);
- Active engagement in learning (relatedness);
- Immediate applicability of learning (competence);
- Recognition of learner achievement (competence, relatedness);
- Supportive emotional environment (relatedness).

4.2. What do we mean by "innovative strategies"?

When things have been done in a certain way or a set of ways over a significant period of time, and the outcomes are still not as good as expected, or have stopped improving, then it is time to do something differently. In our case, when all the well-established ways *have* been tried out to improve adults' engagement in lifelong learning processes, and the results are still not satisfying (i.e. we are still not pleased with either the number of participating adults, the quality of their participation or the overall outcome of their participation), then innovation is required.

In our project, what we have agreed to change is the approach to facilitating adults' learning. In our understanding, introducing innovative strategies is like *assisting adults in their endeavour to discover new tastes when already known or new ingredients are combined differently*. We expect that this new combination will be the potion that causes change in the adults' thought processes about and/or attitudes toward learning, and thus they will get hooked on lifelong learning.

The innovative strategies we propose are meant to support professional and personal development; they are transferable and adjustable to contexts other than the ones in which they have been tried out. The innovation of the strategies we have developed and tested resides in at least one of the following:

- Use of a new type of learning activity with a group (or category) of learners who have not experienced it before;
- Use of a learning activity that has some new elements (e.g. a new set of materials such as hand-outs or worksheets, a different form of presentation of the new input, a new way of grouping learners, different sequencing of the steps to complete the activity, a different focus on some targeted learning behaviour, etc.).

In most of the innovative strategies that we share there is a combination of both the above described categories of innovation.

Name of the innovative strategy	Innovative dimension
Biographic work	New approach to actively engaging disadvantaged learners in developing cultural awareness and expression
Online café in language learning	New media for practicing communication in a foreign language in a structured manner
Community mapping	New purpose (evaluation) for using a popular community development activity
Stepping in the picture	New approach to using learning materials
Reading with predictions	New profile of learners' group – parents who then use the reading strategy with their young children
Basic skills for group discussions	New learning instrument for metacognitive learning
Benefits and costs	New learning instrument for metacognitive learning
Film as a Tool of Motivation	New approach to using film in learning (viewed with stops for comprehension check and anticipation)
Active engagement in learning occupational safety and health	New target group in a challenging learning environment using cooperative learning strategies

II. Innovative strategies developed by the project partners

5. Developed Innovative strategies
5.1. Overview

Strategies	Targeted competences and skills												Targeted motivation factors						Targeted learners / groups					Organisation of Learning, group size			
	Communication in the mother tongue	Communication in foreign languages	Learning to learn	Social and civic competences	Cultural awareness and expression	Critical thinking	Creativity	Initiative	Problem solving	Risk assessment	Decision taking	Management of feelings	Self-directedness	Active engagement in learning	Shared ownership of training organization	Supportive emotional environment	Immediate applicability of learning	Recognition of learner achievement	College students and youth	Educators / teachers	Adults in general	A specific profession	Mixed	Group of up to 5 learners	Group of 5-10 learners	Group of 10-20 learners	Mixed grouping
Biographic work: Associative picture cards				■	■		■		■				■	■		■		■			■				■	■	
Online café in language learning		■	■				■	■					■	■			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Community mapping				■		■	■						■	■			■		■	■						■	
Stepping in the picture			■	■	■	■			■		■	■		■		■	■		■	■	■		■			■	
Reading with prediction	■		■	■		■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■		■	■		■	■	■		■				■
Basic skills for group discussions	■	■	■										■	■									■				■
Benefits and costs										■	■	■	■	■							■					■	
Film as a tool for motivation	■	■	■				■					■		■					■	■	■				■	■	
Active engagement in learning Occupational Safety and Health									■	■				■			■					■				■	

5.2. Biographic work: Associative picture cards (Austria)

Introduction – An overview

Biographic work, a personal approach, is an option to learn more about oneself, to identify and make connections between the past, the present and the future, between one's social surrounding and personal life, personal perspectives and goals. By working with these subject areas, one can make resources accessible and get to know about the possibilities to (re)design one's own life concepts.

Through orientation along a specific timeline, one's development can be monitored better. People's own line of action and decisions can be understood better and can be accepted as the right solutions for that time and situation even if the person would act differently at the time of retrospection. In this way, one's current mental state and current experience are more visible and easier to understand. In view of one's life career, the person undergoing this process of awareness-awakening will be able to make effective adjustments and understand hidden issues and motives in life. The goal of biographical work is to find one's own thread of life and to develop it in an active way.

Steps to implement the strategy

Biographical work involves use of a variety of methodical tools (see Annex 8). In this section, we will describe the steps to carry out one particular activity, called *Associative picture cards*. In general, picture cards can be used in counselling, therapy, coaching and training for various purposes. By means of using pictures, participants are stimulated to connect with their inner self -- their memories, experiences, resources, ideals or feelings -- and to broaden and nourish it by means of the associations they make. The participants' interpretation of a card is always accepted in the way they chose to make it.

Below, we will describe the use of picture cards within the framework of biographic work for the purpose of identifying and activating the learners' resources.

The purpose of the activity is to assist the participants in becoming aware of the resources they have and know how to use by remembering a challenging situation in the past and recalling what helped them to master this situation. While the participants do the activity, they may become aware of additional resources they possess.

In order to carry out the activity with a group of up to 12 people, you need a set of OH-cards. To prepare the ac-

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible (up to one week)
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

tivity, spread out the cards openly so that they can all be seen. Divide the participants in small groups of 3 or 4 persons each.

Ask the participants to close their eyes, if they feel comfortable doing it, and remember situations in the past that were challenging for them. Give time so they can select a situation that they think they would like to work with and also share.

Instruct the participants to select a few cards (2 to 4) to represent the challenging situation and a few cards (2 to 4) to represent the resources that helped them to master this situation and to return to their small group.

Ask the participants to place the cards they have selected in front of themselves so that the cards form a story. Give the participants time (about 5 minutes per participant) to tell each other about the challenging situation mastered and the resources they used.

Ask the participants to return to the circle (whole group) and give them opportunity to share how it was to tell and listen to the stories. Conduct an evaluation of the activity together with the participants, giving everyone the chance to share what they learnt, but not forcing anyone to talk.

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible (up to one week)
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

Examples of practical use

Background information concerning the piloting and cross piloting activities

The background to develop the innovative strategy was provided by the project *Intercultural Centre* in 2010, in which we worked with young unemployed people with immigrant background. Young people with immigrant background are two to three times more likely to be affected by unemployment than non-immigrants, as a result of frequent employments without qualifications taken adequately into account and shorter employment periods.

The project concept included training in social and intercultural competencies, job orientation skills, gender issues, cultural work, establishing mentor-mentee partnerships, setting up internships, arranging outplacement, and doing biographical work.

Nearly all of the participating youngsters were early school leavers who had been included in supportive projects (job orientation, job seeking), but all of them dropped out of the training course and some of them dropped out of apprenticeship. That's why the project aimed to support and motivate these young people to improve their individual options, to develop their professional career by building on existing competencies and developing new ones.

After 4 weeks of training and because of a fixed training concept, we had to start with the biographic work in spite of the unfavourable conditions for this approach: the pre-selection process by the labour office was not done according to the proposed criteria and therefore group building was not completed (which could be one of the reason for the increasing absenteeism of the participants). Hoping that the biographic approach would help to increase their motivation in general, we started with the biographic work approach, a six-day program which we will describe below. We note that every day we started the training with a warm-up activity and with a reflection session on the previous day.

Day 1: Biographic work – introduction
- The metaphor Life – Journey (What is part of a journey? In what sense is it similar to life?); Brainstorming
- "Philosophizing" about particular aspects of life (aims, orientation, "luggage", companions/ partners, responsibility, etc.); Group discussion
- Brief discussion about issues connected to language, bilingualism, language learning as a child versus as an adult;
- Additional activity: getting to know each other on the basis of learners' life histories (in the broadest sense); the participants stood in a circle, while the trainer asked questions about life; all those who shared a specific characteristic had to take a step forward.

Day 2: Origin
- Family of origin: family tree; individual work followed by presentations;
- Probing questions addressed by the trainer or by the trainees to the presenters: Who lives nearby/far away? Who do you keep in touch with and who do you not keep in touch with? Who came to Austria earlier?
- Women's and men's professions in the family; the participants wrote about their family members' profession/ occupation on cards, and then built clusters.
- Group discussion of the findings related to professions, based on the clusters displayed on the board.

Day 3: Language
- Languages used in the (Austrian) society; language assessment done by the participants for themselves and their environment.
- Trainer input about language competence and its different elements (speaking, comprehension, writing, reading); everyday language versus complicated language; the history and meaning of names;

- Introduction to the topic "Resources"; "Passenger's luggage" - what learners have received from their family (i.e. resources and/or values); work in small groups to prepare a poster using symbols; presentation; discussions on similarities and differences.

Day 4: Resources
- Stories about learning resources ("Everything in life is good for something"); reading of stories ("Fatima", from "Palast der Geschichten" by Reinhold Dietrich); comprehension of the story, group discussion; development of a system for monitoring individual results of the biographical work (paired reflection);
- Imagery journey "Journey through life"; participants observe their own journey through life as if from "above", looking upon different the situations on the road of life;
- Self-confidence, resources; individual work in which the participants chose a positive experience and describe their contribution to it, answering questions such as "Which of my own abilities did I use and witness in action?"; then participants worked together to analyse one example.

Day 5: Resources
- From the individual to the general/ collective: "Challenging life situations"; selection of cards (card examples: Reach adulthood / Uncertainty, uncertain future / Experiencing a disappointment / Things never turn out the way you expect, etc.)
- Presentation of strategies for overcoming difficult life situations; the participants worked in small teams on each of the chosen life situations; they chose an illustrated card, set it up, explained how the card fit the topic; wrote down experiences/ tips/ advice for a person who struggles with the same problem answering the question: "How can you resolve such a situation?"
- Sources of strength (Resources in difficult situations); the participants arrange the cards with different possible answers on the floor (nature, family, friends, religion, hobby, etc.). Each participant selected one of the prepared cards and positioned herself/himself in front of her/his most important source of strength. The established groups asked each other questions.
- Viewing of the film "Jasmin" (Jasmin is the daughter of Pakistani immigrants, who lives between two completely different identities) as an example for sources of strength.   Explanation concerning choice of film, observation assignments; discussion.

Day 6: Identity
- Responsibility for the individual success of the current training course; the participants fill out the sheet "Responsibility-cake"; look at it together and discuss different positions/ perspectives;
- Social skills for an employee; mind-mapping activity;
- Identity - my inner world (logical levels from outside to inside: environment, behaviour, individual skills, persuasion, values, source of strength); individual (personal) description of each participant;
- Creation of a fictitious (youngster) identity; the participants used creative methods for presentation, such as rap music.

Some activities of the biographic work approach were tested in Romania with a group of six young people (Roma high school students) in the framework of their monthly group meeting with their mentor. The approach was used in a differently structured activity, which lasted somewhat over three hours, as described below.

After a brief introduction to the activity, the following task was given to the participants: *Draft a story, a poem, the lyrics and the melody of a song, a set of comics, or the script of a movie about your life as a journey*. Guiding questions were provided, which the young people read together with the trainer to make sure that everyone understood what they meant. The students then worked individually to prepare: think, make notes, and draft their work. Drafting was followed

by paired discussions where the youth shared their drafts, and received help from their peers to make a decision about what to elaborate on. By asking each other questions after listening to first thoughts/ answers to the guiding questions, the youth supported each other to make a decision about what story/ poem etc. to actually write about themselves and their life as a journey. Next, second drafts were prepared, or the chosen topics were elaborated on. When they finished, the trainer invited them to share their stories/ essays / products. Each presenter received questions from their peers or from the trainer.

The activity ended with a group reflection on the following questions: "What have I learnt about myself by reflecting on my life so far / What have I learnt about how I think by reflecting on my thoughts about this journey?"

Evaluation

For the pilot activities the evaluation was done through self- and peer evaluation of the participant group after each working day and at the end of the week based on the question *What have we learned and how could it be used?* The trainers also conducted evaluation each day concerning group dynamics, individual progress, while they also discussed striking points and necessary adaptations. The trainers' conclusions and the findings drawn from the participants' self-assessment revealed the following aspects. Because of the specific situation of the group in general at the time of implementation of the biographic approach (new group members joined the group of nine already existing members), the group members weren't enough familiarized with each other, so they didn't want to discuss their difficult family situations in the group, and showed some indifference. Difficulties appeared due to the daily fluctuation, and the planed *bottom to top work approach* was difficult to maintain. Despite all the care taken by some participants, some group members didn't manage to concentrate long enough, and their focusing on the topics over a long period proved difficult. In general the participants had difficulties engaging with other group members along their contributions to the discussion.

Moreover, the group was split into interested and indifferent group members, and the trainers had difficulty handling this situation. In response to this situation the implementation concept had to be adapted from time to time.

Because of the language problems (some of the participants didn't understand and speak German language well enough to follow the content), translation was necessary, which was provided by the fluent group members, and which further caused disruption in the group.

The formation of working groups by the participants themselves was mainly done by ethnic criteria. When the trainers set up mixed groups, the group discussion showed better results. Dealing with the issue of identity captured the participants' attention significantly. For this topic we had to do a specific follow-up work.

The group reflection the week after the implementation of the biographic approach brought an interesting result. Participants apologized for their indifferent behaviour during the implementation of the *Biographic work approach*.

The activities cross-tested on the group of Roma youth were evaluated through group reflection on the following questions "What have I learnt about myself by reflecting on my life so far / What have I learnt about how I think by reflecting on my thoughts about this journey?" and by an individual reflection, where they had to complete a feedback form. The findings in this case were: some of the participants wrote "safe" texts like one would in school (although they had shared quite personal details orally), which could be a sign of insecurity in handling writing or it could reflect the influence of the environment in which the meeting was held (a school); therefore, this activity is probably best done outside of the school, and not upon a first meeting with the group members; alternative forms of expression(other than text) should be encouraged more. The trainer's expectation that the youth would reflect deeply on personal issues *and* share their reflections was unrealistic.

What was shared in the group related to the questions "What have I learnt about myself by reflect-

ing on my life so far / What have I learnt about how I think by reflecting on my thoughts about this journey?" did not reflect much learning about the use of reflection, but rather learning about one's personality. However, as the participants did not seem to be used to reflecting deeply, one such meeting which was relatively short could not be expected to teach them that.

The size of the group is very important; this activity is best done with small groups (max 8 participants).

The participants themselves suggested that a follow-up would be good, and then they would feel more relaxed, more secure in the group, and they would get a better chance to know each other.

The impression of the trainer was that the written feedback only partly reflected the effect of the activity on the group members; they seemed to write what they suspected that the trainer would expect them to write, which may be yet another sign of insecurity.

Conclusions

The pilot activities have shown that motivation – shown by decrease in the number of sessions the learners missed ("times absent") - didn't increase significantly in the group as a whole. A significant increase in motivation for participation in learning activities could only be noted in the case of a few participants. Our hypothesis (i.e. *participation in group work where the topic of learning is one's own life leads to the emergence of a sense of success in learning and subsequent behaviour which reflects the interest to participate in more such learning*) could not be verified. This seems to be an indication that the *biographic work approach* is rather a long term approach, especially when this work is done with a group of young participants.

The teams that carried out the piloting and cross-piloting activities still see the value of the *biographical work approach* even with the described target groups, but the concept of implementation has to be adapted in certain ways:

- The approach is highly effective with long standing small groups. In the case of the pilot activities the group was still concerned with the clarification of the individual group status (the period of implementation was decided too early, the process of one's positioning in the group was not yet completed); in the case of the cross-piloting activities, the group wasn't together long enough and they were not familiar with each other.
- In both cases, the trainers who implemented the biographic work had not worked with the groups of learners before, whereas biographic work needs a certain level of familiarity with the group and experience in handling the specific group.
- The implementation of the biographic approach needs extensive time; it ideally requires individual talks with the learners before, during and after the implementation.
- Experience with the specific target group related to the pilot activities (youngsters with migrant background) has shown that migration or "to be a migrant" is seen as a deficit in the host society. This makes it difficult to discuss family topics in the group. In this case it is also important to pay attention to a coherent language, especially when working with a complex approach and/or with groups with some degree of language difficulties.

5.3. Online café in language learning (Germany)
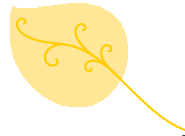
Introduction – An overview

Iberika group and the Thüringer Volkshochschuleverand e.V. developed an innovative strategy to motivate its adult language learners to allocate an increased amount of time to practising the language between classes and to therefore learn more and better and - on the long term - persist longer in lifelong learning.

The online café is basically an online forum. Through the piloting and cross-testing phase of the CreMoLe project it was used by both institutions to motivate language students.

The online café is a part of Blended Learning. According to Sauter, Sauter and Bender (2003), Blended Learning is an integrated combination of the advantages of face-to-face instruction and technology-based E-learning. The trainer needs to give guidance to the students during the E-learning phase. For this purpose, an E-learning platform should ideally be used where, at any time and from anywhere, the trainer can provide the students with information or additional material, quizzes, open online forums, etc. Before December 2010, neither Iberika group nor the Thüringer Volkshochschuleverand e.V. had applied Blended Learning within their institutions.

The introduction of Blended Learning was a process. Within this phase different kinds of exercises were developed and tested. In the cross-testing phase both institutions used the open source E-learning platform called "moodle". For this guidebook we focus on the description of one exercise: the online café.

Steps to implement the strategy

The evaluation of the piloting and cross-piloting has shown which steps should be considered towards a successful implementation of the online café:

1. Make sure that you and your trainees have sufficient computer skills to use an E-learning platform. Alternatively, you may have to use staff who can introduce the technical part to you.
2. Make sure that you and your students have access to a computer either in your institution or at home.
3. Choose any kind of E-learning platform which provides the possibility to create an online forum if you do not already have one in your institution. The kind of platform/forum depends on the financial resources of the educational institution or of the students. Depending on this, one may decide to buy an already set-up system or use an open source software such as moodle to design one's own E-learning platform. Already set up systems often prove to be more

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible (up to one week)
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia
e-learning platform

user-friendly, while open source E-learning platforms can be filled with more individualised content. If you decide for the latter, remember that the teacher will need extra time to create and upload the individualised exercises.

4. Analyse the needs (grammar, vocabulary, fluency, accuracy, etc.) and interests (topics) of your target group in language learning. Depending on what you find, choose a topic for the online café. This can be a theme you want to discuss such as politics, environmental issues or hobbies, spare time activities, etc. The topic may be introduced through another medium that you can install and/or upload in the E-learning platform/forum. Such a medium could be a song, a fragment of a film, a speech of a famous person or a newspaper article. The discussion will further develop the ideas introduced through the additional medium.

5. Create the online café technically and make it accessible to all students (log in etc.)

6. Introduce the online café and the additional material to the learners. It is important to explain:
   a)   The advantage of using it in class;
   b)   How to use it;
   c)   Remind the students to use it.

7. Start using the online café in between the classes. Not only you as a teacher but also the students can upload and include different media, such as photos, links or articles. This makes the approach very interactive.

8. Correct the students. This can be done directly within the online café (forum) or during your next face-to-face session. You need not limit yourself to correcting your learners, but may also actively take part in their discussion. Bring in new aspects and be part of your course. This gives you an opportunity to make corrections unobtrusively.

9. Evaluate the use of the platform after the first few sessions in order to gain insight into the learners' opinion about it:
   – How many learners have used the platform?
   – If not all, why have some not used it?
   – Are there any technical difficulties?

10. As often as necessary, adapt the topic/theme to the learners' needs. Consider using different media approaches like videos, pictures, live streams etc.

11. Continue checking the results of what has been done by the learners. Are there any difficulties with the content? Where do they need more support (grammar, listening or reading comprehension, etc.). Use the results for further planning of the self-studying dimension.

12. Final evaluation. Talk with your learners about using the online café: Was it useful? What should be improved? What were the weaknesses and strengths of the approach?

Targeted competences and skills
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Communication in foreign languages
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Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
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Adults in general
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Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
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Up to 2 days
Flexible (up to one week)
Necessary resources / materials
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Photographs
Film
Multimedia
e-learning platform

Example of practical use

The online café can be used in different settings as well as with different groups. Within the piloting and cross-piloting phase, both iberika group and the Thüringer Volkshochschulverband e.V. tested the online café with language learners. Both institutions took the chance to test it with different target groups, within different settings and through different E-learning-platforms.
When we thought of using the online café, we were aware of a number of issues connected to learning a foreign language, which requires a lot of sustained effort. A general problem when learning a language is the lack of motivation to constantly study at home. This phenomen occurs especially in classes with several days' time between consecutive sessions. Many adult learners are employed and do not have the time and energy to study outside of class. Especially those learners who do not benefit from learning the language immediately, for instance by travelling to the country where the language is spoken, face these problems.

Another problem that often occurs is how to catch up with the work if a student misses a class. Most of the times the students cannot get access to the learning material and to what was done during the class they missed. Moreover, learning a language is sometimes not very entertaining because the vocabulary has to be memorized and the grammar has to be practised meticulously. The consequence of the above can be that the learners make little effort to study between the classes or in the worst case drop out of the course. To prevent these consequences, we came up with the idea to of the online café.

Here is one example of how the online café has been used. After all the technical aspects had been taken care of and the students were already familiar with the online café format, the trainer introduced the topic for discussion: *"We shall be free".* For this activity, in the E-learning platform we installed a link to the song by Garth Brooks *"We shall be free"*. The learners first listened to the song. After that, they did a fill-in-the-blanks-type exercise in which they had to identify words from the song to complete the lyrics of the song. They were able to correct themselves, as they were also given the lyrics of the song. Next, the trainer instructed the students to turn to the online café, and complete the following task: *Tell your colleagues what is important for you in order to feel free as described in the song "We shall be free". Express your own opinion and respond to the statements of the other learners."*
Example: When politicians really take care of the social problems of their citizens, then we shall be free.
The students contributed their ideas, and commented on the ideas of their peers and on what the trainer shared. The trainer corrected the students' errors by interacting with them in the on-line forum.
(student wrote) When there will be no weapons in the world, we shall be free.
(teacher responds) You mean when there are no weapons, we shall be free. How about freedom of thought?
You can find an overview of the piloting and cross piloting activities, as well as more examples for online discussions in the Annexes 9 - 11.

Evaluation

The evaluation of using the online café was done through the use of a questionnaire and discussions with the learners. In addition, the trainers also reflected on the students' progress and level of involvement. To pull together the results, both organizations had a feedback round with the teachers who carried out the above-described learning activities. The ideas below emerged from the processing of the questionnaires, and from the feedback the trainers provided.
Online café has a number of advantages. For instance, the trainees can practice the use of grammatical structures, learn new vocabulary and improve their writing skills in the foreign language

detached from time and space. Furthermore, through the corrections of the teacher the students can improve and learn from the mistakes of the others, not only during the classes but also in the online communication. The teachers can learn a lot about the interests and the learning needs of their students. Another advantage of the online café or the use of any an E-learning platform in general is that if a trainee has missed a class, he/she can at least take part in the discussion and catch up in a more flexible way.

In general the trainees can improve their writing skills, express their own opinion and be creative through the use of the online café. They can communicate, interact and socialize even outside class. Both the teacher and the students can give immediate feedback to each other. The themes can be discussed without any space or time limitations.

All these points increased the motivation of most learners to allocate more time at home to language learning between classes. The successful use of the online cafe mainly depends on:

- Age: the online-café was more often used by younger participants due to its socialising effect;
- Combination with other media: a variety of media should be used to make learning more exciting;
- Topic: Themes and media should fit the interests and needs of the target group;
- Time frame: to get used the online-learning platform can take some time; therefore its use is more relevant in longer courses than in short, intensive courses.
- The learners' computer skills; if the learners' computer skills are not good enough, using the technology can act as a deterrent rather than help to learn more.

Conclusion

To sum up, the success of the online café stands and falls with three determinants:
a) The teacher/ trainer
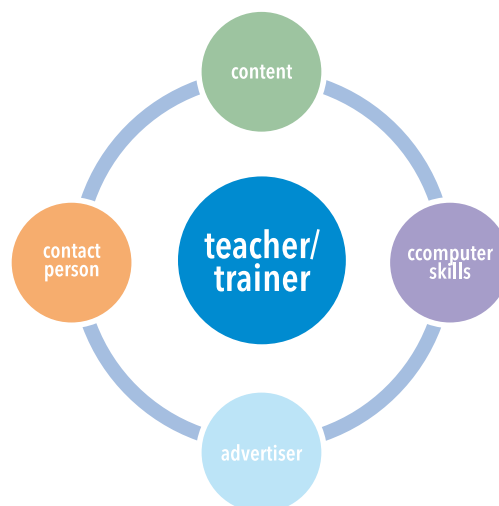
Teachers and trainers find themselves in a tight sport. They will not only be the persons to teach the content of the course but also the instructor for how to use the E-learning platform and contact person for all technical problems and complaints.

It is also important that the organisation the teacher/trainer works for reimburses the extra working time incurred by the implementation and use of the online café. The teacher/trainer should also expect that in the beginning it will take quite some time until the learners start using the online café. Therefore especially in the beginning it will be necessary for the teacher/trainer to explain and present it more than once as well as to answer questions about the online café.

b) The learners
- The learners' age;
- The learners' computer skills in combination with their attitude toward technology: when students don't enjoy working and learning at the computer, the online café is not suitable;
- Attitude towards E-learning: they must be determined to work in a self-directed manner and to spend extra time learning outside the lesson.

c) The topic/theme
Exercises should fit the need of the learners. In general, exercises should be:
- linked to the content of the class;
- fit the level of the learners;
- make learning more exciting;
- economical: they should not be too complex or time consuming.

To conclude, based on our experiences, the online café helps to make language learning more engaging and to give the participants an enhanced role during the course. They are given the possibility to practice from home and therefore improve the skills fitting to their needs and level of performance.

5.4. Community mapping (Italy)
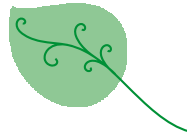
Introduction – An overview

According to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC), "[u]nderstanding the multicultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity is essential." Starting from this conceptual basis, we faced the need for the development of intercultural dialogue within local communities to create an inclusive European (and global) identity promoting the common cultural heritage and the importance of cultural diversity.

One of the best ways to facilitate communication and dialogue between people from different backgrounds, helping mutual understanding and intercultural exchange, is to stimulate their creativity. Creativity is a fertile ground on which to plant the foundations for critical comparison, a base of discussion that also raises self-awareness. This further leads to the trainees' active involvement in the learning process, as well as a conscious choice for the results to be accomplished, and easier self-evaluation of what has been achieved. All these elements jointly yield increased motivation for learning, thanks also to immediate applicability of what has been learned and awareness of the results achieved.

Community Mapping is a strategy that uses maps to gain understanding of a local situation and to facilitate discussion within a diverse group, and provide the basis to build a common understanding of the boundaries and characteristics of a community or neighbourhood, and of how all participants in the discussion fit into it. Together, participants create a map of their community that shows where various resources, activities and opportunities are located. Everyone's input is necessary in order to achieve a detailed description of the community.

Steps to implement the strategy

The strategy can be implemented in groups of 10-15 learners. It is very easy to use, and it takes no longer than 1 day of training for its proper implementation. The materials needed are paper and coloured pencils, crayons or markers.

First introduce the purpose of the exercise. Divide the group into sub-groups of 2 or 3 people. Request that each of the small groups draw a map of the city, the community or desired urban area(s) marking the relevant personal

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible (up to one week)
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia
Paper
Coloured pencils, crayons, markers

landmarks (what they like or don't like about where they live; ideas for making things better). Make sure all discussion gets recorded and referenced to the map!

Give people plenty of time (45-50 minutes) and space, paper and pens to prepare their maps. Underline that it is not important to draw an exact map and that they could use all their creativity. Bring the maps together and ask each group to present theirs. During the presentation, ask questions to probe understanding. For example, "Are there places in the community where immigrants and the autochthons generally meet? Are there any differences among men and women?" The questions can be adapted to match the issues we want to investigate primarily. Ask every learner to explain why the places on the created map are important for them and show on a real map of the area where else they frequently go in the city/ neighbourhood. Then, at the end of the exercise each participant should be asked to evaluate how the activity went and what they discovered.

It is possible to add other elements to the community mapping activity (as it was done during the cross piloting) such as: ask the learners to image that a friend comes to their town and has only 24 hours to see the sights. The learners should think about a schedule for these 24 hours in which they should show their personal most important places of the town to their friends, all the things they believe a visitor shouldn't miss. When they have designed the schedule, they should write a letter to their friends explaining or proposing what they would do on that day. As a closing activity, everyone presents their personal proposed tour on a big map of the town.

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings

Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement

Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed

Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping

Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible (up to one week)

Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia
Paper
Coloured pencils, crayons, markers

Examples of practical use

The above described activity was piloted by CESIE in Palermo within a project called *Learn About Us Through Culture,* which targeted a diversity of people. CESIE uses volunteering and active participation as means of promoting lifelong learning. Volunteers from different countries throughout Europe and the world are invited by CESIE to work with members of the organization and the local community in Palermo. The participants were aged between 18 and 27 years. They came from Austria, Estonia, France, Romania and the United Kingdom. They had spent 9 months in Palermo, Italy within the framework of a project called "Ubuntu" which had a group of volunteers from different countries help out the local community of immigrant children and their families in Palermo. The aims of this project were to promote intercultural dialogue and active citizenship, to raise awareness of the existence of minorities, cultural diversity, and European identity, and to combat discrimination.

The cross-testing of the Community Mapping activity took place in a so-called "integration course" of the Berlin language school Iberika. In this course, migrants from different countries learn German together for eight months, for 4 hours a day, five days a week. When the strategy was tested, the class was in the language level B1 and the learners could understand, speak and write German quite well. Eight students of the class were present. These learners were between 24 and 46 years old, coming from eight different countries: Poland, Cameroon, Ukraine, Montenegro, Russia, Spain, Vietnam and Ecuador. Most of them went to Berlin just 6 to 12 months before and had plans to settle there. Their social background was very different, some of them had completed their studies and had jobs, or were still studying, while others were less educated and had low qualifications. It was a very diverse and friendly group, open to experiencing new teaching methods.

Thanks to its simple nature, Community Mapping is a very useful tool to stimulate engagement in the learning process and to overcome cultural and language barriers.
When we first used it, our aims were:
- helping people record and analyse information which is a sensitive issue to talk about;
- giving less confident people a chance to express personal opinions ;
- ensuring that people's views are recorded and the geographical details are retained,
- facilitating intercultural dialogue among participants from different cultures, of different ages, and between guests and the local host community;
- overcoming cultural and language barriers;
- shifting focus from use of literacy skills as a means of expression;
- stimulating community-based activities at the local level – the volunteers have a positive impact upon the activities already developed locally;
- increasing the opportunities of non-formal education in Europe.

The target groups in both the piloting and the cross-piloting activities were composed of adults from different countries, who had lived in the area for several months before they took part in the Community Mapping. The activity was highly valuable because it helped to understand the perception that foreigners have of the city that hosts them, not only from a geographical point of view, but also from a social perspective.
The specific problems we addressed through the use of Community Mapping were:
- Absence of communication between local and immigrant communities: the local community and migrant communities often work and live in the same areas but they are not able to communicate. There seems to be lack of integration of the migrants resulting from a lack of motivation towards mutual knowledge;
- The usefulness of education and intercultural dialogue is not fully grasped by either migrants, or the autochthonous population;
- Low impact of the volunteers' work in terms of intercultural dialogue at the local level.

The implementation of the strategy took one day (six hours of training), and included the following activities. The trainers introduced the activity by stating the purpose: learning about the places where immigrants and autochthons gather together, and the reasons why they get together there. At this stage, the trainers had to be careful not to reveal any personal assumptions. Then, the trainers divided the group into smaller clusters of 2 or 3 people. Each of the groups was asked to draw a map of the centre of Palermo and mark the relevant personal landmarks. The learners were provided with paper and pencils, and told to take their time drawing the map. The trainers assisted the learners when necessary. When the maps were ready, each group was invited to present their findings. The trainers and the other participants asked clarification questions during the presentations.

The cross piloting activity, which took place at Iberika school in Berlin, was carried out using four class periods of 45 minutes each. This is how the trainer at Iberika described the experience: "First we had a short round of presentations. After that, I hung up a huge Berlin map in the classroom and we identified our position on it. Then I asked the students to create their own Berlin map, which should reflect their personal Berlin and places that are important for them or which they often go to. They had 45 minutes for that and lots of paper and pens. After this first step, everyone was asked to present their map, and explain it to the other learners, who could also ask clarification questions. Every student explained why the places on the created map were important for them and showed on the real map where else they frequently go to in the city. The next step was to image that a friend was going to visit Berlin and would have 24 hours to see the city. The students were invited to think about a time schedule for these 24 hours. At the end, everyone presented their personal Berlin tour on the big map placed in the classroom."

Evaluation

At the end of the exercise in Palermo, each participant was asked to evaluate how the activity went and what they had discovered. The two trainers needed to find ways to evaluate, together with the participants, their level of intercultural learning and awareness after spending nine months developing these skills through active, participatory learning and volunteering. The use of Community Mapping gave the opportunity to the participants to self-assess their progress in relation to knowledge of the territory along these topics: intercultural dialogue, minorities and cultural diversity, active citizenship, European awareness, and fighting discrimination. Self-assessment encourages motivation for learning. This is confirmed by the reactions of the participants, who have worked actively in the activities.

The reaction of the group of language learners in Berlin was really positive. They had expected to go on with their language book exercises as they came to the lesson. Their first reaction to the topic of the class was quite positive and they were curious about what was going to happen. At the end, the learners said that it was very interesting for them and that they were reflecting about their moving through the city and their knowledge and ignorance about it. They found the class motivating and said that they would like to do more of this kind of work. They also said that it was not useless in terms of language learning because they had to both listen and speak during the activity. At the same time the teacher noticed that they took interest in looking at the real Berlin map to identify streets and planning their tours.

Conclusions

Community Mapping is a very useful, interesting and at the same time entertaining method to exploit an intercultural environment including for purposes of language learning. In a language class, it also can be used while learning how to ask for directions or how to describe a city.

The use of the interactive elements resulted in the fact that the participants were highly motivated and deeply engaged during the activity.

Our major findings about learning with the use of Community Mapping were:

- it improves communication among the learners;
- it enhances knowledge of the trainers about the situation of their learners and the area where they live;
- it helps reflection on the reasons of territorial separation of the different ethnic or social communities.

Because of its simplicity, Community Mapping is easily transferable to different contexts. The method can be implemented in any location, with different types of learners, ideally gathered in a diverse group. First used within a project called Learn About Us Through Culture, which targeted a diversity of people, Community Mapping has proved accessible for a variety of groups in a variety of contexts.

5.5. Stepping in the picture (Latvia)
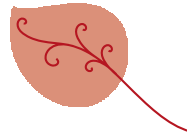
Introduction – An overview

The innovative strategy "Stepping in the picture" is a learning activity involving the use of a picture showing a real life, generally problematic situation. It requires active engagement of the participants to reveal *their* understanding of the particular theme or issue represented in the picture and to share their knowledge and experience related to the topic. The strategy is aimed at developing the participants' critical and creative thinking, decision making and problem solving skills. It also develops the participants' social and civic competences, and as such has the potential of motivating them for further learning. As shown below, it is applicable with different adult groups and in various contexts.

Steps to implement the strategy

The strategy may be applied with any group of learners, when the trainer wants to help them clarify their initial ideas/views on some topical issue/problem or to facilitate the learners' reflection on a theme that has been studied. The recommended number of learners is between 10 and 20. Fewer than that would jeopardise the diversity of opinions, while many more than 20 could lengthen the activity.

To prepare for the activity, select pictures that reflect or relate to the topic of your teaching. They should be topical, such that can be interpreted differently, and allow for a variety of ideas or opinions. Decide on questions that relate the topic to the aims of your activity, and which are adequate for the stage where you pose them in the learning process. Here are some examples:

a. How would you characterize the situation shown in the picture? What may have caused such a situation? What could have happened before the picture was taken? What is happening now?

b. To your mind, who are the people in the picture? What are the relationships among them? What makes you think that?

c. What could the people in the picture say or think? Why do you think that?

d. How could the events develop further? Why do you think so?

e. Imagine you are one of the people in the picture. What do you smell in the air? What sounds do you hear?

f. What is left "outside of the picture", i.e. what is not shown?

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

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g. Why do you think the photographer chose to take this picture?

h. In the shoes of which person from the picture would you like / not like to be? etc.

Decide how you will share the pictures and how you will manage the question and response activity, and also prepare questions to facilitate post-discussion reflection.

Start the activity by sharing the picture. You could project it on a screen so that everyone gets to see it well during the entire activity. In this case, the participants can work individually or in pairs, or even in small groups, and answer the questions about the picture.

Alternatively, when you have several pictures to share, divide the learners into groups of a number equal to the number of pictures that you want them to respond to. For example, if you have five pictures, set up groups of five. To each group, distribute a set of copies of the printed pictures attached to a piece of paper with the questions. The pictures are passed round to each member of the group, who take turns writing their response and then fold the paper to cover their answer so that the next person does not see what the other group members responded. In either version, this step of the activity may take up to 30 minutes.

When the individuals or small groups have prepared their responses, organize a large group discussion of about 30 minutes to facilitate the sharing of responses. Summarize the discussion, pointing out the common and the different opinions. To close the discussion, depending on the group, you may want to ask why the learners think opinions about the same picture are different. In the end, ask the participants to reflect individually on the activity.

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
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Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
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½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
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Necessary resources / materials
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Photographs
Film
Multimedia

Example of practical use

Stepping in the Picture was first introduced in the professional development program "How to set up development education projects in your school and in the local community". Development education is a relatively new theme in Latvia. In order to reach out to wide audiences, to increase people's understanding of the global development trends and their connection with Latvia and each of us, a program was initiated for educators. This program offers practical strategies that invite discussions on real life issues.

One of the topics we discussed by using *Stepping in the Picture* was "The different faces of safety". The pictures were taken from different sources and were related to the following:

A – a photograph taken in the refugee camp in Gori showing the consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia; close to 100,000 civilians had to leave their homes.

B – a photo related to SARS (Severe acute respiratory syndrome). It touched 37 countries, 800 people died. It started in China, and spread in Asian countries. People wearing facial masks were seen everywhere. Fear from SARS seriously damaged the economy of Asian countries.

C – a photo showing armed conflict in the Middle East. Conflicts nowadays are wars over access to natural resources, especially oil. Conflicts in Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan are attempts of the great powers to re-divide their influence upon oil regions. Such wars continue inside the countries and it is mainly civilians that suffer the most.

D – a photo related to living conditions in developing countries. Millions of people in developing countries die as they have no access to clean drinking water. One of the solutions is the Life Straw, a personal water filter, which is 25 cm long, 30 mm in diameter and costs less than 2 US dollars. It purifies water and kills different bacilli. One is enough to filter approximately 700 litres of water, which is the annual consumption of a person. Its inventor was Westrgaard Frandsen.

E – a photo showing a boy-soldier in Uganda. Children have been used in wars from the beginnings of civilization. This was widely spread practice in the Civil War in America, as well as in Nazi Germany. Today some 300,000 children are soldiers, two thirds of them in Africa. Involvement of children in armed conflicts is a violation of their rights.

F – a photo showing the people's concern for security. Airports and planes, where a huge number of people concentrate in a relatively small place, are often targets of terrorist threats. The international community discusses the balance between security measures and the protection of personal data, privacy and human rights.

On a screen, the learners were shown the six pictures described above, and given the following tasks:
   a. What do you think the person in the picture is thinking/saying at this particular moment? Write you answer, then read it to the others, and invite comments.
   b. What issues connected with safety and conflicts can you learn from this picture? Answer the question in your group, then present it to another other groups and invite their comments.

Highlights of the group discussions were shared in the large group. Then, the trainer summarized the ideas and pointed out the common and the different elements in the groups' comments. At the end of the activity, the trainer asked the participants to reflect individually on their learning and on the strategy that was used.

Cross-piloting of the strategy was performed with year 2 college students of European Administration. The activity was used to introduce the topic ("Globalization" within the unit "International Trade" in the English class. Before the topic was introduced to the students, they were given 6 hand-outs with pictures on different aspects related to globalisation. They worked in pairs to find an appropriate title (reflecting the meaning/ message of the picture) for each photograph and explain the reason for their choice of title. Next, they were asked to work with another pair to identify common elements in the six pictures and name the topic they can all be related to. Once the topic ("Globalization") was introduced, the teacher started a cluster on the board, with the topic

word in the middle, and the words *Economy, Culture, Environment, Society* and *Politics* around it. After small group and whole class discussions, the students were asked to express their opinions on which dimension of globalisation each picture best represents. In the end, the students were invited to share their written feedback on the activity with the teacher.

The strategy was also tested on five groups of teachers and school principals within a complex training program on Inclusive Education for School Leaders. The session in which it was used focused on working effectively with parents/carers**.** The lead questions posed to the groups for the discussion centring on four different pictures (which showed different families engaged in a variety of everyday situations) were:

I. Why might these parents be "hard to reach" for you?
II. Why might these parents feel that you are "hard to reach"?
III. Do any of the pictures show parents like the ones you work with? What similarities are there? Are there any differences? What?

In the course of the discussions, prompting questions were included, such as, "*What do you think these people did before the photo was taken? What sort of parent could this be: articulate, assertive, angry, knowledgeable, educated, etc.?*"

Evaluation

During the piloting and cross-piloting, feedback was collected from the participants and the trainers. The most relevant ones are summed up below.

The most important features of *Stepping in the Picture* are:
- It encourages cooperation in the group while preparing for the large group discussion,
- It provides the opportunity to share one's experiences,
- It improves one's learning skills;
- It develops empathy, creativity and critical thinking.

Some of the arguments the participants made to substantiate that the strategy motives people to learn were:
- it can be used for professional development purposes;
- it is useful in connecting theory to practice;
- it provides the possibility for learners to express their opinions and feelings, and to learn about themselves.

The learners also pointed out that in order for them to willingly participate in further education/ lifelong learning activities it is essential that there should be a positive emotional atmosphere, preferably in a comfortable room. The issues discussed should be relevant for them. The approach to learning should be interactive, cooperation-oriented and reliant on the learners' creativity. Real-life examples and cases should be used, with practical applicability in one's professional and/ or everyday life. The use of ICT was also pointed out as a plus.

In the post-piloting interviews, the trainers provided their opinion on the most significant outcomes of using *Stepping in the Picture*, which were the high level of involvement of the participants. The participants readily moved from one group structure to another, they volunteered to express their personal opinion, and to share their professional and personal experiences. In addition, the participants demonstrated deep understanding of the topic/ theme/ issue discussed.

Conclusions

Stepping in the Picture can be used in everyday situations, as well as in one's professional life. It facilitates the learners' understanding of the key concepts or major themes. In addition, it develops critical and creative thinking skills and has the potential to motivate people for involvement in lifelong learning processes.

The strategy encourages active and cooperative learning and provides the opportunity for the learners to share ideas, opinions, experiences, which are all high motivators for the learners' persistence in lifelong learning.

The features that guarantee the effectiveness of the strategy are:
- it invites active and cooperative learning,
- it allows for the expression of a diversity of opinions, and meaningful interaction among the learners, while it also helps develop a sense of security in each participant that everybody's ideas and thoughts matter and they are listened to respectfully.
- it ensures a positive emotional environment,
- it is appropriate for linking theory to practice.

As regards transferability, *Stepping in the Picture* can be used in different contexts and cultural environments. As demonstrated by the piloting and cross-piloting activities, the strategy is rather flexible and can be adapted to the needs of a variety of target audiences. When trainers decide to use it, they should be familiar with the social, political and cultural context so as to include in the pictures locally identifiable elements that can be recognized by the learners.

5.6. Reading with prediction (Lithuania)

Introduction – An overview

Scientific literature highlights the role of parents in forming their children's skills and appreciation of reading. Children who grow up in whose families where reading gets attention learn and express their thoughts better, and have more developed imagination. Reading books, listening to fairy tales, taking part in discussions about books in early childhood help to achieve better academic results in later age. Both Lithuanian and international research shows that children whose parents have read to them aloud frequently are twice as effective readers as those whose parents have read aloud to them only sporadically.

Reading with Prediction is based on posing open questions to a group of readers who are reading the same text, stopping at specified points to discuss and reflect on the meanings of the text. With a group of up to 12 participants, the activity can last 90 minutes, while bigger groups necessitate more time. The duration of the activity also depends on the length of the text being read. The strategy relies on a constructivist framework for learning defined by three phases called anticipation – building knowledge – consolidation (ABC) (Crawford *et. al*, 2005), or evocation – realization of meaning – reflection (ERR) (Steele, Meredith& Temple, 1998).

Reading with Prediction helps to develop thoughtful, reflective readers. The strategy is based on purposeful inquiry, and is characterized by the following:

- It allows readers to set their own objectives for reading;
- It encourages readers to formulate their own questions;
- It keeps readers actively engaged in the reading process;
- It raises motivation for the reading;
- It leads to interesting discussions;
- It encourages readers to express individual opinions;
- It creates a respectful environment for discussion, where different opinions are voiced;
- It helps readers become aware of their feelings and understand the text better;
- It allows readers to become aware of and possibly reconsider what they value.

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

Steps to implement the strategy

1. To prepare the activity, think about your learners, and identify a piece of fiction (a narrative, a story) that focuses on the issue you want to discuss with them. The text should not be too long (1-2 pages, depending on the participants' reading level), and it should lend itself to multiple interpretations. Ideally, the text should bring in a surprising idea, something that people would not easily predict one could think about the issue.

2. Decide on three or four stopping points in the text. These should be either marked by suspense, or just prior to a significant turn in the story.

3. Prepare good, open-ended questions that you want to pose to the participants to achieve three goals: a) help them build and reveal their comprehension of what has been read; b) make predictions or anticipate the next part of the text; c) make personal connections with the story. The questions should relate to the main topic of discussion.

4. When you word your questions, think of the level of cognitive engagement that the question requires. Avoid the simple recall questions or only plan to ask them if you think that your learners may easily misunderstand some of the text. Instead, prepare questions that can receive several good answers, which invite making personal connections, and draw on the learners' life experience for multiple answers. For example, if your topic is housing issues, you may want to ask your participants whether they think homeless people in the 19th century were essentially similar to or different from homeless people nowadays. Thus, your learners will learn to ask good questions themselves and dig deeper in their thinking for meaningful answers.

5. Decide whether you will be reading the text for your participants, or whether you will have them read it. In the second case, you will have to prepare a copy of it for each participant, with the stopping points clearly marked, so that the learners are not easily tempted to read on before the discussion.

6. To set the frame for the activity in your group, start by engaging the participants in a discussion which facilitates connecting the topic to their personal experience. Then, introduce the reading activity by saying: "We are going to read together a text that is about our topic. From time to time, I will stop reading/ I am going to ask you to stop reading, and discuss about what we have read."

7. Ask them to make predictions about the text relying on the title; if you get surprising answers, remember to ask why the person thinks so. In general, accept all answers as long as

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Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
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they are well argued. When you invite predictions, be careful not to reveal your thoughts.

8. Have the participants read to the first stop; then pose the first question. Conduct the discussion in the following manner: allow participants to think individually, then discuss in pairs for a couple of minutes before you invite 3-4 to answer for the whole group to hear. Encourage divergent answers. To keep the conversation going, and encourage all participants to contribute, you may say: "So Diane thinks X, and Luke thinks Y; what do you think? Do you agree with either of them?" or "How do your thoughts compare to Marie's?" Allow as much time for these discussions as you can afford. Conclude the discussion briefly before you move on to the next reading or the next question.

9. Carry on reading the rest of the text in the same manner, using the rest of the questions

10. When the text has been read, and all questions answered, invite the participants to share their thoughts about this reading experience. Discuss how they can use this reading strategy to make sense of other reading.

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
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Example of practical use

Trainers of Modern Didactics Center Lithuania used this strategy with a group of parents of pre-school and primary school children from Diemedis School in Vilnius. The text was a half-page excerpt from a story by Miloš Macourek "Elephants' ears" from the book "Love and cannonballs" (see Annex 1). The purpose of the activity was to encourage the participating parents to read with and to their children to increase the chances of the children becoming proficient readers.

To set the frame for the activity, the trainer started by engaging the participants in a discussion about whether and how they read with or to children, how they know that children understand the text that is read to them, and what comprehension issues they might encounter. The participants shared their experiences about books selection, making decisions about what literature is good, etc. The trainer then closed the discussion by summing up what has been said.

The reading strategy to be used was briefly explained to the parents prior to starting reading. The parents were told: "We are going to read together using a strategy that you can use with your children or children you spend time reading to. This strategy is called *Reading with Prediction*. We are going to read a short text. From time to time, I am going to ask you to stop reading and discuss about what we have read. The text is called "Elephants' Ears". It's part of a book entitled "Love and cannonballs" by Miloš Macourek. Has anyone read it?" Luckily, none of the participants had read it. If there had been such parents who had read the story, the trainer would have asked them not to make predictions in the following steps of the activity.

Next, the participants were invited to speculate about the text, considering the title (*Elephants' Ears*). Then the trainer read to the first stop and asked, "What are your thoughts about elephants suffering because of their huge ears?" The parents discussed in pairs for a couple of minutes before a few of them were invited to share their answers with the whole group.

To help them think about the next part of the text, the trainer asked: "What do you think the next part of the text will be about?" First everyone thought individually, then they discussed in pairs and then they shared their answers with the whole group. All answers were accepted.

The activity was then continued, with stops and discussions until the entire text was read, and all the questions discussed. The trainer consistently encouraged divergent answers, and prompted the somewhat timid parents to contribute by addressing them directly. Before the end of the activity, the parents shared their thoughts about the reading experience, planned and discussed how they would be able to use the same strategy with their children. They discussed what text to select, where to stop, and what questions to ask. They practiced dividing the text and asking questions on a text by J. Kepeniene entitled "The most fashionable crocodile". After the workshop, the parents used this strategy with their own children and found it very useful and effective.

Reading with Prediction was cross piloted by trainers from the Slovakian Orava Association. They used it with a group of parents of second grade pupils. They selected the text by Slovak author Maria Durickova entitled "The first grader". The feedback that they received was also very positive, proving that the strategy can work with the same type of audience (parents) in a different cultural, linguistic context.

In the experience of Modern Didactics Centre, this strategy can be used as part of a bigger adult education programme. Adjustments depend on the trainees' learning needs, their experience and their goals. Whatever the specific purpose or the group of learners, careful planning is needed for the activity to be successful. Involvement of a "critical friend", a colleague, an adult family member, can be helpful in the planning phase to consult with and try out the text on before taking it to a wider audience.

Evaluation

The strategy can be used with any group of adult learners who need to improve their reading literacy skills, or their general communication, discussions, decision taking and problem solving skills, whether for personal or professional goals. By modelling ways of text analysis, the strategy can be used to teach individuals or groups reading with understanding and interpreting text. It also contributes to the development of critical and creative thinking skills, and repeated use can help improve management of personal feelings, by expressing them in the appropriate form within a group of other learners. When set up properly, the strategy provides space for a positive emotional environment that stimulates self-directed learning and active engagement into the learning process. To trainers, it can be appealing as it is applicable in a diversity of situations and with different target groups. As part of a professional development program, it can be used with professionals such as educators, librarians, journalists, social workers, etc. In the case of the Lithuanian parents, they had no professional development plans in trying out this strategy. They wanted to use it a) for their meaningful communication with children, and b) for supporting the development of their children's reading and thinking skills. The nature of the development goal (personal or professional) influences text selection, questions formulation, and instructions for the group of learners, as well as individual applicability of the strategy.

During the project, the strategy was used in two different settings: with a group of Lithuanian parents, and a group of Slovak parents. After being exposed to *Reading with Prediction*, the Lithuanian parents used the strategy with their children. They afterwards shared with the trainers that the children very actively engaged in the reading process, and shared their thoughts willingly. The parents noticed that their children's associations are often connected to real life. Reflecting upon their children's reactions to such reading, parents pointed out that children „*would prefer to read like that every time"*; they would like *"to talk as while reading the text they have a lot of questions"*, etc. Parents say that this reading strategy helps develop the children's imagination, their creativity, and their communication skills. While analysing the advantages of the applied strategy, the parents mostly appreciated fruitful and productive, qualitative communication with children; and secondly, stimulation of imagination and thinking. Associations with the child's experience and important life events have been also named as advantages. It is important to point out that such reading is useful for parents as well. First of all, it improves the parents' reading skills, and they also learn new things *from* their children and *about* their children. No essential disadvantages were mentioned by the Lithuanian parents, but they admitted that they themselves lacked the skills to select good texts. A list of recommended readings was thought to be useful.

The Slovak parents' feedback was very similar to the Lithuanian parents'. They pointed out that this strategy helps the children better understand and remember the story; the children get more involved in the reading and are willing to continue reading enthusiastically, they show interest and have wise arguments for supporting their personal opinions. The Slovak parents echoed the Lithuanians' opinion that *this strategy develops the child's imagination, fantasy, thinking, speaking, and also concentration and deduction*; *it improves child - parent cooperation, fellowship, and close contact*. The strategy helps to connect fiction and real life. Children easily make connections with personally important things, are able to switch from the story plot to reality and come back, to compare events, characters and draw conclusions.

Both groups of parents pointed out that this strategy develops rich and more explicit vocabulary, contributes to the development of thinking and creativity. They also mentioned that for them this strategy was first of all a very good communication tool, as they are able to learn more about their children from reading and discussing and even to touch upon very sensitive issues of high importance, which would otherwise prove very difficult to discuss.

Conclusions

The strategy was well received by groups of parents in Lithuania and Slovakia, who applied it effectively with their children at home. The parents pointed out the advantages of using this strategy for the children: it encourages meaningful, deep reading; the children are captured by the reading process, they make connections between the story and their real life experiences. The repeated use of the strategy helps the development of creative and critical thinking. It conveys enhanced quality to communication between parents and children, and proves to be a good means of detecting and solving problems.

Reading with Prediction is transferable to other contexts of working with adults. Used in a group setting, it motivates learning from both text and the other group members. Thanks to its flexibility (different kinds of questions asked depending on the text used), it can be a useful tool for helping full engagement in the reading process, thus with a potential to improve reading literacy, critical thinking, as well as communication and problem solving skills.

Those who plan to use the strategy must identify good narrative text, which would be interesting for the specific group of learners and would encourage open discussions on the topic or issue of focus. Text could be replaced by film with a strong narrative element in it. Before selection of the text or the film, the trainers need to explore carefully the needs, interests and expectations of their learners. The strategy is most effective if repeated several times with the same group. The learners need time to experience how they can use it in their professional or personal life. The participants' feedback is very valuable information which allows the trainers to improve their practice.
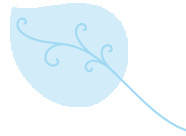
5.7. Basic skills for group discussions (Romania)

Introduction – An overview

People who hesitate to engage in a discussion may do so for a number of reasons, including because they do not feel confident expressing their opinion or sharing their knowledge or experience, possibly because they had bad experiences when they did so in the past, and therefore they fear that the bad experience may be repeated, or because they do not know *how to engage*, and therefore they *fear the unfamiliar*; they may not be aware of the adequate language, they fear they may become a laughing matter, etc. This is generally the case with less educated adults, especially those who have a low self-esteem, and lack assertiveness. For this reason, the innovative strategy described below provides support, *scaffolding* for the discussants (learners) (Ellis *et al*, 1994) so that they can effectively engage in a discussion or debate, thereby increasing their chances of acquiring *rewarding experiences* connected to such participation and learning, which may in turn become motivators for their future engagement.

Steps to implement the strategy

1. Prior to launching the discussions or debate, distribute the checklist (see Annex 2) to the participants and ask them to read it carefully. Tell them that they will be able to refer to this checklist during the discussion, and that you want to make sure that they understand it. Clarify what each competence means by asking the participants to tell you what they understand by the entries in the *What it involves* column. If you are not pleased with their explanation, exemplify and / or model, by asking the questions below.

Suggested questions:
- *How can you tell when someone listens actively? What do you precisely do when you listen carefully? What do they look like? What do they sound like?*
- *What could you say when you don't understand what has been said, and want the speaker to say that differently? How do you know when you have understood precisely what the speaker meant to say? What do you say when you want the speaker to confirm that your understanding is correct?*
- *Sometimes people agree with each other, and sometimes they don't. Sometimes they disagree totally; sometimes they only disagree with some of what the others have said. Either way, it is useful for everyone to know how the others feel about their ideas and / or opinions. Under "constructive response" you have*

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

tips for how to keep the discussion going and contribute to it. What would you respond to me if I said "People who live in cities are less healthy than people who live in villages". Would you agree or disagree? What if I said "Everyone who is looking for a job is wasting a huge amount of time that they could spend meditating"? etc.

- *When we discuss a topic there usually is some closure, conclusion before we move on to the next topic. After having heard a number of ideas and opinions, it is often difficult to figure out to what extent the discussants still think the same as they did initially, or whether some people have changed their mind/ opinion. To clarify this, it is good for everyone to get a chance to express their revised opinion if that is the case, and a group member would have to sum up or conclude if the discussion results need to be reported. The language of this type of speech includes sentence beginnings as the ones listed under "taking a position". What else could you say to begin to express your final thinking on something?*

2. Now tell the participants that you want them to use the checklist during the discussions and whenever they hear someone use the phrases/ sentences in the checklist or similar expressions, put a checkmark in the last column in the relevant line. Also tell them to monitor themselves, and after they have contributed to the discussion using any of the phrases or similar ones, they should put a check in the last but one column in the relevant line.

3. At the end of the discussion / training session, give the participants a couple of minutes to go over the checklist and put in more checkmarks if they have forgotten to do so during the discussion. Then take 5 -10 minutes to reflect with the group on how they felt during the discussion, whether the list helped them to engage, and whether they would consider using the list again when they participate in a similar discussion.

The explanation and exemplification in the introductory part may take up to 30 minutes if the participants have difficulty understanding the expected behaviour. In this case, you may want to consider introducing the competences incrementally, especially if you meet with the group several times over a longer period (1-2 months). At the conclusion of the first couple of meetings or sessions when you use parts of the checklist, invite the participants to reflect on its use to secure the development of metacognitive skills. In order to demonstrate the behaviour, you may have to find images or short films of people engaged in a discussion, and together with the participants analyse what they are saying and how they are saying it. If there are two trainers, you could role-play (take about 3-4 minutes to do that), analyse the role-play and ask the participants to use the checklist to state what behaviour was obvious.

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
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A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
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Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

Example of practical use

The specific issue we addressed by developing this innovative strategy is *adults' participation in group discussions*. A lot of learning takes place in group situations where people not only listen to speakers or trainers, but interact with them and other participants. All group learning involves the use of verbal and non-verbal communication skills for conveying messages effectively. Effective communication is key to collective problem-solving and decision-making. When individuals do not have the skills to engage in a discussion, they are likely to also be unmotivated to participate. It is generally accepted that most people will feel motivated when they know they are making a contribution *(autonomy and competence factor in the self-determination theory)* by doing something useful*, and when they are being listened to (relatedness factor in the self-determination theory).* In addition, rewarding experiences of successful participation in a discussion will be motivators for further engagement and for better quality contributions.

The background to developing the innovative strategy was provided by a project implemented by the Romanian Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Association in 2010, which included running so-called *citizens' panel-type debates.* A Citizens' Panel is a structured forum bringing together a diversity of people to discuss and decide on issues that concern them all. In our project, debates centred on education for disenfranchised groups, including the Roma, which can be a rather sensitive topic. Our assumption when preparing the Citizens' Panels was that the participants *would engage in discussions*, that they would be able to *share experiences and ideas* for addressing the issues debated, and overall everyone would contribute in a balanced manner *provided* that the facilitators did a good job pulling everyone into the discussion, and at the same time stopping people from dominating the discussion. *Our assumption proved erroneous: participation in the discussions was poor*. The verbal communication skills of the Citizens' Panel participants (teachers, parents, community workers, and upper secondary school students in the final grades) were low or very low. Given that the topic was highly familiar and the facilitation was good, we concluded that *one of the aspects that may have prevented people from participating in the discussions effectively was their lack of skills to engage* – to confidently share their experiences, their opinions. We were aware that psychological aspects such as low self-esteem, lack of assertiveness, fear of repercussions after having expressed disagreement, etc. may also have been in place. However, as these would take longer to address than the time we had available to ensure more productive Citizens' Panels, we decided that in the future we would have to support the participants to develop the skills needed for effective participation in discussions.

There were two different groups of learners involved in the piloting phase of the innovative strategy, totalling 75 people. The first group included 54 participants in a 2-day conference in Cluj, Romania (17 teachers; 18 community leaders, non-governmental organization activists, school directors, policy-makers in the field of education, and 19 upper secondary school and college students). Most of the participants were Romanians, but a fair share (approximately 30%) belonged to ethnic minority groups (Roma and Hungarian). The second group involved 21 young Roma community leaders from rural areas of western Romania, who were completing leadership training.

At the beginning of their engagement in a series of group discussions lasting for at least 3 hours (two 90-minute blocks), the learners were given the checklist (see Annex 2) that listed four essential competences for effective participation in group discussions, described the expected behaviour for each competence, and provided verbal clues (phrases, incomplete sentences, connectors) for each type of behaviour except for active listening. The functions of the verbal clues relate to the listed competences and behaviour. For instance, for the specific competence of checking understanding, seeking clarification is the behaviour (action) and the verbal clue provided is:

Could you clarify (what you mean by …)? Another action for checking understanding is asking for examples, or requesting confirmation of the accuracy of understanding by providing an example of one's own. The verbal clues provided are: *Could you give me an example …?* and *Could an example of … be…?*

The checklist includes two columns with boxes next to each type of behaviour / action. The first of the two columns is labelled: *I have done this / I have used this expression or a similar one*, and the second: *I have noticed others do this / use this expression or a similar one*. The learners were asked to read the checklist and make sure they understood what the entries meant, and how to use the checklist in all. They were told that they could tick the boxes during the discussions, and that they would also be allowed time after the conclusion of the discussions to fill in the boxes as appropriate. In one of the two groups where the checklist was piloted there was need for extensive explanation of the competences and modelling of how to use the list.

The strategy was cross-tested in Latvia on two groups totalling 27 mainly rural school teachers, who participated in a 36-hour (3 days) training course on intercultural communication, diversity and tolerance. The course required active engagement in the discussions to express points of view, provide arguments for discussion, etc. The expected outcomes included improved skills to engage in group discussions.

Evaluation

From the checklists completed by the participants we found that the overwhelming majority ticked at least a couple of boxes in each of the two columns. There is no specific competence or type of behaviour / action that was not ticked at all. This means that in all discussions that were monitored the listed competences and types of behaviour were evidently used to some extent. This was an expected behaviour: once the checklist was provided, the participants' awareness of behaviour and language unavoidably increased.

From the feedback form (see Annex 3), which was filled in and returned by 26 teachers and students in Romania, and 27 teachers in Latvia, we obtained a wealth of information. As concerns the *perceived use of the checklist for enhanced participation in the discussions*, an average value of 6.58 was obtained. This means that on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 means 'very much', on the average, the respondents judged that the checklist did enhance their participation. The explanations included:

- The phrases were familiar, but they were not necessarily associated by the respondents with efforts to understand, participate in discussions and express themselves in an assertive manner;
- The checklist systematized and structured the elements that are needed for an adequate language of debate; it was a 'reminder' of the basic rules in a debate, and they would be useful in any civilised discussion;
- The checklist proved helpful in identifying what makes a discussion effective and how to draw conclusions; it provided verbal examples; the phrases helped speakers who are at a loss when they have to begin their speech.
- Some respondents paid more attention to the debate because of the checklist, they were more aware of what was being said;
- Some respondents found the list useful because they managed to have constructive contributions to the debate, they were more confident that what they were contributing to the discussion was delivered in an adequate manner;

"The syntagms were familiar but it is only now that they turned into a 'lighthouse'; they enlightened my understanding, my participation and my assertive expression." (Citizens' Panel participant, Romania)

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The average *for future intentions to use the competences* described in the checklist is 7.69. On the same scale (from 1 to 10), this means that the participants in these debates are likely to use the competences, and probably the expressions, which may turn into automatic behaviour with sufficient practice.

The average for the digital responses to the third question was 9.24. We interpret this as quasi-general agreement with the statement that *it is motivating to know how to interact effectively when you participate in group learning activities*. Some of the explanations were:
- Once one is aware of the competences, one becomes more motivated to display the desired behaviour in a group discussion;
- In a group where the participants are aware of the competences of effective interaction time management ceases to be such a big issue;
- It is important to be able to interact because the group can better focus on the task / topic of discussion.

Some of the final comments that the respondents made sum up the manner in which they perceived the usefulness of the strategy and of the activity in which it was applied:
- *"I managed to overcome some of my limits; I managed to express my ideas and opinions freely and without interruptions (without losing my ideas in mid-sentence)."* (Citizens' Panel participant, Romania)
- *The checklist encouraged my participation and helped to structure thoughts and argumentation. It was something new and different.* (teacher, Latvia)

Conclusions

The instrument we tested was useful in helping people engage in discussions, and in making them aware of the types of behaviour that are desirable in a constructive discussion/ debate. Despite its simplicity, the instrument was welcome because it provided useful phrases for the discussants. Thus, they found it easier to engage in the discussion, and managed to overcome some difficulties which otherwise they would have faced especially when they had to express opinions.
In brief, the strategy (use of the checklist) is effective in enhancing participation and thereby motivating adults for learning because:
- It exemplifies, pools together and points out useful phrases;
- It encourages the use of polite and assertive language;
- It is a reminder of what we may well know but fail to remember when participating in a discussion;
- It confers confidence to the speakers;
- It enhances attention, active listening;
- It helps make the interventions effective and constructive.

The type of behaviour promoted by the list is that of a confident person, a good thinker, and a constructive discussant. The learners who took part in these activities are highly likely to use the same phrases in the future and be aware of their functions in communication. Also, they are likely to feel safer and more confident in future group interactions/ learning.
Based on the above conclusions, we recommend the use of the checklist with groups of learners who lack confidence or clarity as speakers, who may prove to be too impulsive or who display too little patience with each other, whether any of these types of behaviour has been demonstrated or it is suspected by the trainer/ facilitator. Another group we recommend the activity to is educators, who may use it with their students, especially in cultures where the curriculum does not focus enough (or explicitly enough) on teaching oral communication skills, whether in the mother tongue or in a foreign language.

The checklist is best used with groups who have the opportunity to meet several times (not in a one-off event) so that the trainer can incorporate repeated opportunities for the learners to practice the skills over a longer period, or to introduce them incrementally.

5.8. Benefits and costs (Romania)
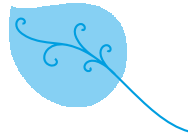
Introduction – An overview

Our aim in developing the innovative self-assessment strategy called *Benefits and Costs* was to collect feedback from trainees on what they consider useful or not useful in their learning experience. The strategy is most suitable for a long training programme structured in more than one meeting. In this case, the best time to use it is at the end of the first meeting of the group, after the learners have already experienced one and a half or two days of training. It requires about 15-30 minutes for application and about 15-45 minutes for interpretation of the collected information. The recommended size of the group to apply it in is 8-16 people. Sets of two different colour post-its and flipchart paper are needed.

The motivational model we used to frame the *Benefits and Costs* strategy is John Keller's ARCS model for learner motivation, described in *Motivational design of instruction* (1983). In terms of this model, the use of our strategy contributes to adult motivation for learning in the following manner:

- **A**ttention: it makes participants aware that learning is an investment, it *motivates them to reflect on their "profit" gained out of learning;*
- **R**elevance: by modelling this strategy to the learners, the trainer can trust that the learners will see the relevance of doing self-assessment (in terms of benefits and costs) in real-life situations as well. In addition, the trainer can give *relevant examples* of what may count as gain and what as loss in terms of the participants' investment in learning.
- **C**onfidence: the essence of the strategy is to collect feedback from the participants about the perceived usefulness of their participation in learning, which is expected to convey to them *a sense of control* of their assessment of learning.
- **S**atisfaction: the "benefits" part of the strategy is meant to help develop in the learners a *sense of achievement/ "profit"* which can motivate them to further learn, relearn and/or unlearn.

Steps to implement the strategy

1. Make sure you have plenty of green and yellow post-its of the same size (of each colour, prepare at least 5 times the number of learners in the group) and two pieces of flipchart paper, one labelled *Benefits*, and

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings

Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement

Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed

Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping

Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible

Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia
Post-its, flip-chart paper

the other *Costs*. If you don't have flipchart paper, identify two distinct surfaces in the training room on which you can display post-its.

2. In a training programme that consists of a series of several meetings, in the closing session of the first meeting of the group of trainees, distribute 4-5 green and the same number yellow post-its to each participant.

3. Instruct the participants as follows: *Think about your learning experience in this training. Write down what you consider to be benefits and costs of your participation in this training. Use the green post-its for benefits, and the yellow ones for costs. Write only one benefit or cost on each post-it. Use as many post-its as you wish. When you are ready, stick your Benefits post-its on this flipchart paper/ area (indicate), and the Costs on this other one (indicate). The person who finishes first will display all their post-its vertically. The next persons will post their notes vertically if their identified benefits and/ or costs are of a different category than those identified by the first person, and horizontally if they are the same as the first person's, next to the post-it bearing the same category of benefits or costs.*

4. Let participants write as long as they need, depending on how much time you can afford. Some may take as much as 15-20 minutes.

5. When all the post-its have been displayed, you may decide to immediately have a group discussion with the participants to analyse what they have written. If you are pressed for time, or if you prefer to have a look at the post-its yourself first, then tell the participants that they will get a written report from you in the next meeting.

6. In the subsequent meetings, demonstrate that you have taken on board the benefits and costs: allocate more time for the things that the learners consider "benefits", and find ways to mitigate as much as possible of what they put under costs.

7. Re-apply the strategy if time permits it in the last meeting.

8. In the final training evaluation form include some question related to the "costs" identified by learners in the first meeting to check if they have perceived the adjustments that you have made in response to their feedback.

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement
Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed
Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping
Time requirements
Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia
Post-its, flip-chart paper

Example of practical use

One of the questions we have as trainers is how to find out what the trainees consider to be important for them and what they consider not important in the training we deliver. Relevance of learning is one of the motivational factors for a person who attends a course. This also relates to the transfer of learning to the learners' daily working context. The probability of this transfer can be enhanced by giving trainees confirmation of what they have learnt. In order for the trainer to find out what is relevant to the learners, and to provide them with the expected confirmations, bidirectional feedback is necessary: trainers collect feedback from trainees, and they also give the trainees feedback.

When people attend a course, they have a natural tendency of thinking about the learning they "receive" in terms of "what I give (up) for this" and "what's in it for me". The learners may share some of these thoughts with the trainer in informal discussions, in training needs analysis activities or in mid-term and final training feedback questionnaires. *Benefits and Costs* is a technique that builds a bridge of communication about "investment" and "return of investment" between the adult learners and the trainer, and it provides useful information for the training programme deliverer to design or adjust the training activities.

Photo - Costs. Piloting   *Photo - Benefits. Piloting*   *Photo - Benefits and Costs. Cross-piloting*

Benefits and costs was developed and first piloted in Romania on a group of highly educated persons, in a train-the-trainers course. The group had the following characteristics:
- All participants completed higher education and held a degree;
- The represented professions included university professors, teachers, a school psychologist and a school inspector;
- The group consisted of 14 persons, of whom two were men;
- The age range was 25 years to over 55 years.

The training programme was delivered using the blended learning approach: 48 hours of face-to-face training, delivered in 4 workshops of 12 hours each, and 81 hours of learning activities through an e-learning platform (Moodle).

Benefits and costs was used in the last 30 minutes of the first face-to-face workshop, which lasted for 12 hours. This was considered a good time because the trainees had covered enough to understand the training architecture: design, targeted competences, practical organisation, time and effort necessary to learn, support from trainer, etc.

The cross-piloting was carried out in Spain, with a group of workers from a home care services company. The participants were compelled to attend the training because of newly introduced legislation stipulating that certain professional categories of employees need to produce a certificate which states completion of in-service training. This group of learners had the following characteristics:

- the group consisted of 17 people, all of whom were women;
- most of the learners had only completed primary school, and some secondary education;
- the age range was between 35 and over 55 years.

Participants took part in this training outside of their working hours. The training had a total duration of 10 hours organized in 3 sessions. The *Benefits and costs* strategy was used at the end of the first session.

The main difference between the Romanian and the Spanish groups was the educational background of the participants. Nevertheless, motivation for learning is a universal challenge and the *Benefits and costs* strategy proved of help regardless of the characteristics of the two groups. It was more important for the participants to have a voice and to share control of their learning with the trainers.

Evaluation

Both in the piloting phase, and in the cross-piloting context, after the use of the strategy, the participants and the trainers had a discussion.

In the Romanian group the discussion revealed that the *Benefits and costs* strategy is good for collecting feedback, it gives participants a voice and it offers a view on the participants' motivation to enrol in the training. After reading all the post-its, the trainer drew some conclusions based on her quantitative and qualitative interpretations. The trainer identified some "heavy" categories of benefits and/ or costs, such as "time" under costs, or "new methods and information" and "team work and meeting other people" under benefits. Also "the relaxed atmosphere" was a category with many occurrences under benefits. Another way to interpret the participants' feedback is in terms of the number of categories of information they list under benefits and costs. There were only four categories under costs, while under benefits there were nine. Benefits included also the "certificate", "the structure of the course", "the exchange of ideas", "problem solving", "familiar content", or the "trainer as a model", while costs included "the emotional involvement", "changing the agenda", "paying for the taxi". Knowing the most powerful categories could be a starting point in redesigning the next training meeting – one could make room for "team work", and also stress each "new method" presented in the course. For a cost as general as "time", it is necessary to ask details from the participants, and to get as much clarification as possible about what "time" really means. Only after that could it be possible to find ways to minimize this particular cost. A cost such as "changing the agenda" could be reduced by announcing the schedule well in advance or by agreeing the schedule with the participants.

In the Spanish group post-its were very homogenous within each category. Most of the participants stressed the same aspects both under costs and under benefits. Most of the aspects were repeated on different post-its so it turned out that most of the participants agreed on the same kind of costs and benefits of attending the training. The fact that their participation in the training was decided by their company, and that it was scheduled outside of their working hours there were considered the two main disappointments quoted by the learners. To them it felt like not having control of their learning process (not even in terms of when and how), which was perceived as a cost. Costs such as "losing time otherwise spent with family" was even more negative than in a freely chosen, non-mandatory training. Benefits pointed out by the Spanish learners included aspects such as: "interest in getting new knowledge and skills", "professional development", "usefulness". We also found out that the majority of the participants were willing to learn even though the training programme did not provide perfect conditions. All in all, the participants enjoyed the self-assessment activity. Some clarification had to be made in terms of what costs and benefits meant. They all agreed on the impossibility of integrating their suggestions showed under "costs" in the next sessions, at least as concerns what the trainer had the power to do. Costs were considered as a structural problem that could not be tackled by the trainer.

Conclusions

Including *Benefits and costs* in the training was assessed very positively by the learners, the project coordinators and the trainers involved. Especially the trainers found this technique very valuable and they stated they would definitely use it in the future for collecting feedback from their learners and also as a monitoring and internal evaluation tool.

This strategy can be used as a tool to learn about what trainees consider they stand to gain from the training. With this information, a trainer can decide what to keep in the next learning activities, what to take out, what to allocate more space for and what to shorten.

There are a number of dos and don'ts to observe when using this innovative strategy:
- Apply it only at the end of the first training meeting when the participants have had significant exposure to the training.
- Give participants feedback on what they have written on the post-its either by an immediate discussion or in the form of a written report sent by email or handed out at the beginning of the next training meeting. Remember that this strategy is built on the principle of two-way feedback.
- Try to make more room in the training for those things that the participants consider benefits.
- Some of the costs may not be in the power of the trainer to change (e.g. training imposed by employers or as a consequence of new legislation). Acknowledge this fact and be open to accept it as an aspect of the training.
- When either a benefit or a cost is not clear enough, ask immediately for clarifications.
- When the training is ordered by an organization, when it is part of an accredited programme, when it should be delivered in a particular manner due to the principles on which it was created or when other similar to the above conditions occur, check with those in charge what kind of alterations to the training design are accepted and what are the most appropriate ways of making them.
- Seek advice from a different trainer on how to tackle the costs. A trainer with a different experience may give you good insights to build upon. You could also ask the participants for their proposed solutions.
- Participants may not agree on what things go under a certain category or you may not agree with their categorization. When time allows it, ask them to reach an agreement and never impose your own categories. This strategy is about the participants' voices, not about the trainer's expectations.
- Make transparent for the participants how you have thought to amplify their "benefits" and to minimize their "costs" during the next training meetings. State this only once in a meeting, or when the occasion arises for instance if a trainee asks a related question, but do not reiterate the message too often as it may become annoying for the participants.
- Consider this innovative strategy as a tool for better communication and a valuable picture of the participants' perceptions, and not as a tool of controlling the group.
- If the feedback you receive is discomforting for you in any way, choose the written response to the trainees. In this way you have time to step back and consider the feedback as "a fact" to keep in mind in the design and delivery of the training. Sometimes it may be too well disguised, but feedback is always a gift.

5.9. Film as a Tool of Motivation (Slovakia)
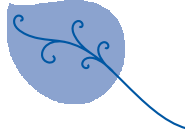
Introduction – An overview

The finding that students in general are motivated to engage in learning when film is used in the classroom has been pointed out by a number of educational researchers. Some educators look upon film as a means of public pedagogy, which mobilises students to dialogue.

In developing our innovative strategy we intended to capitalise on the power of film as potential motivator for sustained participation in lifelong learning. We were at the same time inspired by the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA) (Crawford et al, 2005), which is a popular method for engaging students in reading narrative texts for understanding. We borrowed the manner of directing the learners' viewing of the film from the DRTA strategy, and replaced written text by film. It must be pointed out that some films come with subtitles, therefore written text is present, accompanied by moving images, which further facilitate comprehension. To develop the post-film viewing activity, we relied on the strategy called "Questioning the Author" (Beck *et al*, 1997), which we turned into *Questioning the Director* to match the new medium.

Steps to implement the strategy

1. When you decide to use film (whether a feature film or a documentary, etc.) in teaching as a tool for motivating adults to learn, you need to select the film carefully to ensure that it contains the relevant learning point. Once the film is selected, decide where you want to interrupt the viewing so that it is relevant for the goal of the lesson. The recommended stops are such moments where the learners can gain some impulses for their thinking and can make predictions on what they think will happen/ they will be shown next.

2. Decide what questions you are going to pose to your students prior to viewing and during the viewing, at the specific stops. The questions fulfil three functions: get the learners to make predictions about what will happen and explain on what they base their predictions; check comprehension; invite personal interpretations.

3. Start watching the film and stop it at the selected moments. At the stops, ask questions such as: What has happened so far? What do you thing about … (film character, event, situation, etc.)?, What are your feelings about…(film character, event, situation etc.)?, What do you think will happen next?, What makes

Targeted competences and skills	
Communication in the mother tongue	
Communication in foreign languages	
Learning to learn	
Social and civic competences	
Cultural awareness and expression	
Critical thinking	
Creativity	
Initiative	
Problem solving	
Risk assessment	
Decision taking	
Management of feelings	
Targeted motivation factors	
Self-directedness	
Active engagement in learning	
Shared ownership of training organization	
Supportive emotional environment	
Immediate applicability of learning	
Recognition of learner achievement	
Targeted learners / groups	
College students and youth	
Educators / teachers	
Adults in general	
A specific profession	
Mixed	
Organisation of Learning, group size	
Individual learner	
Pair of learners	
Group of up to 5 learners	
Group of 5-10 learners	
Group of 10-20 learners	
Group over 20 learners	
Mixed grouping	
Time requirements	
Up to 2 hours	
½ day	
1 day	
Up to 2 days	
Flexible	
Necessary resources / materials	
Photocopies	
Photographs	
Film	
Multimedia	

you think that?, What would you do next?, What do you think about the other learners' predictions/ opinions?

4. For the learners to record their predictions at each stop, prepare a table such as the one below (see *Table of Predictions*). Have the participants individually record their predictions and the arguments for them in the first two columns. After viewing the fragment, have them fill in the last column.

5. When the viewing of the film is over, ask the participants to lead their own silent "dialogues" with the film director and ask them to put down the results of their imaginary communication. Here are some examples of questions the participants can ask themselves: What is the main idea/ message in the film? What was the director's intention? Has the director expressed the idea clearly? Why has the director concluded the film this way? What does the director want from the spectator to think about? What should the spectator understand?

Table of Predictions

	What do you think will happen next?	What evidence do you have?	What has really happened?
Stop 1			
Stop 2			
Stop 3			
Stop 4			

Targeted competences and skills
Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings
Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
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Up to 2 days
Flexible
Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

Example of practical use

We piloted the strategy in a workshop for a group of teachers and teacher trainers. The goal of the activity was to introduce film as an educational tool which can be used to develop the learners' critical thinking skills. Critical thinking of the learners was mainly intended to be developed by means of the questions asked during viewing of the film and prediction-making.

The film selected for demonstration was "Coffee and Cigarettes", the episode entitled "Cousins?" directed by Jim Jarmusch. The workshop was divided in the three parts.

In the introductory part, we used brainpooling, where the participants were first asked to write what they thought about the possibility of using films in education. On a piece of paper, the participants first wrote down their individual answers. Then, the trainer collected the answers and redistributed them so that each participant received someone else's answer. After reading their colleague's answer, the participants were instructed to write down their comments or opinions about the response they read (whether they agreed or disagreed with what their colleague had written). Then the trainer collected the responses in a pile again, and had the participants pick a piece of paper at random. This time, they read the first and the second opinion and then, regardless of which of the two opinions they agreed with, they were instructed to judge and record in writing which one was better with respect to the arguments used. Finally, the participants got back their original writing (the piece of paper on which they wrote first) and read the responses on their own, sharing some ideas with the whole group.

During the second part of the workshop, the teachers watched the film that was stopped a few times. At the stopping points, the participants responded to the questions as described above and individually filled in their table of predictions.

After watching of the film, the method of "questioning the director" was applied (which is an adaptation of the strategy called "Questioning the Author", developed by Beck *et al*.), during which the participants were invited to lead their own silent dialogues with the film director, focusing on the message of the film. The workshop was concluded with a whole group discussion to analyse the use of film in teaching.

As concerns asking the questions (i.e. trainer questioning), there is an important note to be made. Because it is the trainers who initiate the discussions, the participants tend to respond directly to their trainer. They look at the trainer and listen to us while listening less to the other participants. However, if we wish to initiate a real discussion, we need to change the interaction pattern. It is necessary to motivate and involve everybody. When the participants get used to the "real" discussion, where all ideas are respected and considered important, and where no *one* answer is correct, they will make an effort to express their own ideas and listen to each other.

The strategy was cross-piloted by three partners in the CreMoLe project. Interkulturelles Zentrum (Austria) used it with a different target group, namely unemployed young people with migrant background, aged 17-20. The project within which Film as a Tool of Motivation was used aims to support and motivate young people who have been disadvantaged in the education system, to improve their individual options and vocational development and to develop their professional career by building on existing competencies and developing new ones. The strategy was applied in the second session of a regular training day by two trainers. The main question related to the implementation of this strategy in the framework of the project was whether the proposed innovation can be applied systematically with learners of all ages and with multiple contents. In addition, the Austrian piloting partners also wanted to know what the impact on their learning group would be, given that they were mainly early school leavers, most of whom had been participating in similar projects before, but all of whom had dropped out of the training course or of apprenticeship programmes. The film used for this cross-piloting was the same as at the original piloting: Coffee and Cigarettes, episode "Cousins?" by Jim Jarmusch.

Modern Didactics Center (Lithuania) cross-piloted the strategy with a target group of seven parents. First, the goals and objectives of the strategy were made explicit so that at their turn, the parents could use it with their children. The participants were shown a fragment ("*Blue Gypsy*") from the film "*All the Invisible Children*" by E. Kusturica. After the viewing, the learners engaged in discussions and debates according to the scheme prepared by the trainers. The parents were given a home task – to choose a cartoon and watch it with their children in the same manner that they experienced in the workshop (with stops and predictions).

CESIE (Italy) used film as a motivator in a three-hour learning activity for 15 teachers working mainly in primary schools with classes composed of pupils with a migrant background. The teachers teach various disciplines in different schools of the First Instance of Palermo and of its province. All the participants were Italian, 26 - 50 years old. The workshop including the film viewing was implemented inside a wider training course, aimed to increase the political and intercultural skills of teachers working in elementary schools with pupils coming from different regions. The strategy was used for viewing a short film entitled *"This is my brother,"* which tells the story of an immigrant who landed on the island of Lampedusa. To properly carry out the method, the film was stopped three times in three key points of the story, in order to ask the trainees to imagine/predict the continuation, by activating their critical and creative thinking at the same time. For this reason the "Table of Predictions" was handed to the participants, who had to indicate what they thought would happen next in the film after the interruption, and then also record what actually happened, and compare whether their predictions were correct.

Evaluation

In the course of the piloting workshop the participants were actively involved in all three parts of the workshop. In the second stage of the training (film viewing)*,* the questions aimed to activate the learners' higher order thinking (mainly analysis). The participants were very actively involved in the discussions at each stopping point. They were not only replying to the trainer's questions, but also discussed among themselves, thus extending the interaction pattern. One of the fundamental types of thinking applied in the described strategy was predicting. In the course of the workshop the participants had to think what would happen next in the story. Predicting entails anticipation and hypothesising, which are strong factors that affect motivation, thinking, and comprehension. They increase curiosity and according to some authors they places the learner in the role of a detective who wants to solve a puzzle (Meredith, Steele, Temple, 1998) or a researcher who wants to test a theory. Predicting and hypothesising are essential factors in increasing the level of learner engagement and comprehension.

While watching a film, we are following a basic plan, but we are also directed by the thoughts of the other participants in the discussions about the issues they are interested in. Often the discussion makes us ask more questions than we had originally planned. We then tend to ask open questions which do not have only one correct answer. All kinds of questions are important, because they stimulate multiple kinds of thinking processes across a broad scale of conceptual structures and learning experiences. Each type of questions represents a way of thinking on a specific level, which contributes to a broader and more universal comprehension. However, in education one priority should be to motivate learners to engage in higher order thinking processes, so that they improve their thinking skills and could further exploit their knowledge and ideas.

The findings of the Austrian cross-piloting partner differ significantly from those of the trainers in Orava (Slovakia). In Austria the strategy was implemented with a target group of disenfranchised, poorly educated young people. However, the experiences from this cross-piloting can considerably contribute to the further applications and developments of the strategy. According to Interkulturelles Zentrum, the strategy can contribute to setting the environment to promote critical

thinking and discussion, but for it to be successful, this approach has to be applied several times. To impact the habitual behaviour and interaction patterns of the participants, especially if the target group is heterogeneous (regarding their communication skills and habits) attention has to be paid also to practicing discussion skills. The approach might be more effective if applied with a long-standing group, fulfilling some long-term goals, through attempting to change the participants' interaction patterns by activating their higher order thinking skills.

According to the performers of the second cross piloting, the participating parents got very interested and involved in the strategy, and the discussions were very engaging and fruitful. After the application of the strategy at home with their children, the parents provided feedback to the trainers about the strategy. They pointed out the following advantages of the strategy:
- It allows the learners to look at the same thing from different perspectives, to see what was not seen before;
- It fosters engaging discussions, in the course of which the learners look at issues in depth;
- It models a different approach to film watching as such;
- It develops the learners' imagination, creative thinking and reflection;
- It provides similar benefits to reading books;
- It allows the parents to engage their children in quality communication which further helps them get to know their children better, to learn about them;
- It stimulates thinking, concentration, and attention to details.

Among the disadvantages, the parents pointed out that:
- the children do not always want to be interrupted when watching a film;
- the strategy requires that the parents do some preparation, as they have to watch the film in advance, which means time spent on this;
- not all films can be watched in this manner (i.e. with stops), some good ones need to be selected for the purpose of viewing with stops;
- the strategy requires that parents be in a special mood, prepared;
- it requires good timing, as evenings are not the best time for this activity.

The performers of the third cross piloting concluded that the strategy proved extremely useful for the active involvement of the trainees. The trainers valued the fact that the learners were willing to share ideas; that they were open to reconsidering their preconceptions that all of them had at the beginning of the training. The CESIE trainers expressed their belief that because of its simplicity, the method is easily transferable to different contexts, with other trainees, as long as the theme of the film matches the content to be delivered. The teacher training course where the strategy was cross-piloted focused on cultivating the political-intercultural competence of elementary schools teachers, and on use of appropriate teaching/learning materials for elementary school pupils. The main aim of the project within which the training course was delivered was to enable pupils with migrant background to achieve success in school. The aim the trainers were pursuing in using the film was to stimulate critical thinking in learners. Thanks to the fact that it uses a form of visual art, the strategy also serves the purpose of overcoming the limits imposed by language and cultural barriers, which is the case in schools attended by children with migrant background.

Conclusions

The strategy we have called *Film as a Tool of Motivation* is effective in getting learners actively engaged in thinking and discussions, and therefore it is likely to provide enjoyable experiences to the adult learners, who can be expected to want to go through similarly enjoyable learning experiences in the future. Motivation to persist in the learning activities is triggered by the curiosity of the learners engaged in prediction and hypothesising, which are then followed by lively discussions to deepen comprehension.

The strategy is useful for developing communication skills (in the mother tongue and in foreign languages), critical thinking and the competence of learning to learn. It can be used with virtually any group of learners (except people with visual impairment), with the proper adjustments made to group management. It is essential to identify films that are appropriate for the learning point, and to identify the best stopping points to elicit predictions.

Although the strategy may necessitate longer time for preparation, the returns make it worth for trainers to spend that extra time: the trainees will be engaged in deeper thinking, more lively discussions, and will gain highly pleasurable learning experiences that are a precondition for their voluntary search for new learning opportunities.
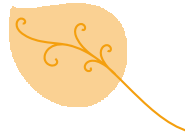
5.10. Active engagement in learning Occupational Safety and Health (OHS) (Spain)

Introduction - An overview

After more than 20 years' experience in providing workers with the necessary training to ensure their professional development, we noticed an important lack of motivation in the trainees participating in compulsory training activities (mandated by legislation, which workers must complete in order to be able to perform their job).

Our goal when introducing the innovative strategy of delivering training was to motivate low-qualified workers to continue in further job-related training and enhance their engagement in learning. The strategy described below was tested on two different target groups: initially designed and first tested on construction workers participating in an occupational safety at work training; secondly, it was adapted for use in a training program for people whose job involves handling food.

Steps to implement the strategy

The introductory module of the training programme in occupational safety at work for construction sector workers includes three main activities.

a) The first one is a start-up activity. It mainly aims to get the participants acquainted with each other. In some cases, even though the participants may come from the same company, they might work in different departments, which is why such an activity is welcome. This other aim of the start-up activity is to help the participants recall previous personal and/ or professional experiences related to safety issues. In this activity, the participants are asked to make their own name tag according to the following instructions: (see also Annex 4)

1. Write your name in the middle of the tag.
2. In the top left hand corner: Write the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).
3. In the top right hand corner: Write something you already know about OSH.
4. In the bottom left hand corner: Write one reason why you might need OSH in your daily work.
5. In the bottom right hand corner: Write one reason why you might need OSH in your personal life.

b) The second activity allows participants to think about actors involved in OSH issues. At this point, the learners get a chance to share different perspectives while talking about what they already know related to OSH, which helps

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Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings

Targeted motivation factors
Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement

Targeted learners / groups
College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed

Organisation of Learning, group size
Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping

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Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible

Necessary resources / materials
Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

them get prepared for the new learning. A description of a situation related to OSH is distributed among the participants (see Annex 5: Dilemma). After reading the text out loud, participants are asked to proceed as follows:

"There are seven characters in this story: the worker, his wife, his superior, his colleague, his son and the public office technician. Please, rank them according to their level of responsibility in the accident."

Once the learners have made their own list, they are asked to share their lists in the big group, and explain why they ranked the characters as they did. The trainer facilitates the presentations and the ensuing debate, and can address questions to the learners to help them clarify their arguments. The final goal is to agree on a common list for the whole group.

c) The third activity included in this introductory session aims to engage the participants in thinking in terms of risks and foreseeing accidents. It also facilitates the learners' reflection about possible preventive measures. A picture showing many different people performing a great variety of dangerous tasks is distributed among participants. Most of the characters are acting in an irresponsible and a risky way. Participants are asked to underline all the behaviours which in their opinion are considered dangerous. Next, the learners are asked to work with a template (see Annex 6) and describe the risks they have identified in the picture, the accident that might occur; and the measure they would propose in order to avoid the accident. The results of this activity are then analysed at the end of the training activity, once the participants have completed the course. Risks/ accidents/ measures that were identified and proposed by participants at the beginning of the session will be compared with the ones which they can recognize at the end of the course.

Targeted competences and skills

Communication in the mother tongue
Communication in foreign languages
Learning to learn
Social and civic competences
Cultural awareness and expression
Critical thinking
Creativity
Initiative
Problem solving
Risk assessment
Decision taking
Management of feelings

Targeted motivation factors

Self-directedness
Active engagement in learning
Shared ownership of training organization
Supportive emotional environment
Immediate applicability of learning
Recognition of learner achievement

Targeted learners / groups

College students and youth
Educators / teachers
Adults in general
A specific profession
Mixed

Organisation of Learning, group size

Individual learner
Pair of learners
Group of up to 5 learners
Group of 5-10 learners
Group of 10-20 learners
Group over 20 learners
Mixed grouping

Time requirements

Up to 2 hours
½ day
1 day
Up to 2 days
Flexible

Necessary resources / materials

Photocopies
Photographs
Film
Multimedia

Example of practical use

The innovative strategy was piloted with two different target groups: one with construction workers participating in an occupational safety at work training; and another one with staff whose job involves handling food. Those two target groups were chosen because they are two good examples of compulsory training in two main economic sectors in Spain. According to Law 32/2006, beginning with 2012, all those employed in construction must hold a Professional Card, which recognizes the worker´s experience and professional category in the sector. It also ensures that workers have received a minimum training in safety and health at work. In the last quarter of 2010, the construction sector employed 8.7% of the working force in Spain. This means that the new regulation applies to approximately 2 million workers nowadays in Spain.

A minimum training in OSH is required in order to obtain the Professional Card. Most of the workers have already been trained in this field, especially because of the high rate of accidents in the constructions sector. The new law establishes compulsory training that must be completed by each worker regardless of their previous training in this topic. As a result many construction workers enrol in OSH training with low motivation levels. This training session is perceived by most learners as an unnecessary imposition.

Even though the law was conceived as a step forward to ensure access of every construction worker to basic OSH, it remains a fact that its relevance is missed by the target group. On the other hand, this does not mean that workers enrolled for the course know everything about OSH, but they definitely don´t think this training will be an added value for them. It is true that for most of them it is not their first approach to this field but this normative change is often seen either as a pure administrative procedure, or an opportunity to integrate OSH in their daily work.

Another legal provision, Law 202/2000, established that workers in contact with food during either the preparation, packing or service process must get a Food Handling Certificate to be able to work in any of the sectors involved (food industry, services, commerce). In Spain, the food industry employs 17% of the work force. A 10-hour training programme must be completed by these workers in order to get the appropriate certificate. The (absence of) motivation of these workers as concerns participation in the training is very similar to those in OSH training.

Given the above described situation, one of our goals with the innovative strategy was to motivate workers and enhance their interest in continuous learning instead of allowing them to persist in the perception that these laws are just one more official requirement that workers are obliged to meet.

When people believe the learning process is not useful itself, just a simple procedure you have to go through, they won't be motivated to participate and persist in learning activities. Our experiment set out to change this attitude reinforcing some of the key factors identified during the first stage of CreMoLe project: motivating training connects the importance and relevance of the learning process for one's professional life to their personal life; it incorporates hands-on activities; group learning activities are frequently used, etc.

We believe the eight hours of compulsory OSH training established by Law 32/2006 and the 10 hours necessary to get the Food Handling Certificate are still not enough to guarantee the best performance of safety or hygiene measures by workers in these sectors. Therefore these trainings must incorporate as many motivational factors as possible in order to ensure the learners' participation in further, even non-compulsory job-related training.

The piloting stage involved two different groups of learners, 19 in total. There was a majority of men, which is characteristic of the whole construction sector. Regarding the participants' educational background, around 70% of them had completed their elementary studies. 80% of the par-

ticipants were middle aged, with low qualifications. Although we can find an important percentage of workers with migration background in this sector; participants in these training sessions were mainly Spaniards. All of them were employed at that time and their company allowed them to attend the training during working hours. When we developed the innovative strategy, we had to keep in mind two main challenges: the participants' lack of motivation for the training, and the low level of their skills. Both called for practical activities and the replacement of the traditional lecturing by group work.

The second piloting phase involved another two groups of employees working for a home care services company. This time they were all women, 32 in total. 65% of them only completed their elementary studies. Like in the previous groups, 75% were middle aged workers (between 40 and 55 years old). Unlike the previous groups, participants took part in this training outside of working hours.

The originally designed innovative introductory training activity was adapted to this target group, and an additional motivating activity (called "Benefits and costs") was also included in the training programme. Hence, the second piloting of the innovative strategy included the following activities: the first two (start-up activity and dilemma) kept the same structure as in the initial piloting, but the content was adapted to the food handling context (see Annex 7). In the third one, we introduced the "benefits and costs" learning self-assessment technique. Our aim in introducing this technique was to collect feedback from trainees on what they considered to be useful in their learning experience. The participants were asked to write down what they considered to be benefits and costs due to their participation in the training, and then discuss the overall satisfaction with their learning in the training.

Evaluation

The courses where the new strategies were piloted were assessed through the same questionnaire applied to each participant. The questionnaire aimed to assess different aspects of the training such as organizational issues, methodology, logistics, etc. Some questions were specifically linked to the participants' perception about the usefulness of learning and motivational issues such as: *To what extent do you think this training can contribute to your current or future job performance?, To what extent do you think this training has improved your knowledge and competences enabling you to progress professionally and personally?; To what extend do you think this training will determine your decision to enrol in a new course in the future?*

After processing the learners' answers, it became clear to us that small changes such as incorporating an introductory session to OSH or Food Handling courses can increase significantly the participants' satisfaction with the course, their perceived usefulness of the training and its future impact on their career. We need to emphasise that our findings are based on the trainees' shared perceptions, and that in terms of time, the introductory part of the training took up one hour out of the total duration of the courses, which was 8 hours in one case, and 10 hours in the other one. So results should be interpreted within this context.
Future development of the innovative approach should incorporate motivational aspects throughout the training sessions, not only in the introductory session.

Conclusions

Even though this strategy of starting off can be further developed, we confidently conclude that including it in the training programme has the potential to motivate adult learners to persist in work-related training, even if the training in which the strategy is applied is mandatory.

Furthermore, we are aware that the strategy we used opens a new path, which can be further explored by training providers aiming to engage adults in lifelong learning. Based on our experience, we strongly recommend to both private and public training providers to implement this strategy in similar training courses or with similar target groups. The inclusion of the innovative approach in the two training programmes was assessed very positively by participants, the project coordinators and the trainers involved. Especially trainers found these techniques very valuable and they stated they will definitely use them in the future, which is a highly important aspect for the project team, since it reassures us of the value of our work within the CreMoLe project.

6. Annexes

Annex 1 – Text for the "Reading with Prediction" strategy

Excerpts from *Láska a dělové koule* (Love and cannonballs) by Miloš Macourek.

Question 1. Before reading: Considering the title (*Elephants' Ears*), what do you think the text will be about?

Elephants' Ears

Quite small ears are no use: someone with small ears can hardly hear anything and never even knows whether or not his wristwatch is still working. However, ears that are too big are also a nuisance. Elephants have huge ears, and you have no idea how much they suffer. (Stop 1)

Question 2. What are your thoughts about elephants suffering because of their huge ears?
Question 3. What do you think the next part of the text will be about?

When elephants are still small, their ears are about as big as yours. They can hear a train whistling in the distance and a bumblebee flying around. They hear birds singing and rain pattering down; they can hear everything, and they do not find this anything special. Actually, what is so special about it?

Nevertheless, as elephants grow up, their ears get bigger and bigger, and they can hear more and more. They enjoy it at the beginning, and they say to each other, did you hear that plaster flaking off the wall? Where could it be, there are no walls around here?

But they keep growing. Their ears begin to resemble small town squares, and they can hear so many things that it is not possible to count them. (Stop 2)

Question 4. In this passage, what surprising or special ideas did you find?
Question 5. While reading the next part, engage all your senses in grasping its meaning: imagine the sights, the smells and the sounds, the feelings. Be aware of the thoughts that cross your mind and the associations you make.

Two big elephants are walking in tall grass; there is nothing moving for as far as the eye can see. A small elephant might say that everything is completely silent, but the two big elephants can hear the noise of a lift, and shouting in a corridor, loud radios, crockery being broken, crying and reproaches, a door slamming, a baby crying, swearing, gunshots, and an ambulance wailing; they can hear everything on their walk through the tall grass, where nothing moves as far as the eye can see.

They would like to have a chat, these two elephants, but they cannot; they cannot hear what the other is saying, and they cannot bear this, and they run to get some cotton wool to put in their ears; but where can you get enough cotton wool for such enormous ears? There are too many elephants, and there is too little cotton wool in the world – we would have to produce only cotton wool in order to satisfy all the elephants – and the elephants, the older they grow, the more furious they become; I would not want you to meet a furious old elephant. You can recognise him from far off; he runs through tall grass, because he thinks he can escape the sound; and then he realises that there is no way he can, and he starts trumpeting with his trunk in the air, making a big noise in order to interrupt what he cannot bear to listen to, at least for a short while. (Stop 3)

Question 6. What do you think about this part?
Question 7. What associations did you make? What were your thoughts?

At this moment the big elephants wish they were small, which the small elephants will never understand. (Stop 4)

Question 8. What is the text about? Why do you think so?
Question 9. Does the text end as you expected? What are the similarities / differences?
Question 10. Compare your initial thoughts before reading story and your reflections at the end.

Annex 2 - Checklist for the "Basic skills for group discussions" strategy
CHECKLIST - COMPETENCES NEEDED FOR
EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN DEBATE/ DISCUSSION
SELF- AND PEER-MONITORING FORM

Competence	What it involves	I have done this / used this or a similar phrase	I have noticed others do this / use this or a similar phrase
ACTIVE LISTENING	I listen carefully to the speakers and filter what they say through my own thinking (I respond mostly non-verbally)		
	I sum up the major ideas in my mind		
	I make notes on the essential aspects, the ideas I value, and jot down questions that come to me; I am getting ready to engage in discussion		
CHECKING UNDERSTANDING	When needed, I ask for clarification – Could you clarify (what you mean by...)?		
	When needed, I ask for examples or request confirmation of the accuracy of my own example – Could you give me an example...? – Could an example of ... be...?		
	(especially in a small group, when needed) I reword to check that I have understood correctly – In other words... / as I understand ... – I have understood from what you are saying ... – Is this what you meant...?		
CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE TO WHAT HAS BEEN SAID	I express (partial) agreement or disagreement – I (do not) agree/ I partly agree with the idea(s) ... – I (do not) understand/ accept the argument / point of view		
	I emphasise what has been said – I would like to emphasise / underscore what has been said ...		
	I add to what has been said – I would like to add to ...		
	I express opinions, beliefs, judgments – I (do not) believe that it is (appropriate/ good...) to		
TAKING A POSITION IN AN ARGUMENT	I express my support or lack of support – I (do not) support / favour ... – I conclude, reiterating in brief the major ideas / arguments – To conclude, based on ... – Having weighed what has been said / the above, I conclude/ support the idea ...		

Annex 3 – Feedback form for the "Basic skills for group discussions" strategy

Dear participants,
The questions below are addressed to you upon an initiative of the Romanian RWCT Association, a partner of the RWCT International Consortium within the project Create-Motivate-Learn (CreMoLe). Our purpose is to test innovative strategies that lead to motivating adults to participate and persist in lifelong learning. In this frame, we want to see to what extent making explicit the competences and exemplifying the language used in order to engage in a discussion can be useful for increased effectiveness of participation in a discussion or debate.

Your answers will be anonymous. We would very much appreciate your most sincere response. Thank you for your willingness to answer the questions and for your cooperation.

1. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1=not at all și 10=very much, to what extent do you think the form entitled *Competences needed*...has contributed to your enhanced participation in the discussions held in the conference / working groups? Circle the number that best reflects your situation.

   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Please, provide a brief explanation for your choice:

2. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1=not at all and 10=very much, to what extent do you think you will use the competences described in the above-named form in learning activities / group interactions in the future?   Circle the number that best reflects your situation.

   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Please, provide a brief explanation for your choice:

3. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1=not at all and 10=very much, to what extent do you think it is motivating to know how to interact effectively when you participate in group learning activities? Circle the number that best reflects your situation.

   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Please, provide a brief explanation for your choice:

4. Please, use the space on the back to add comments, remarks, suggestions.

Annex 4 – Name tag for the "Active engagement in learning Occupational Safety and Health (OHS)" strategy

What OSH suggests you? (Write the first word that comes to your mind when you think about OSH)		What do you know about OSH? (In one word, write something you know about it)
NAME		
How can you use OSH in your work? (Name one thing you might find OSH useful in your daily work?		How can you use OSH in your personal life? (Name one thing you might find OSH useful in your daily life?

Annex 5 – Dilemma for the "Active engagement in learning Occupational Safety and Health (OHS)" strategy

A construction worker is about to leave his home to go to work. When he says bye to his family, his son tells him: "Dad, you forgot your work-boots". The worker answers him: "Don't worry son, if I forget them once in a while it's not such a big deal". The boy insists and the father asks his wife: "Do you know where my boots are? " She says she doesn't and since she's arriving a little bit late to work she cannot help him find them.

Then, he decides to go in order to not being late at work. Before he leaves, he tells his son: "Don't worry, after all it's not compulsory to wear them". When he is arriving at the building he reminds what his son just told him and he decides to talk to his superior. He explains him the situation and asks him if, exceptionally, he can borrow a pair of boots (steel sole boots). He promises to turn them back at the end of the day.
His superior, in charge of the building work, replies him that a pair of boots was provided by the company at the beginning of the year, and they were not obliged to provide him more than a pair per year.

His answer upset the worker and he decides to go further. He remembers that there is a Public Safe and Prevention Office located nearby. Sometimes they come to give them informational leaflets and brochures about this topic. So the worker decides to go and ask them. When he explains the situation to the technicians working in the office, they answer that they cannot do anything for him in this matter. The company is responsible of providing all the security equipment necessary for performing their work. They apologized but anyhow they couldn't do anything for him.

The worker realizes that he has lost enough time with that issue and he decides to go back to work. Two hours later, when he was moving construction materials around the building, he steps on some nails and cutting tools his colleague left on the floor earlier. As a result of it, the worker suffered severe cut injuries which won't allow him to step on his foot or to walk normally again.

Annex 6 - Risks / Accidents / Measures for the "Active engagement in learning Occupational Safety and Health (OHS)" strategy

RISK List the risks found in the picture.	ACCIDENT Write down the damage that could occur as a result of each risk.	PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES Write how these damages could be avoided.

Annex 7 – Name tag 2 and dilemma 2 for the "Active engagement in learning Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)" strategy

What does Food handling suggest you? (Write the first word that comes to your mind when you think about FH)		What do you know about FH? (In one word, write something you know about it)
NAME		
How are you going to use it in your work? (Name one thing you might find FH useful in your daily work?		How can you use FH in your personal life? (Name one thing you might find FH useful in your daily life?

Dilemma

Juan was about to leave home to go to work while his 2 year old child was having breakfast on the kitchen table. When he was going to kiss his son to say bye, the baby started playing with a knife and unfortunately cut his father. It could have been worst, but luckily it was just a little cut in Juan's hand that didn't look to bad.

Without paying much attention to what had just happened, Juan left home quickly because he didn't want to be late to work to the slaughterhouse. However, when he arrived to work, he told his boss about what had just happened at home, and suggested that he shouldn't be working at the chicken quartering area that day. The cut wasn't so bad, but his hand hurt whenever his used the knife and he continued bleeding more and more. The manager told Juan that it was impossible to change his working area because he had limited staff that day. Juan's boss told him to wear gloves to avoid the bleeding on the chickens and all would be solved.

After 5 hours working in the chicken quartering chain, Juan started to feel his hand hurting real bad, and on one of his movements, the knife grazed his gloves and cut them. His blood went all over the chickens. Even if he quickly told what had just happened, the conveyor belt continued running. Then Juan went to the nursery to get a better bandage for his cut.

That day an official health inspector visited the slaughterhouse. It wasn't the first time the inspector came; he had inspected this slaughterhouse many times and always found everything spotless. That's why, that day, he decided to shorten a little the inspection and ignore the review of the conveyor belts. The sooner he finished the review, the sooner he could return to the office where much work awaited him.

Finally the chickens stained by the blood of Juan were distributed and offered for sale. Angela bought one of those chickens. She was always in a hurry: leaving work, shopping, picking up children from school, etc. She argued with her husband, once and again, about how they should divide tasks better, but never agreed and she had to run from side to side.

That day when she got home, the phone rang; they called to remind her that she had an appointment at the dentist. She had completely forgotten and had less than half an hour to get to the dentist's office. So she left the groceries in the kitchen and ran out without putting anything in the fridge until she returned at noon.

A couple of days after, Angela cooked and served at lunch the chicken that was first stained by Juan's blood and then had been many hours without refrigeration. At night, the whole family was sick. They all had to go to the hospital, and the worst part was for her daughter because she had to stay at the hospital for a week. After several tests, the diagnosis was "food poisoning of unknown origin."

Of the 6 figures in this story: Juan, Juan's son, Juan's manager, the health inspector, Angela and Angela's husband, which one can be held responsible for the food poisoning?

Order the 6 figures of this story of highest to lowest degree of responsibility.

Annex 8: Outline of the curriculum for the "Biographic work" strategy

The activities described below need not be delivered in a strict chronological order. There are numerous possibilities for adjustment: the order of the topics can be changed or some topics can be skipped altogether. It has not to be seen as a completed programme, but as a motivation to choose from different options. The practice of biographic work implies knowledge and skills that exceed the common education of teachers or trainers. Psychological and advisory knowledge are benefits and – even more important – self-awareness and personal experiences with -and enjoyment in biographic work.

Steps/activities	Aim	Method/Mediu
Biographic work - introduction		
Self-reflection	Develop meanings	Story telling
Metaphor "Life as a journey"	See life as something that can be shaped	Association, philosophize
Valuing experiences	Widen the view of resources	Interaction, painting, story-telling, carving
Origin		
Family of origin	Create a family tree	Interviews
Family members	Collect stories	Interviews
Gender specific images	Visualize family members	Interviews (stories about family members)
Who belongs to my community	Characterize the community	Create a poster
Resources		
Resource people	Recall who has been a supporter and encourager in one's life	Stories about what these people have contributed
Traditions, values	Sort values – what would you like to keep/ to leave behind?	Bring in or draw symbols
Role models	Presentation of role models	Photos, books, films
Success and coping with difficulties	Work out common aspects of good and difficult experiences	Draw pictures, tell stories
Personal resources	Develop awareness of where one gets one's energy from	„4 corners" – a method involving working with different options
Identity		
Parts of identity	Name pieces of "identity-cakes"	Visualize different subject areas (group - similarities contradictions), group discussions
Group self-perception (group identity)	Work out how "we" define "us"/"we" and the "others"	Talk about development of group identities (film viewing)
Individual uniqueness	Bring items that represent you	Awareness-raising about features (skills, talents), pair or group work
Interactive views on different aspects	Connect surrounding and personal lifestyle (work with the metaphor tree)	Individual or group work

Steps/activities	Aim	Method/Mediu
Path of life		
One's own path of life	Gain insight in the path of life, connections	Imaginary journey, talk about impressions afterwards
Visions, aims in life	Deal with "big" plans	Imaginary journey, talk about impressions afterwards
Courage and self-esteem	Overcome the barrier of habit	Story, discussion
What do I need to be able to go "this" way?	Motivate, work with proverbs (e.g. A journey of 1000 miles starts with the first step)	Discussion: What do these proverbs tell us?
Map: further steps	Work out the concrete next steps (write down plan)	Mark your current place and draw the way to your future aims

Methodological suggestions

Allow the participants to choose their personal tutor for the work in pairs; this is one way to allow protected personal interaction. Monitor collaboration for early detection of signs of discomfort.
The priority rule of the biographic approach is: the learner decides how much they share about their personal life. The trainer must not put any pressure on the learner and must not engage in guesswork.
The stories the trainer decides to use can be adapted according to the needs of the specific group or the specific workshop.
Both the subjects and the methods can be complemented and further developed.
The materials to be used include OH – cards: cards with varied pictures, which allow various associations and emotional points of connecting factors; a deck of cards: "Persona", faces of men, women and children.

Annex 9 - Piloting and cross-piloting the "Online café in language learning" strategy

Type of language course	Intensive course iberika	Evening course with young people iberika	Evening course with a mixed age and ability group TVV	Evening course with a mixed age and ability group TVV
Number of participants:	3	5	2 groups of 12 participants each	10 participants
Age range:	18	20 – 30	35 – 55	30 - 50
Language:	Spanish (A0-A1)	English (A1/A2)	Business English	English
Time:	2 weeks intensive course (30h/week)	Once a week, 90 min	Once a week, 90 min;	Once a week, 90 min
Motivation to learn language:	Participate in exchange semester in Spanish speaking country	For work, travel and fun	For work	For work, travel and fun
Kind of E-learning platform that online café was created on	Moodle	Moodle	Commercial system purchased from publishing company	Moodle
Use of online-café:	Voluntary	Voluntary	Obligatory	Voluntary
Computer skills :	good	good	good	average
Topics in the on-line café	common hobbies	vacation, grammar	sport , hobbies	sport , hobbies
Feedback from the participants after use of the online café:	Very good; increased motivation to learn the language	Good after some starting difficulties	Good, mostly due to obligatory use	Mixed impression

Annex 10 - Screenshot of online café used within the intensive Spanish course (piloting phase)

Hobbys e intereses en común
von Admin User - Samstag, 1. Januar 2011, 13:13

Hola chic@s☺:

Qué tal si hablamos hoy de nuestros hobbies e intereses? Cada uno comenta qué le gusta y qué le interesa hacer en su tiempo libre. Seguro que en el grupo hay compañeros que tienen hobbies en común...

Yo (la profesore ☺ escribo sobre mis hobbys e intereses y, después, otra persona del curso escribe sobre el tema, ¿vale? :

_A mí me encanta la música, especialmente me gusta escuchar flamenco. También me encanta salir con amigos y charlar. Y me gusta mucho ir al cine. Me interesa el cine europeo y también de otros países, por ejemplo, el cine que se hace en Israel. Generalmente me gustan las películas francesas, bueno, no todas, claro.
Ah! y también tengo un hobby exótico: En España me gusta buscar setas en el campo (champiñones, níscalos, etc) y también juego al frontenis, es una modalidad de tenis que se practica en mi región.
Me interesa también la literatura, sobre todo la española y la alemana ☺, y también mirar los blogs de cocina, siii, es verdad.
Y la política... pues... no me interesa nada ahora ☺ Y a tí, ¿qué te gusta y qué te interesa? ¿tenemos cosas en común?

Bearbeiten | Löschen | Antwort

Re: Hobbys e intereses en común
von Alumno1 Alumno1 - Donnerstag, 13. Januar 2011, 14:14

¡Hola!
Si, tenemos unas cosas en común... Por ejemplo a mi también me encanta la música - ¿conoceis Ludovico Einaudi? - y me gusta la música de flamenco. También me gusta la literatura, leo todos los tipos de libros pero me encantan las obras de Sebastian Fitzek - si lo no conoceis ¡¡LEER!! - y las de Derek Landy. Y la política no me interesa nada tampoco.
Naturalmente tengo un hobby especial: Me gusta mucho pasear con mi perro en los bosques y identificar los árboles, ante todo en el ontoño. Bueno, solo conozco los nombres alemanes, no se los latinos ;)
El hobby invierto el más tiempo es el baile. Bailo flamenco, tango argentino, breakdance, zumba, latín y el baile estándar en seis

Annex 11 - Screenshot of online café used within the evening course English (cross piloting phase)

Holiday Chat!
by Englishteacher1 Englishteacher1 - Thursday, 19 May 2011, 03:12 pm

Anyone on this site

Hello Everyone,

This is a new chat where we can practice our English together. It is summer now and everyone is going on Holiday. I think we should all talk about our best vacations. My best vacation was when I went to London three years ago for a week. I stayed in a hotel near Hyde Park. I booked the hotel online! I visited lots of tourist sights in London like the London Eye and Buckingham Palace. The best part was the weather. It was sunny and warm and it didn't rain once! London is a great place to visit because you can go sightseeing and shopping and speak English! When it was time to go I didn't want to go home! Have you ever been to London?

Now tell me about you. What was your best holiday? Where did you go? When did you go? What can you do there? Why was it the best holiday?

Best,

Katherine

Edit | Delete | Reply

Re: Holiday Chat!
by Student2 Student2 - Thursday, 9 June 2011, 07:44 am

Hallo Katherine,

I was too in London for few years a few years ago. Unfortunately the weather was typical - raining, raining, raining. It was also very hard for me to understand the spoken English. But I like the shops (I bought some shoes) and the old part of the town.
Last month I was in Australia. A great country! First I traveled by a car along the westcoast west coast. The nature is very untouchted there. I watched exotic birds, saw kangaroos on the beach, koalas on the top of the trees and swam with lovely dolphins. It was like in a being in paradise. After that I visited a friend in Melbourne. It's a very nice city on the ocean. And finally I drove to Sydney. The Opera House and the Harboure Bridge was were really impressive. The Aussies are very kindly kind and not as so busy as the Germans. But the cost of living are is very expensive.
My best holiday was in 2004. My friend invited to meet his family in Cameroon. He showed me his country and I enjoyed the enormous hopitality of the natives. I appreciated the sense of humor of the african people. Next year I'm going to Cameroon again. My friend is going to marry get married.

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Feedback sheet

To RWCT International Consortium
6/22 Luceafarului Street
400343 Cluj-Napoca
Romania
office@rwctic.org

Feedback from:
Name: _____
Organisation: _____
Address: _____

I used in my trainings the following methods, techniques or learning activities: _____
_____
_____
_____

The method, technique or learning activity has been used in a training/ workshop with the topic:
_____
_____
_____

After using the method/ technique/ learning activity I/we have reached the following conclusion(s):
_____
_____
_____
(if more space is needed, please write your reflections on a separate sheet of paper)

I/ we havemade the following adaptations _____
_____
_____
because _____
_____
_____
In my/ our opinion this guidebook is _____
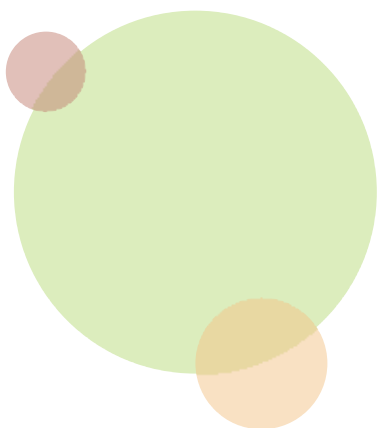_____
_____(Please, explain your
opinion about the guidebook.)

I'm enclosing the following documents (materials, resources, participants' feedback etc.) which
might be relevant: _____
_____
_____

Thank you for your support!

Grundtvig Multilateral Projects are a specific type of large-scale European projects in the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme. Organizations and institutions from different European countries work together to jointly develop innovative approaches and materials for adult education.

The **CreMoLe** project, through this guidebook which contains a collection of *Innovative Ways for Motivating Adults for Learning*, supports adult educators in their efforts of removing barriers to participation and of increasing the quality of adult education by better motivating adults for learning.