



METHODOLOGY FOR INFORMAL LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR IMMIGRANTS

GUIDE FOR THE FACILITATORS AND ORGANISERS OF THE SESSIONS

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Introduction

The present document has been developed in the framework of the METIKOS project and aims to provide the individuals and organisations that are interested to organise informal language learning for immigrants, useful information that will help them to organise these sessions in the most efficient way. The document focuses on three informal language learning methodologies that have been adapted in order to serve the specific interests of immigrants: language café, Tandem ® and Cyber Language Café. It is divided into three parts, one dedicated to each methodology although some parts (Cultural Awareness etc.) are presented in the Language Café part but are common for all the three of them.

The present document includes the following information: history of each one of the approaches, how to select an appropriate location, at what time and dates, how the groups should be formed, what is the role of the facilitator, how the first session should be organised, which activities can be organised in the framework of these sessions, how evaluation should be organised etc.

The methodology also includes useful information to improve the cultural awareness of the facilitator, to improve his/her ability to facilitate a discussion, to build the confidence of the participants in the sessions, to deal with groups of varying abilities and to correct the errors in the language more effectively. It also includes issues regarding the financial sustainability of the informal sessions.

The methodology is based on the initial study made by the partner organisations that are experts in these methodologies (University of Southampton, Tandem Fundazioa and Hellenic Culture Centre), in the field research that was carried out/conducted in all the partner countries for the identification of the needs of the immigrants, according to the guidelines for the development of a language cafe developed by LLAS, University of Southampton during the “Language Cafe” project <http://www.languagecafe.eu> and the guidelines for Tandem ® developed by Tandem Fundazioa <http://www.Tandemcity.info>

CHAPTER A: LANGUAGE CAFÉ



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition

A Language Cafe is a sociable and friendly way to practise languages without attending formal classes. It provides a social space for people to meet, talk and learn languages together in an informal and sociable way. Language Cafes are run for and by the people who use them and can be found in all kinds of places such as cafés, libraries, cinemas, bookshops, schools, pubs and restaurants. They include usually one person who is responsible for the facilitation of the session (facilitator) and people interested in learning a foreign language. Language cafes could include native speakers but this is not necessary.

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1.2 Examples of Language Cafes that are already working

Usually the language cafes are not set up for immigrants wanting to learn the language of their host country but for people wanting to learn a foreign language in the country where they live. Many of those who attended the language cafes were people who were motivated to refresh their language skills for holidays, because they had family and friends living in the country where the target language was spoken or were keen in their leisure time to refresh their knowledge of a language learned at school or university.

Examples of Language Cafes that are currently running can be seen in the website www.languagecafe.eu which advertises over 70 cafes around the world. This website is the website of the Language Café project which was an EU funded project which ran from 2006-2008. Led by the LLAS Centre at the University of Southampton with partners in Belgium, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Sweden and Turkey, it established language cafes in all partner countries and developed a guide to setting up language cafes.

2. PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE LANGUAGE CAFÉ METHOD

Regardless of the target group, the language cafes, in order to be defined as such should have some common principles:

Alternative or supplement to a more formal language course

The one common feature of the language cafes was an ethos of informal language learning as an alternative or supplement to a more formal language course. The description of a Language Café at Dunkirk (France) encapsulates the spirit and atmosphere of many of the cafes we reviewed.

'each week in a friendly atmosphere you can participate in discussions in the foreign language of your choice sitting comfortably with a drink in your hand. Based on the principles of free expression and exchange, the language café allows each person to choose their own topics of discussion. No set theme or obligation to attend, each person organises his evening as he wishes, immersed in an intercultural and intergenerational environment.'

Beyond this, there are varieties of scope and organisation between the different cafes.

Informality and flexibility with an emphasis on conversation

All cafes with a web presence emphasise the informal nature of the meetings, reinforced by the fact that many meet in cafes, bars and restaurants, establishments associated with relaxation and fun. Café participants enjoyed being able to chat in the target language without feeling constrained to study a particular theme, or aspect of the language.

The advantage of cafes is that, unlike a language course, participants are not signing up to a formal course with a substantial time and financial commitment.

Friendly and inclusive atmosphere

The cafes have to be friendly, welcoming and inclusive. Participants could contribute as much or as little to the discussion as they wished. It seems that a key driver for many people for going to a café is to meet people and make new friends and many of the cafes organise additional social events.

Ownership by group members

It is clear that the success of the cafes is not simply due to the facilitator (if indeed there is a person who would describe him/herself as this) but to the participants. Group members take responsibility for welcoming new people, steering the discussion, organising additional events and deciding on the focus of the café (i.e. general conversation or singing or themed discussion)

Facilitation and native speaker input

Although most cafes function well with an egalitarian atmosphere at the café itself, the cafes which had been running for a number of years had one person who had some coordination role. This might involve liaising with the owners of the venue, ensuring that website information was up to date. A facilitator would also take responsibility for ensuring that at each session at least one person was present to greet somebody who simply turned up to the café speculatively.

In a rural area, the need for a facilitator may be more evident, to co-ordinate venues, times and dates to maximise attendance and to overcome challenges of both logistics and time. Experience of working with immigrants also highlights the need for a facilitator to gently remind and encourage participants to attend, and tempt them by sending out topics early so that should they wish to prepare in advance of the café, they are able to do so.

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Although there are a number of cafes which run very successfully without native speaker involvement, the presence of a native speaker is positively encouraged where the cafes are targeted at immigrants to provide an authentic experience and to provide accurate linguistic input. If the native speaker is not going to be paid, their motivation may be that they wish to make friends and meet people or they are happy to provide a voluntary service or are provided with free refreshments to thank them for their participation and support

Regularity of meetings

For those people who are taking language learning seriously and who want to make progress through participation in language clubs, the groups need to meet weekly to maintain momentum. Participants may want to see the dates of all the cafes in order to commit the time and day to their diaries, especially where they may have more chaotic lives related to their status or personal situation. In rural areas, knowing the time, date and venue enables participants to organise their travel in advance where they may need to travel some distance and/or organise sharing travel arrangements with other participants where this is practical and possible.

Value for money

Many of the cafes are advertised as an opportunity to practise a language for the cost of a drink. Generally it is valued the fact that there is no cost attached to involvement in the cafes. It should be added, however, that there are people willing to pay a small fee as they recognise that they are only paying for sessions that they can attend.

In some instances where facilitators are required, a small charge may need to be in place to cover the facilitators' costs (hire of the space, facilitator time, travel expenses, cost of printing and copying and their telephone where participants may not be on e mail). It is recommended that such a charge is discussed in advance with prospective participants and kept as low as is possible.

3. SETTING UP OF A LANGUAGE CAFÉ

Setting up a Language Cafe is a relatively easy process that could be done by everyone that has the time and the will to organise such sessions. Of course there are things where particular attention should be made when the target group of the language cafe are immigrants.

3.1 Selection of the Location

It is very important that the language café is located near to the places where immigrants are already living because having to travel a long distance to attend a language café could be a very strong demotivating factor. Also, the location could have the following characteristics:



Tips for the Selection of the Location

- People will need to be seated comfortably, perhaps around a table so that they can talk to each other and share materials e.g. books, newspapers etc.
- The location that should be easy to get to and visible to a wider public, but could be in a place where immigrants already meet
- It should be quiet place that would still allow you to be able to talk
- There should be a sympathetic 'host' e.g. the café owner, librarian etc



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

- The location should be near where immigrants are already living
- The place where the language café will be established should be culturally sensitive. For example you cannot organise a language café in a coffee shop for immigrants coming from cultures where going to a café is not socially acceptable. On these occasions, alternative places should be considered (village halls, libraries, church halls, rooms offered by voluntary organisations etc.)

Examples of locations where a language café could be organised

Café, bar, restaurant, pub	These already have the café atmosphere but check that they aren't too noisy or too busy. It is also important to find out where immigrant communities frequent when choosing a café, bar, restaurant or pub.
Libraries	These are places for the general public so should be willing to host community activity such as a Language Café but check

	that they have a space that is suitable and separate from reading rooms that need to be quiet
Bookshops	Many bookshops already host social activities such as book clubs or readings and they may have foreign language books as well but check that they can supply a space and will accept refreshments
Shops	Some small food shops are run by immigrant communities where immigrants already gather and could be interested in hosting language learning sessions but check they have seating and that you will not be restricted by their opening hours
Community centres, church halls, village halls etc.	These spaces are ideal in small communities as they are used to hosting community groups including immigrant community groups and meetings but check who else is using the centre and who the key holder is
Rooms offered by NGOs, social spaces	These spaces could be ideal when working with immigrants. You should check their availability and other uses and if they are already used by immigrant communities

Note: Language Cafés are often small so you won't need a large space. If the café becomes so popular that you outgrow the space you can always look for somewhere larger or meet in smaller groups at different times. However where more smaller groups are offered it must be recognised that this increases the need for a facilitator to co-ordinate more cafes. It may also create a problem in recruiting native speakers to more than one language café session, as they are giving their time freely.

3.2 Time and Days

The language cafés should be organised at the time and on days that suit the participants and the hosts where the space selected is free to be used. The following things have to be considered when setting the time and days for the language café:



Important issues for the selection of time and day

- A time and day that suits the host
- A time and day when people are likely to come (this will influence the types of people who will come)

- Times or days when the venue is less busy or underused. You will need to negotiate those with the venue owner)
- For those immigrants with children at school, a time which allows them to take their children to school and also pick them up so that they are not having to organize and pay for childcare.

When organising a language café for immigrants, specific issues have to be taken into consideration:

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List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

- Since many immigrants work, it may be that the learning sessions may need to be organised at the weekend., Sunday might be the most appropriate day but this depends on the needs and faith of the participants
- you might need to consider childcare if language cafes are organized on a weekend, or even a language café for the children to participate in together.
- Before setting the times and date, consider which is the specific group of immigrants that you are targeting (employed, unemployed, younger, older, faith etc.)as such considerations will make a difference to when they are available to attend.

3.3 Pace (How often)

The frequency of the meetings depends on the availability and the schedules of the participants. However there are two main issues that may have to be considered:



Important issues regarding the frequency

- The time and frequency of the café should be fixed i.e. same day and time each week, but will need to be discussed with the host and participants so that everyone is happy with this. Weekly or fortnightly is best with the meeting lasting about an hour. In order not to lose contact, it is however recommended that the sessions should be organised at least once a week
- Regularity – people need to know that the Language Café will be where they expect it to be when they expect it to be!

3.4 Formation of the groups

Generally, the language café is open to anyone interested and there is no need for formal registration. However, the formation of groups and language café sessions for immigrants there maybe challenges to consider.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

- **Group size:** The group size should be controlled and it should be neither too big nor too small. The optimum size is 12 participants and the minimum size is 5. If groups are larger, they can be broken down into smaller groups of 3 or 4 within the language café session and where possible with a native speaker

- **Level:** There is no need for the language levels to be similar. People from different levels can participate. The participants at a lower level will be able to learn initially from listening. Experience shows that natural groups form where participants are of a similar level.

- **Topics:** Topics It is important that the participants decide which topics / subjects they may wish to discuss in the café. It may be that different groups talk about different things.

- **Cultural Norms:** Cultural norms should be considered where appropriate and if a problem arises. For example in cultures where women cannot speak freely in front of men, maybe it would be appropriate to create separate groups for women and men.

- **Registration:** In order to be able to consider and address the issues identified as a group is being formed, it is advisable to ask for prior informal registration through a simple e-mail, a telephone call or an SMS. This requirement does not mean that a person that will show up in the session should not be accepted.

- **Reminder:** It is advisable that an e-mail notification or an SMS should be sent as a reminder to the participants in the language café sessions in order to remind them of the next session. This can also be achieved through a facebook group as long as all participants are members of facebook.

The profile of the immigrants that might be interested in participating in these language sessions is varied. Below, you can find a table with possible reasons why immigrants are interested to learn the language of their host country. It is associated with examples from the research realised in the METIKOS partner countries but it could be equally relevant for other the countries.

To improve the quality of communication with resident native speakers	<p><i>«... it is a new life for me here in Greece. Learning the Greek language is obligatory...we should learn Greek properly so as to be acquainted with the traditions, mentality and cultural specifics in order to be integrated into the Greek society. Only then, Greek will treat us better...» (int. 15)</i></p>
	<p><i>«Knowing the Greek language means that you'll be treated well from the police and public administration. They will not treat you like an object sending you back and</i></p>

	<p><i>forth from one to another office or services, i.e. from IKA to tax office and vice versa. When I once went to the district's police station the police officers' behaviour toward me was far better comparing with how they treat another guy who couldn't articulate properly any word in Greek...»(int. 11)</i></p>
	<p><i>“I had not realised how much more difficult it is in France to complete tax forms than it is in England. It is not only the language that is new, but the process which means I have to speak with the local tax offices on a regular basis. I need to be confident I can do this, and am telling them the right things to make sure my tax bill is correct as there is no flexibility here once it has been submitted.</i></p>
<p>To adopt the cultural code of host country residents and society</p>	<p><i>«...it is in our interest to speak, to write, to learn the cultural code of the country you've migrated to, to set up communication bridges with the natives. The more you know the language, the better...» (int. 2)</i></p>
	<p><i>“I had always assumed that English and French culture would be very similar and in some ways it is but in many ways it is not. Being able to speak with local French people at the language cafés has highlighted so many differences such as the sociable lunch breaks where all the workers go out to local café to eat together, where we just have a sandwich in the office at our desk. Sundays are still very precious to the French as a day where families come together, so I would not want the supermarkets to be open all day as they are in England. Every community, no matter how small has a full range of community activities such as the village meal, concerts throughout the summer and great activities for children during the school holidays. The French socialise so much more than we do, and not just on an evening. Etiquette is very important in</i></p>

	<i>France.</i>
To find a better job and improve work conditions	<i>“...if I don’t know the language, if I don’t know how to speak and write I’m going to remain for my entire life a work equipment/tool that anybody can use it as a disposable item...I’ll never be able to either find a proper job or to improve my position in the Greek labour market”</i> (int.1)
	<i>“language is definitely a barrier in France in being able to obtain work at a level I am used to operating at. I have had to set up my own business as I could not obtain work with a local employer, but am now keen to develop my work based language speaking skills and hope the language café will start this for me”</i>
To improve the quality of social life	<i>“...we all need the language just because everybody needs to communicate with his fellow neighbours; you definitely want to improve the quality of your everyday life, that’s why you are here searching for a better life...”</i> (int.6)
	<i>“I really try hard to speak to my neighbours, but find I run out of things to talk about. We always talk about the weather but I want to talk about different subjects such as films, theatre, books and French television”</i>
<i>To ease integration into a new host community</i>	<i>“as an older person who has chosen to retire to France, I had not realised how important learning French was to be able to speak with my neighbours who are so helpful, to be able to thank them and invite them round to our house for drinks. We also need to be able to shop locally, and in our later years have greater need for doctors and hospitals where we must be able to properly inform our listeners of our circumstances and illnesses.”</i>
To prevent discrimination practices, rejection and segregation	<i>“...if you express yourself properly and address your needs so as to be understandable to the other, then everybody will respect you...you will find</i>

	<p><i>more easily a house, a job, no one will dare to insult you [...] the language it is the first step towards being accepted "(int.4)</i></p> <p><i>" many French people think we English do not want to learn to speak their language, but this is not true. It is hard to learn in formal classes where we feel vulnerable due to our lack of confidence. I feel sometimes the public authorities take advantage of our lack of fluency in the language such as when I applied for a small grant to set up my chilli business and they told me I was too old. I also felt there was some discrimination because I was an older woman too. It took me a long time to show them they were breaking their own laws on ageism as well as EU law, but with help from friends they had to concede they were in the wrong.</i></p>
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Other reasons identified include:

- Completing administrative procedures with the local municipality, health agencies, tax office, bank, insurance companies etc
- Communicating with teachers at schools and helping children with their homework
- Dealing with everyday life activities such as shopping or going to the doctor.

3.5 Facilitator

The facilitator is very important for the formation of the language café since s/he is the person who organises everything and facilitates the discussion in the session. The facilitator should have the following characteristics:



Characteristics of the facilitator

- Open-mindedness
- An interest in people
- Empathy with immigrants and the difficulties they face
- The ability to listen as well as speak
- A willingness to take responsibility for making the Language Café a success

- Should preferably be a native speaker or have an advanced level in the language of the café

Once the café is up and running the organiser's role may include some or all of the following:



Role of the facilitator

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- To facilitate meetings e.g. keeping the conversation going, coming up with ideas for café activities
- To use icebreaking techniques and be able to propose new activities and topics for discussion
- Be a native/competent speaker of the language of the café
- To liaise with the venue owner and deal with any issues that may arise in regard to the venue
- To engage with native speakers to encourage them to participate in the language cafes as volunteers
- To make sure that everybody is given a chance to speak but is also an effective timekeeper
- To encourage participants to ask questions and participate in discussion
- To invite external guests and experts, where appropriate
- To promote the language café in the local area

The above characteristics are applicable for all the language cafés. In the particular case of the organisation of language cafés for immigrants, a facilitator should take also into consideration the following:



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

- **Native Speaker:** The need for a native speaker is far greater in cafés organised for immigrants wanting to learn the culture and the language of their host country than in other types of language cafés. If the facilitator is not a native, at least one native should participate in the café as a volunteer when possible. Experience has shown that immigrants like to talk to native speakers so being able to offer small groups of 3 or 4 to one native speaker has been welcomed
- **Language Teacher:** There is no need for the facilitator or the native speaker to be a language teacher or to have any teaching background.

- Liaising with immigrants and immigrant associations: The facilitator of the sessions should be able to liaise with immigrants and immigrant associations in order to attract people to the language café sessions. At the same time, s/he should liaise also with native speaker willing to participate in these language café sessions.

4. ACTIVITIES

After setting up a language cafe, you should keep it going. In order to do that it is important to create a friendly atmosphere and organise a series of activities which will be considered useful and attractive and productive. The first meeting is very important in order to engage the participants and create the basis for the success of the future sessions.

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4.1 First Session

The first session is very important for the introduction of both the language cafe and the introduction of the participants. In the introduction of the cafe the following things have to be explained and discussed with the participants. It is very important that decisions are only taken with the agreement of the participants.



Introduction of the Cafe

- Explanation of the aim of the language café
- Explanation of the ground rules for communication and organisation
- Decision about the times and dates of café
- Decisions on the topics and subjects which will be the focus of the café

Another useful activity for your first meeting is to discuss your **previous and current** language learning experiences using the form below. Each member of the Language Café group can introduce themselves using the suggested format below. It will probably be less intimidating for people to speak to each other rather than to the whole group. This can be done in the foreign language or in the immigrant language. Another idea is for each group member to introduce themselves to the person next to them who will then introduce them to the whole group.



Questions to be asked in the first meeting

- Everyone to introduce themselves and say how well (or not) they currently speak the host language
- What other languages do they know?
- Why are you attending the language cafes?
- What subjects, topics and activities do you want as part of the language café?
- What language learning aims might they have?
- What has been their most significant or memorable experience so far of living in their new host country?

The first meeting is also the time where team building has to start and ice-breakers are very important for this issue. Below you can find some examples of ice breakers that you could use in a language café session.



Ice Breakers for the First Meeting

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What we have in common

The facilitator calls out a characteristic of people in the group, such as '*having children*'. All those who have children should move to one corner of the room. As the facilitator calls out more characteristics, such as '*likes football*', people with the characteristic move to the indicated space.

Match the cards

The facilitator chooses a number of wellknown phrases, and writes half of each phrase on a piece of paper or card. For example, they write '*Happy*' on one piece of paper and '*Birthday*' on another. (The number of pieces of paper should match the number of participants in the group.) The folded pieces of paper are put into a hat.

Each participant takes a piece of paper from the hat and tries to find the member of the group with the matching half of the phrase.

Names and adjectives

Participants think of an adjective to describe how they are feeling or how they are. The adjective must start with the same letter as their name, for instance, "I'm Henri and I'm happy". Or, "I'm Arun and I'm amazing." As they say this, they can also mime an action that describes the adjective.

Three truths and a lie

Everyone writes their name, along with four pieces of information about themselves on a large sheet of paper. For example, '*Alfonse likes singing, loves football, has five wives and loves PRA*'. Participants then circulate with their sheets of paper. They meet in pairs, show their paper to each other, and try to guess which of the 'facts' is a lie.

Find someone wearing...

Ask participants to walk around loosely, shaking their limbs and generally relaxing. After a short while, the facilitator shouts out "Find someone..." and names an article of clothing. The participants have to rush to stand close to the person described. Repeat this exercise several times using different types of clothing.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

- **CV:** You can ask the immigrants to fill in the information below in writing but only when they have some basic writing skills. Therefore, an important question which should be asked at the beginning is whether they know how to write in their host language
- **Language:** The language used for the presentations and for all the activities of the project should be the language of the host country
- **Traumatic Experience:** The participants should never be forced to talk about personal experiences if they do not want to because they could be related to traumatic experiences

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4.2 Organisation of activities according to the needs of the target group

The activities organised in the framework of the language cafe should be flexible and adapted to the particular needs of the target groups. The emphasis should be given to oral communication and discussion skills but also writing skills exercises may have to be organised if the participants need and request them.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Topic Based Sessions: What might be different when organising language café sessions for immigrants is that they should be based on specific topics. While in other forms of language cafés the flow of discussion is free, in order to meet the needs of the immigrants, each session (or the whole café) should be organised around specific topics in order to meet their specific language needs. These topics are provided in the curriculum of the METIKOS project and include help for children, coping with administrative procedures, specific topics such as literature cafés, job related issues etc. The topics can be pre-arranged but also the participants can suggest topics according to their own needs. If the immigrants have writing skills, they can write the topics on a piece of paper and put it in a box. If they do not have, they can just suggest ideas during the café sessions and discuss them with the other participants.

It is recommended that the facilitator prepares each topic before the session. They can provide some material that could be used as a stimulus for the discussion or in order to explain some specific vocabulary, develop some specific skills etc. according to the needs of the group members. The facilitators can use the bank of online resources from the site www.metoikos.eu which has resources for the topics suggested in the curriculum. Other resources that can be used include:

- Articles from newspapers and magazines
- Videos from youtube
- Photos from magazines and participants own photos
- Language learning material from dedicated language sites in the Internet

- Vocabulary lists
- Examples of tax forms, insurance claims, etc
- Etc

This list of resources is only indicative. The resources could be of any type (text, video, photo etc.). If the resource is electronic (audio or video), proper equipment needs to be made available in order to play it (e.g. laptop computer).

The learners do not necessarily have to be prepared for each session but sometimes it may be advisable that they are asked to be prepared for a topic to be discussed or bring an example of something relevant to the topic with them

Other ideas for activities can be seen below:



Discussion Starters

- Compare your likes and dislikes about the culture of the host country, e.g. I really hate it when...
- Talk about your life/job/hobbies etc.
- Think of 10 items that are related to your life here and describe them
- Make word maps. Write one word and then try to find as many related words and expressions as possible.
- Take it in turns to select an item from the media and present it to the rest of the group



Games

The organisation of games should again be culturally sensitive and only organise games if there is agreement of all the participants in advance that they want and are willing to play

- Charades – mime an activity/word/film/book etc
- Taboo (have picture cards, pick a card, try to explain the picture without using any proper nouns)
- Memory games – place a collection of items on a tray, spend 5 minutes naming the items and trying to remember them. Cover the tray and see who can remember the most items.

- Pictionary (pull a card with a word on it and draw a picture to help the others guess what the word is)
- Word association game – one person chooses a word, the next has to find a word that is associated with it and so on
- Scrabble (sets are available for different languages)
- Who's who? Someone thinks of a famous person and the rest have to ask questions to find out who it is (these can only be answered yes/no)
- Broken phone – whisper a sentence or a short story to your neighbour. This is continued around the group and the last person tells the sentence or story out loud so that everyone sees how it compares to the original.
- Start with items beginning with 'a' and each person adds an item and tries to remember every preceding item until you reach the end of the alphabet.

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Cultural Activities

- Invite a guest speaker to talk about his/her work, interests, travels etc.
- Bring in some music, listen and talk about it or sing along karaoke style!
- Listen to songs. Try writing out the lyrics or have written lyrics with gaps and try to fill in the gaps.
- Take it in turns to prepare a talk on something or simply describe what you have been doing
- Take it in turns to talk about your country of origin
- Pick a topic (eg food) and each person has to say one sentence about anything related to that topic
- Go to the cinema together and discuss the film afterwards
- Choose a book to read and discuss it in the café
- Each person can bring a poem or play and you can read aloud from it and/or discuss it
- Have a food/wine tasting evening

- Take it in turns to cook an international dish and introduce it to the rest of the group
- Organise group visits (to the garden centre, to the DIY shop, the theatre or museum, have a meal together, walking activities etc



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

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Extra activities that could be organised according to the specific needs of the immigrants are practical hints and tips such as writing a CV and completion of forms in case such a need is requested by the participants.

The participants in the groups will have different skills which could be identified and made use of. These might include music skills, artistic skills etc. You would not believe the wealth that is hidden within your group!

5. EVALUATION

It is important to regularly obtain feedback from the participants in the language cafe who will be able to identify problems or highlight good practice in order to improve the sessions for everyone

The questionnaire that is suggested to be used with immigrant participants is the following:

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LANGUAGE CAFE PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION FORM

A questionnaire for café-goers and sponsors to be used at 5 weeks and 10 weeks

This evaluation will be used in confidence, but is needed to inform us of your views.

Please let us know what you think of the project by completing and returning this form to your workshop leader / facilitator at the end of the programme

Your name (optional)

Location of the language cafe

Please ✓ the appropriate responses to each statement. If you would like to add further comments please add them in the space provided, continuing on a separate sheet if you need to.

		YES	NOT SURE	NO
1	The METIKOS language cafe programme was what I expected			
2	The information/guidance about learning I was given before and during the language cafe programme was relevant and helpful			
3	The language cafe has helped me to develop my spoken language skills for living and working in xxxxxxxxxxxx (name of the language)			
4	The language cafe programme was well organised			
5	The support available during the programme was helpful and supportive			
6	Any materials and resources used were well presented and easy to use			
7	I can speak in xxxxxxxxxxxx (name of the language)			

	much better than before I attended the language cafe			
8	I have more confidence in using my spoken language skills in public, at work, with the doctor, in banks and wider professional capacity			
9	I have more confidence in using my spoken language skills with my neighbours and in my community			
9	I would recommend the language cafe programme to someone else			
10	The facilities provided for the language were satisfactory			

Was there anything that could be improved?

If the Language Café was attended by a native speaker, was this helpful?

Are you planning to continue coming to the Language Café (if not, why)?

Are you planning to continue your language learning in another way? If yes please say how.

Date: ___ / ___ / ___

Thank you – we value your opinion

6. CULTURAL AWARENESS

Regarding the organisation of language cafe with immigrants, the cultural awareness of the facilitator in specific issues regarding the culture of the immigrant countries is considered to be very important in order to be able to understand their issues, barriers and concerns as well as, their need to learn the host language.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

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Some of the things that the facilitator should know regarding the culture of the immigrants might include the following:

- Country of origin of immigrants (some basic information)
- Culture of the country of origin of the immigrants (traditions, religion, languages spoken etc.)
- Main difficulties faced
- Main needs regarding language learning
- Specific cultural characteristics (regarding alcohol, gender, faith etc.)
- Framework of the EU policy on migration
- Their human rights

Here is a very indicative list with examples of websites that could help you develop this cultural awareness

UNESCO document library on immigrants	http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/resources/online-materials/publications/unesdoc-database/
Overview of the Immigration to Europe	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_to_Europe
Amnesty International	http://www.amnesty.org/
Article about language learning and immigration	http://www.multilingualliving.com/2011/11/13/immigration-and-language/
Basic Knowledge about Islam religion	http://islam.about.com/
Basic Information regarding EU migration policy	http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/217_en.html
EU Migration Portal	http://ec.europa.eu/immigration/
Basic Information for the Immigrants in Greece	http://www.migrant.gr

7. FACILITATION OF DISCUSSION. USEFUL TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

The main role of the facilitator in the framework of the language café learning sessions is to facilitate, to keep the discussion going and ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak or ask questions. Some useful hints and tips that will facilitate the discussion process are provided below:



Questions to ask regarding facilitation

1. Are you allowing your participants to be active learners? Are they able to participate actively?
2. Are the goals of the language café and the trainings sessions clear?
3. Are the sessions recognizing and including the skills and competencies of each member of the group?
4. Are there feedback mechanisms in place?
5. Have you clarified how the learning will help the participants in their daily life?
6. Is the material provoking interest and enthusiasm?
7. Are participants able to undertake self assessment
8. Are the participants able to share their learning with each other?
9. Do you use strategies to include all participants in the learning?
10. Are participants respectful of each other?

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Hints and Tips for the Preparation of the Session

1. Match your content to the needs of the participants following consultation with them.
2. Depending on the length of the session, include various exercises and activities that are both meaningful and consistent with your participants' needs.
3. When you introduce an activity make certain that it has a clear and meaningful context.
4. Ask yourself if the materials you use are attractive
5. Since everyone learns and retains information differently, prepare the session using a variety of delivery methods.

6. Consider sending out materials in advance of the language café session both as a reminder for the next session and to enable anyone who want to prepare.



Hints and Tips for facilitation during the session

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1. Allow participants to learn from one another
2. Expect participants to be engaged
3. Enforce positive and respectful interaction
4. Summarise and clarify difficult content or discussions
5. Ask open-ended questions and listen carefully
6. Be aware of pacing; keep an eye on the clock; keep it moving
7. Clarify with examples but don't overuse stories
8. Be positive, enthusiastic, and focused
9. Trust your participants to have good ideas
10. Include a variety of activities
11. Offer encouragement, praise, and recognition
12. Understand that people like to learn in different ways
13. Encourage constructive differences of opinion
14. Keep participation balanced
15. Pay attention to participant reactions, moods, and attentiveness.
16. Listen carefully to all the participants.
17. Facilitate smaller groups where appropriate either by level of language or by topic

8. BUILDING CONFIDENCE

Increasing the confidence of the participants is a very important aim of all the language café learning sessions. Immigrants may be very reluctant but they can develop more quickly if their confidence in themselves is increased.

Here are some tips to develop confidence



Hints and Tips for the Confidence Building

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1. Enable ownership of learning by the participants. Encourage them to use their own initiative, to propose topics and suggest activities, even to facilitate one session etc.
2. Set attainable goals for each language café session. Support participants in overcoming any doubts they have in improving the spoken language skills helps develop learners confidence. Discuss with them as to how they have developed their skills during the sessions when appropriate.
3. Provide gentle feedback and correction to help strengthen their spoken language skills. Offer corrections without damaging the confidence of the participants.
4. Encourage participants to set high standards for themselves. Reassure students that they are capable of improving their spoken language skills. Provide consistent encouragement to students to show your commitment to their success.

9. CORRECTION TECHNIQUES

When facilitating a language cafe' session or assisting a language cafe session as a native speaker, the correction techniques are a very important part of the learning process. When correcting activities and discussions based on informal conversations, there is an important balance that has to be made between accuracy and fluency.



Accuracy vs Fluency in a Language Cafe

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In a Language Cafe fluency is generally more important than accuracy since the primary objective is to get the participants to speak the language they learn. Normally, in this situation the correction of the mistakes is not immediate but is left for later. This is usually called "delayed correction".

During a fluency activity, it is better not to interrupt the participants. However, there will always be mistakes which need to be highlighted.



Tips on correction of mistakes in a fluency activity

- Take note of the mistakes that you hear during the conversation
- You can highlight the mistakes and ask the participants to correct it
- If the participants are not able to correct it you can correct it yourself by highlighting the correct answer
- Emphasis should be given to the mistakes which are repeated more frequently
- Sometimes the majority of the language cafe participants are doing the same mistakes. You can talk about them in the class.

10. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

For the organisation of a language cafe, the existence of a friendly and relaxed atmosphere is a very important aspect. Therefore, the recognition and resolution of a conflict, it is an important part of the role of the facilitator.



4 main things about conflict

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- **A conflict is more than just a disagreement.** It is a situation in which one or both parties perceive a threat (whether or not the threat is real).
- **Conflicts continue to fester when ignored.** Because conflicts involve perceived threats to our well-being and survival, they stay with us until we face and resolve them.
- **We respond to conflicts based on our perceptions** of the situation, not necessarily to an objective review of the facts. Our perceptions are influenced by our life experiences, culture, values, and beliefs.
- **Conflicts are an opportunity for growth.** When you're able to resolve conflict in a group, it builds trust. You can feel secure knowing that your group can survive challenges and disagreements.

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/eq8_conflict_resolution.htm



Tips for Successful Conflict Resolution

- You can avoid many confrontations and resolve arguments and disagreements by communicating in a humorous way.
- Accurately read another person's nonverbal communication. This is an effective way for the identification of conflicts
- Listen to what people have to say
- Recognise the importance of feelings



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

In the resolution of conflicts with groups of immigrants, the respect of the cultural diversity of the participants, of possible traumata and of cultural norms is a very important aspect.

11. PUBLICITY

Here are a few tips for advertising your Language Café by using the press, events, personal contacts and other agencies. These are followed by some advice on supporting other people to set up a Language Café.



Build a Website

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- You can use the website of METIKOS www.metoikos.eu to advertise the language courses (contact: euprograms@action.gr) or you can build your own website for your cafe using free platforms such as blogspot. This is a free and easy way to gain publicity
- In the website, give specific information regarding the language, the location and the time for the meetings. Emphasise the benefits that the participants will have. Provide examples of the topics that might be covered but encourage them to provide other suggestions throughout the language cafes.



How to use the press

- Create a recyclable press release (see 'How to write a press release' www.linguaconnections.eu/STWritingPress.htm)
 - Contact:
 - o Press officer of newspapers, etc
 - o Webmasters of online publications
 - o Journalists of your local paper
 - o Online journals relating to language learning
 - Send pictures (but get permission from participants first)
 - Find someone who has a contact in the media (press, radio, TV etc)
 - Use your institution's own press office if there is one available
 - Use your institution's newsletter if there is one.
 - Find something of media interest to tell the press (an attractive story to make your project look 'real') and support it with photographs when possible and approved by participants

- Start local when approaching TV and radio
- Use special interest newsletters, e.g. local government, schools, community groups, local faith establishments (churches, mosques, synagogues etc)
- Use events listings
- Create a podcast or mini video to send to websites, etc.
- Link to press coverage you have had on your website
- Use special event publicity relating to languages/education, e.g. European Day of Languages
- Use specialised press like women's or children's magazines/ publications targeting immigrants
- Have a clear message and be innovative – tell a personal story, think of a catchphrase

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Health warning. Be careful of:

- o The press misreporting you
- o More interesting events may displace you from the news
- o Using photos/podcasts without permission
- o Not always saying the same thing
- o Not targeting your press release to the publication so that it is relevant
- o The press is good for spreading information and the idea but possibly not for recruitment
- o Your institution press office can let you down



Use of Events

- Use different kinds of publicity at different stages of the Language Cafe
- Use language learning conferences and workshops at regional and local levels (your approach will depend on the type of conference, e.g. informal/research)
- o Before Language Cafes are set up, use conferences and workshops as a means of:
 - ☒ Looking for venues/sponsors

☒ Looking for partners

☒ Market research

o After Language Cafes have been running for a while, use conferences and workshops to present:

☒ Successes and failures

☒ Dos and don'ts (useful tips)

☒ Poster presentations

☒ “Live” workshop version of the Language Café

- Give out postcards at events
- Consider cost issues
- Examples of events to look out for:

o Professional events

o Company “open houses”

o Market days (local)

o European Day of Languages

o Book fairs (small)

o Anti-racist days, events and festivals

o Education fairs

o Festivals (music, culture, art, etc)

o Any kind of events organised by the immigrant communities

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Use of Personal Contacts

When organising a language cafe for immigrants, the personal contacts maybe the most important means of publicity (word of mouth).

- Use “useful” contacts, e.g. institutions which support immigrants or are immigrant led that can be useful to your Language Cafe, and personal contacts

- Instead of sending emails to a mailing list use a selective approach and contact people who are potentially interested or who can be an asset to your Language Café
- Contact immigrant associations, NGOs working with immigrants and all other mainstreaming organisations that are able to provide access to the target group
- Produce a “stakeholder” database of everyone who might be useful
- Keep people updated, e.g. through an email every now and then or a newsletter, even if they are not in a Language Café’ group
- Add the website URL and your blog address to your email signature to raise awareness of the Language Café
- Improve cohesion within the Language Café by organising activities like a dinner together or watching a movie – this may help to keep the Café running and might convince people to join
- Use friends for dissemination (tell them what you have been doing and for recruitment (ask them if they know people that would be able to join the groups)
- It is sometimes a good idea to talk to people face-to-face instead of sending an email

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List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Immigrants are usually very reluctant to speak to people they do not know, so good practice to attract them is to contact them through organisations and individuals that they do already know and trust.



Involving other Agencies

Involvement from other agencies may take the form of financial involvement, e.g. paying for a native speaker or some other form of sponsorship, e.g. providing a space/venue or piece of equipment for free

- Find out about the aims of the agency and make sure that you link to the aims you have when approaching them
- Examples of agencies:
 - Local authorities, e.g. district council/ municipality/commune
 - Cultural organisations, e.g. British Council/ local cultural associations

- o Embassy/cultural departments
- o Language schools and university language centres/departments/ Lafrancophonie /
- o Schools (may be interested in a Language Café as an extra curricular activity)
- o Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- o Bookstores/chains and publishers
- o Libraries
- o Charities/refugee organisations
- o Immigrant Associations
- o Employment offices
- o Community centres in your area

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How to extend the Network of Language Cafes

The real success of a Language Café is based also on the extension of its network. In order to expand your network you can do the following:

- Make it easy to access information such as this methodology e.g. through the web site, offering awareness and training sessions
- Provide marketing tools/publicity pack, e.g. posters, postcards
- Include your contact details in all publicity
- Be ready to offer support and guidance
- Go to the first meeting of the Language Cafe if possible
- Make sure your website is easily accessible and regularly updated
- Link to other websites
- Use your own organisation's resources, e.g. mailing lists
- Contact organisations external to your own, e.g. libraries, supermarkets, immigrant-run shops
- Be aware of existing networks and use them
- Go in person to potential venues (but possibly phone first)

12. FINANCIAL ISSUES

The costs related with the organisation of a Language Café for immigrants can be minimal, however some costs are always present and they could be covered by sponsorship or small sessional charges. The sponsorship may not necessarily be in money but the offer of a the venue or to facilitate the promotion of the café, be a volunteer native speaker etc.

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Sponsors may have their own agendas, so make sure your agenda matches theirs. . They will need to know what value they will be getting as a result of their financial or non financial contribution. They may be looking for new clientele (commercial sponsors) but may also just require positive publicity to enhance their reputation (e.g. public sector sponsors).

You need to decide from the beginning what you need sponsorship for (venue, materials, promotional products in the language concerned, free courses, vouchers to give away as prizes) in order to identify the best sponsor for it.

Approaching the sponsor (by personal contact, letters or email will not work). She/he will need to know: numbers (do not give them actual number of participants, talk about multiplying effects), type of audience for the cafes. In the table below, you can identify possible sponsors.

Who	How	Why
Public services such as schools, colleges, local councils, employment offices etc. e.g. Local authority, education service organising Language Cafés in libraries	Providing management and organisation services Funding Publicity	Language Cafés provide opportunities for a wide range of people to engage in self-improvement particularly if they don't have access to other opportunities for reasons of cost, access and lifestyle
Language Café venues such as cafés, bars, cinemas etc.	Organising and running the café Publicity Putting on special events, venue appear to offer services for co-nationals	Many potential venues are run by people who either belong to the immigrant community or who are interested in the culture, food etc. It also gives great added appeal to their own venue.
Commercial enterprises such as coffee companies, supermarkets, manufacturers	Providing food and drink, Funding Publicity	Many businesses engage in charitable work and could support a Café that is of benefit to a particular group of people
Cultural associations, clubs	Providing management and organisation services,	These societies etc. could work with a Language Café

and societies such as dance groups, NGOs etc.	providing venues, Publicity, Guest speakers	to put on a special event which would promote their area of activity (e.g. African dances)
Cultural Institutions such as embassies and cultural institutes	Funding, Links to the target groups, Resources from the target language, promotion to participants from their country	These organisations may be able to provide resources to promote their language/culture through the Language Café network

CHAPTER B: TANDEM ®



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition

Tandem ® is a way of learning a language by exchanging with somebody who wants to learn your language. You divide the time into two parts. In one, your partner learns and practises your language, and you help him/her. In the other, you learn and practise her/his language, and your partner helps you.

It is an especially good way

- to learn new words
- to understand better
- to speak freely and to learn to express yourself with few words
- to get to know other cultures.

You can also work on the Internet ('eTandem ®'). So you can practise reading and writing, and you can also talk with a Webcam.

1.2 History of the Approach

In 1979, a German language teacher at the Cultural Institute Madrid (a branch of Goethe-Institute) was in a dilemma, which practically all foreign language teachers face from time to time: The Spanish course participants complained that they were 'saturated' with knowledge about the German language, but had no opportunity to use this knowledge. At the same time, he often met German students who wanted to learn Spanish in Madrid, but were angry about overcrowded courses that reminded them more of lectures.

His reaction was the only logical one: Any time it was possible, he brought into class the 'real' Germans increasing the opportunity for the course participants to communicate with 'Where are you from' and 'What do you do here' in real life situations with a personal interest.

However, in the long run it was not enough. The packed programme left no space for such 'excursions into reality' and, what is more, it shortly became apparent that the Germans had more prior knowledge of the foreign language than the Spaniards; and therefore, 'Castellano' (Spanish) was soon imposed as the lingua franca. This short experience posed some questions that were going around in his mind:

❑ To what extent can a language course prepare a person for the use of a language in reality? Apart from the often criticised fact that a great part of the utterances come only from the mouth of a teacher, is it a problem that all the corrections are only made by one person? Despite his/her good intentions, is this person, not hopelessly over challenged when he/she tries to establish genuine communication in a target language with all the participants who are so different from each other?

❑ Isn't a lesson, of necessity, always a simulation; can a foreign language lesson with all its resources ever be more than a presentation and consumption of 'slices cut out of the linguistic reality, deeply-frozen and defrosted on occasion'?

Isn't it nothing more than an absurdity that each year, hundreds of German students toddle speechlessly around Madrid, while at the same time hundreds of inhabitants of Madrid try to snatch 'a smattering of authentic German' in language laboratories by practising more or less artificial dialogues, listening comprehension exercises and tests?

Why are we constantly looking for ways to bring the in-class conditions closer to reality by all possible means? Why don't we, at least once, try to change the reality in such a way that it facilitates language learning?

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In these last years, some solutions from many fields have been taken from the experts and passed down to those who are concerned about these issues. If it is possible even in psychiatry (self-help groups) why not in language teaching?

And so the teacher of German started matching Spaniards learning German and Germans learning Spanish in exchange pairs. After conducting detailed interviews with the first pairs, the dependent elements for success were revealed. With the help of the former course participants and the first Tandem ® pairs, various didactic materials were developed. That is how the Tandem ® intermediation came into being.

As a result of it operating successfully for three years and the enrolment was continually increasing, the time for the next step arrived: parallel Tandem ® courses for Spaniards and Germans which started in 1982, hosted in the Cultural Institute's rooms. As far as previous experience was concerned, there was only one article known (by Nükhet Cimilli and Klaus Liebe-Harkort). It was in regards to a course in 1973, with Turkish workers and interested Germans in Munich. None of the pioneering projects of the Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk (German-French Youth Association) had reached Madrid. Nevertheless, the principles were approved and after some time an informal group of German and Spanish teachers with Tandem ® experience was established. Then, in the summer of 1983, they tried to apply the same procedure working with youth at a youth meeting in Sigüenza. The majority of these teachers were present when the 'Centro Cultural Hispano-Alemán TANDEM ®' (Hispanic-German Cultural Centre TANDEM ®) was established. Now there is a wide net of cooperating initiatives in many continents that use the brand 'TANDEM ®' as a common recognition sign.

1.3 Examples where Tandem ® learning has been applied

The Tandem ® approach has been used widely in a great variety of languages for a great variety of exchanges. It has been used mainly in a university environment for exchange students. Particularly interesting Tandem experiences include the Tandem integrated in qualification programmes and multigenerational house, Tandem between police officers and refugees, Tandem to support women, Tandem for lesser used languages etc.

2. BASICS

In this section are presented the basic tips for Tandem ®. This document includes all the main information that a Tandem ® participant should know in order to be engaged in a successful Tandem ®.

1: Let's start!

In the beginning it helps if you make notes about the next meeting, like this:

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- What is the subject we are going to talk about?
- What materials do I need? (pictures, comics, articles, songs, short films etc.)
- Where do we meet?

2: Exchange roles

With Tandem ® you are alternately 'learners' and 'teachers/learning assistants'. Sometimes you are the language-model for your partner, and sometimes you learn from his example and his corrections.

If you are the 'learning assistant', be restrained. We retain knowledge best when we have discovered it for ourselves. So do not provide answers immediately, but try tips or examples.

3: Distinguish and alternate both languages

Speak for a certain length of time, e.g. only half an hour, in one language, then half in the other. Or write an email half in your language and half in the other. If your partner does not understand a word immediately, explain it with another. If you translate, you end up using the language you can both speak better. So one learns more, and the other less.

4: Speak about what you like, for example:

- your school/course and class-mates, work and colleagues, your residential district/your town in the country of origin and here, your spare time, parties, habits, zodiac sign etc.
- common interests (sport, fashion, music, films, computers, domestic animals etc.)
- things you have done (your last holidays, the first trip without parents, first love, the nicest or worst day of your life...), or fantasise about the future (what you want to be in ten years, what your biographer would write about you, what you would be if you were born again...)
- discuss topical questions (climate change, youth unemployment...).

5. In this way you can learn a lot:

Listening: speak normally with the partner. If necessary, repeat something in other words, so he learns to guess the rest from words in a context.

Speaking: better a short sentence which is not quite correct than a silence. Don't worry, nobody is listening to you!

Reading: choose real articles or publications, even if you do not understand everything immediately. First find out what it is about in general, for whom it is written, and the central message.

Writing: it's practical to write something at home and then have a look at the results together, or read them out to each other.

6: There are many ways of saying the same thing

Not all words are in the textbooks. You can get to know from your partner what is 'cool' or 'up-to-date'. Or you can practise technical or business language (commercial letters...).

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7: Your aim is mutual understanding

Speak naturally. Don't use long, involved sentences (which discourage) and no baby talk (the partner does not learn anything). Explain gradually, and make sure that he has understood. Encourage the other person and put yourself in his shoes.

8: Don't translate!

It is not effective if you jump from language to language (unless you are deliberately practising translation).

So it is better if you limit the number of new words and use:

- Synonyms: *stroll* = *walk*
- Contrasts: *bitterly* <-> *sweetly*
- Examples of the same category: *tangerine*-> *orange, lemon*
- Derivations: *fly* -> *flight*
- Associations: *sea and holidays*
- Word connections: *tooth(-)pick*
- Comparisons or references to the person: 'You have jet-black hair.'

9: Retaining words is not difficult

- Write them down and look at them long and thoroughly
- Say them aloud, sing, shout or whisper them
- Discover similarities to other words
- Discover similarities to words from your own language
- Learn a word together with its opposite
- Express them graphically (make a flower in the 'o' of 'the flower')
- Form sentences with them or do a role play in which they appear
- Put in references to other words (*vacation – sea - jellyfish*)
- Order and collect them in groups or lists

- Pay attention to the feelings which the sound produces (e.g. the patter of rain).

10: Learn from your mistakes!

Mistakes are in no way bad and no accident, but are part of the learning process. Arrange with your partner how you want to deal with corrections.

If your partner has only a little knowledge, focus on a few topics. If he is advanced, don't think you can't develop his language. He can still learn a lot.

However, when writing, it is best to be accurate.

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11: How you correct mistakes:

- during the conversation pay attention to which mistakes are made most often. Discuss them only afterwards so as not to interrupt the flow of words.
- Use the word he got wrong correctly, in the course of conversation. So your partner has a model, but is not interrupted
- Note mistakes, and then go through them together
- Highlight your explanations in writing
- Your partner can write down the word or the sentence and read it several times aloud.

12: Linking the cultures

With Tandem ® you have the opportunity to see another country and another culture 'from the inside'. In this way you find out how others see your country and your culture 'from the outside'. It's worth allowing yourself to be surprised, but try to listen first, before you judge. As for the rest, if something in the behaviour of your partner seems strange to you, don't think that he wants to offend you. Ask.

If you have the feeling that it's not going well, talk about it without making it personal. In every learning process there are highs and lows. Your teacher/counsellor can also give you advice. Have a good journey!

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3. IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS AND REGISTRATION

When organising a Tandem ® session for immigrants, the main issue that has to be dealt with is that there may be more immigrants that are going to be interested in learning the language of the host country, than local natives interested in learning the language of the immigrant country. This situation becomes more difficult by the fact that having the same knowledge of the language of the other is a prerequisite in order to participate in a Tandem ® exchange.

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List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

When searching for Tandem ® partners for immigrants it is very important to focus both on the immigrant population and the native population and search for natives that could have an interest to learn the language of the immigrants

The next step after the identification of the possible participants is the registration through the use of a questionnaire. The questionnaire is needed in order to match the needs of the immigrants to the needs of the natives and vice versa.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Often immigrants need more help when completing a questionnaire and therefore there should be someone capable of helping them with this process.

For more information regarding the questionnaire, you can contact tandem@tandem-f.org

4. STARTING A TANDEM ®

4.1 Matching the participants

The intermediary person or organisation is responsible for matching the participants on the basis of the questionnaires that have been presented in the previous section. The basis for a good Tandem ® is a genuine interest and mutual understanding between the partners, which prompts them to speak, making it easier for them. This is why a careful choice and a personal knowledge of the participants before an intermediation are the most important steps of the intermediation centre. This possibility of making a choice is what distinguishes Tandem ® from a haphazardly made conversation.

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4.2 Criteria for Successful Matching of the Participants

Residence/workplace

Hopefully, the venue for the introductions and future meetings is not far away from prospective participants own residence or work place so that consensus can be agreed, on the time of day when the meetings are able to take place.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Attention should be paid to the fact that many immigrants change places of residence often as a result of their work. E-Tandem ® should be always offered to them as a possibility, provided that they have the related skills and access to the relative equipment.

In rural areas distance may also be an issue so E-Tandem may also be an option but only after the participants have first met and got to know each other enough to be able to maintain a TANDEM through e mail, skype etc

Studies/profession

The same occupation is important only for people who do Tandem ® for professional reasons. A comparable level of education is more important.

Age

Normally, the difference of 5 years is acceptable, but 10 years may be too much. However, the meaning of age loses its importance from a certain point; a difference between a 40 and a 50-year old is not as significant as between a 16 and a 26-year old.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

The migrants often are younger people with short school careers and they know only their own language, the host country's language is the second language they learn. The local people which learn a migrant language like arabic are often people which have

learnt a lot of languages and the migrants language is number five, so they are older. This might lead to the impossibility of building tandems for young migrants."

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Interests

Asking about their interests rather serves the purpose of giving the intermediary (facilitator/ coordinator) an impression of the future Tandem® partners when they do not know them personally. As experience shows, it is enough to have one common interest to have something to talk about while getting to know each other. There are good Tandem®'s not only with identical, but also with completely different or opposite interests; mutual understanding and respect for one another is more important than concrete interests.

Motivation for learning

Here, some specific professional/ cultural / integration interests should be identified. Otherwise, the answers may provide little meaningful information.

Language proficiency level

Including a learning biography is important for two reasons:

1. It is possible to tell if a participant needs organised classes outside Tandem®
2. It is necessary that the participants are at a comparable level. If they are not, a great deal of patience is required by the advanced participant when explaining to the partner. Thus, this undermines the participants' interest after some time. Moreover, the language of the spontaneous communication shifts for the benefit of the advanced participant's language ('the language of the effortless communication'), which causes the gap to grow.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

For some immigrants that speak Arab or other similar languages, the identification of the language is not enough. Also the dialect of the participant should be asked because many immigrants do not speak the standard version of the language.

Also in the case of a temporary lack of people of a certain nationality (and language) interested in Tandem®, the rule of equal proficiency levels should not be ignored. It is better not to intermediate any Tandem® than to do one, which condemns its participants to failure or continuous frustration. Small inequalities are possible only out of consideration for some cultural specific peculiarities of learning or the country where a Tandem® takes place. For example, the Spanish tend to think that they will make fools of themselves if they make a mistake. In addition to that, the Germans in Madrid normally learn faster during the same time, because staying in a target-language environment offers additional opportunities to practice. This is why in Madrid the Germans are principally matched with Spaniards who are at a more advanced level.

Duration

Tandem®s, which last for less than two weeks, do not seem to make much sense, unless the meetings take place almost every day and in this way, the beginning phase is shortened.

An average duration of a Tandem® is between three and six months, but there are also some perennial ones.

Time

Usually the one who comes to another country to learn a language needs significantly more hours than the one who works in the country while learning the language as an aside to daily living. Regulate this by enabling the former to work with many independent partners.

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The minimum time is more meaningful for the intermediation than the maximum limit; however, it is often exceeded if there is mutual liking between the partners.

Additional learning

The knowledge of where the participants learn a language and what contact they have with it helps to determine which proficiency areas Tandem® can include or exclude, while appropriate hints are given during the interview.

Interests and other characteristics

The answers provided in this field help the intermediary to get a more refined idea of the future partners. What is more, they may provide some clues about possible incompatibility or aversion.

Political interests

Generally, the conservative participants have no interest in such information and want to perceive learning languages as something detached from it. Liberal participants tend to consider it as a part of a lesson. If no agreement can be achieved, the intermediary can sometimes help with hints about other information sources.

Gender

The statements under this heading should be interpreted carefully. For instance, it can happen that somebody might find a partner of the opposite sex more interesting, but they do not indicate this for fear that the intermediary would misinterpret their intent. Also during work in a Tandem®, some difficulties resulting from the ambiguities in communication between men and women may arise. According to the experience in Madrid and Bielefeld, Tandems between two women are the most productive if those women have similar cultural backgrounds.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Gender is surprisingly often a blocking factor. Both native women and migrant women prefer sometimes to meet only with women, but the number of participating migrant women is in some nations very low, which leads to difficulties for building tandems.

Teaching experience

If one of the participants is a beginner, it is almost necessary that the other has teaching experience so that systematic and even learning is possible.

Schedule

Referring to a schedule makes the intermediation considerably easier; availability is often named as one of more important factors for a successful Tandem®.

Miscellaneous

A concern about the possibility of breaking off an inappropriate partnership and finding a new partner is often expressed here. According to the surveys, the mutual liking or openness comes before the common interests. The relationship between the future partners is difficult to foresee having only a questionnaire, but this question can provide useful hints.



Tips for Matching the Pairs correctly

When intermediating, it is easier not to compare all the answers one by one, but to analyse them in this order:

- 1) Schedule
- 2) Knowledge
- 3) Age
- 4) Interests.

The questionnaires of the interim pairs matched in that way are put together and checked according to the following factors: gender, other characteristics, and political interests. At the end the 'blocking factors' like smoking and other particulars are checked.

At this point, the pre-selection is completed, but there can be other possible combinations. Now one of the candidates is called and a meeting is arranged to shortly describe to them their possible partner/s (without showing them their questionnaires). Line them up according to their wishes. Two or three proposals of appointments are made. Then the intermediary calls the other partner/s, lets them chose a final meeting date and informs the other person about it. Then the actual introduction follows.

4.3 Organisation of the first meeting between the participants

Introduction

As experience shows, the names are not remembered after the first introduction so they should be repeated once again, later during the conversation, or on the telephone, before the introduction takes place.

Relaxation

The situation is sometimes embarrassing for both participants. The intermediary should absolutely avoid a situation in which the introduced partners have to wait for them or even sit together at the meeting point waiting and exchanging shy looks. It means coming on time or a bit early so that there is already somebody to talk with. Leaving both partners alone for 5 minutes after the introduction so that they can chat in private and then coming back to continue with the exact hints has also proven to be successful.

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Informal test

If the intermediary does not know the foreign language at the proficiency level of those involved or the questionnaires do not evidently state it, the conversation provides an opportunity for a better overview. That is why the intermediary moderates the conversation sometimes in one language then the other. As an exception, they begin in the language of the participant who is probably less relaxed and more inhibited. The language has to be changed inconspicuously so that the situation does not seem like an exam.

Establishing direct communication between the partners

The aim of the introduction is to establish direct communication between the partners and to initiate the gradual withdrawal of the intermediary. That is why the partners trying to ask each other questions through the intermediary have to be gradually redirected. Good reasons for direct conversation are arranging the place, time and frequency of the meetings, etc.

Organisational clarification

At the end of the conversation, each of the participants needs to have:

- Name, address, phone number of the partner
- Phone number of the intermediating organisation
- Time and place of, at least, the first meeting

Attention should be given to try to ensure that the partners have the same travel distance to their meeting point. This is particularly important in a rural area where distances may be an issue. In the beginning, there should not be more than 3 meetings a week. The intermediary provides in writing the charge fee and the name of the partner with a date, shown on the questionnaires, and gives these back to the partners. The intermediary keeps a control sheet with all the relevant data. Then they explain the procedure for getting an extra Tandem ® or a subsequent one in case any of the partners would like to do so.

Introduction into materials

Introduction to the existing supporting materials can be given at the beginning as an ice-breaker. As experience shows, these materials are only partially used. They should be nonetheless given as placebo for fright or 'anxiety during the first meeting'.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Due to the forced mobility of migrants, all couples should be introduced in the introductory meeting in the use of skype and language exchange platforms, so they can maintain the contact by internet even if one has to change residence.

Also, it might be useful to give some web references about free language learning courses, both for the migrant wishing to take additional structured classes at his/her convenience, as for the local wishing to improve his/her level in the migrants language or to resolve grammar questions.

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Tips on implementing a Tandem®

According to their observations during the meeting and their prior knowledge, the intermediary can give hints about possible topics, peculiarities and risks of a TANDEM ®. In any case, they should emphatically point out the necessity of separating both languages and show a few examples as to how things can be explained monolingually. An intermediary should also offer help in case of any difficulties or questions that may possibly arise. If there is a feeling that either of the partners are not satisfied with the other, they can suggest that Tandem® begins less intensively and offers the partners on an individual basis, a different partner.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Experience shows that tandem exchange in couples is less suitable for persons with short school careers which need more structure, orientation and feedback. In that case, we recommend to combine a bilingual language café, also called in literature

http://www.tandemcity.info/general/en_reference.htm

'tandem course' with tandem exchange in couple. So, the moderators of the group meetings can guarantee a regular follow-up to the couples every week."

5. MONITORING OF A TANDEM®

Basically, a Tandem® is a device for the participants and after a successful matching, the intermediary should be available in the background or disappear. However, the intermediary should ask the participants occasionally about how satisfied they are. The need for feedback is especially high in the first weeks immediately after starting; later it declines and can be obtained through group meetings where experiences are compared. In rural areas this may be by e mail or skype.

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List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

Tandems with immigrants need considerably more monitoring than the other Tandems. The intermediary should contact the immigrant and the native speaker more often to discuss difficulties, problems and solutions.

At least in the first year of intermediation activity, it is strongly advised for the intermediary to organise an appraisal session with both partners together or separately at the end of each Tandem®. It broadens their experience and enables future intermediations to be improved.

CHAPTER C: CYBER CAFÉ



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition

Generally the term “Cyber Cafe” is not widely used to describe websites for learning languages and therefore we propose the following definition:

A “**Cyber Language Café**” is a website where language learners

- are able to practice a language, either through a tandem exchange, or in a virtual room, with the aid of audio-visual tools (text chat, video chat, teleconference);
- can retrieve resources for language learning for independent language study;
- can find each other and meet up online, meet new friends on the basis of their common language(s) which they are learning or their native language;
- can be supportive / responsive to their questions and problems concerning their language learning, with the help of fellow learners, tutors and/or online tools (e.g. dictionary, online grammar,...);
- meet during fixed hours but also anytime and discuss different topics of common interest in the target language, with the help either of a tutor or a facilitator who could be also a learner who knows the target language in a higher level.

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1.2 Types of a Cyber Language Café

Some principles are the same with the Language Cafe and Tandem sessions but there are specific issues that have to be considered in the framework of a “cyber language café”. The sessions in the cyber language cafe can be organized in 3 types that can be developed on an independent basis or an interdependent basis:

1. Synchronous cyber café → with the use of teleconference tools, like Skype, Google Hangouts and others. This has the aim to enhance the oral skills of participants, to enable them to interact in the L2 with other migrants in the host country in a more “lively” way. As with the language cafe and the Tandem sessions, the emphasis is more on oral than on writing skills even if the development of writing skills might also be considered with additional exercises and tasks.
2. Asynchronous cyber café → with the use of a platform like the one we have developed: <http://cybercafe.metoikos.eu>, which is designed to offer to migrants the possibility of access a Table of Resources for the L2 of the host country and to interact with moderators or other participants. The basic tool to use in this platform shall be the Forum and Chat tools. The aim of this platform is primarily to bring people together in a learning community giving them the chance to interact even in a basic form of the language. This is done without strict demands on the written production they shall present and also in order to familiarize them with the use of a learning environment. A second aim would be to enhance and develop their writing skills, only for those that shall ask moderators or co-participants for this help, which is also a major issue in every L2 and is a key factor to their success in official language exams for permit reasons or other social acceptance procedures.
3. Blended cyber café → combining the above 2 forms of learning offering some face to face support during meeting of the Language Cafes. (see above) In this

way the live interaction between the moderators and migrants shall help to “transfer” the Café’s aims and methodology to an online experience primarily solving issues that are related to major stress factors like absence of ICT skills, lack of ICT tools at home, stress of using ICT, if available, lack of time or motivation to be involved in online activities. The moderators this way used the Language Café to initiate and help migrants become familiarized with ICT tools necessary, so that they have the independence to explore resources alone and create a network of communication and support, so to help each other when someone does not follow the face to face sessions of the Language Café.

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The type 1 (synchronous) can also be combined with the type 2 (asynchronous) if migrants wish to do so. During Skype sessions an initiation to the platforms’ signing up system would be advised, so to familiarize people with this tool, as many people are completely unaware of these forms of learning and they feel threatened, when asked to participate in such initiatives. Exploring the possibilities of the cybercafé platform (material resources and interaction of the online community) can lead a person who was negative in the first phase to change attitude.

Careful and patient mentoring from involved moderators is very important in this case, as working through teleconference tools and exploring ICT tools with people who do not speak well the language and do not have particular ICT skills is a very difficult task for moderators, who need to be very supportive and have some good knowledge of the basic ICT tools to use and how to navigate people to explore them.

The third type (blended cyber café) has the aim of connecting the group that meets face to face with other cafes that function elsewhere. In this way migrants can find useful information on different issues of common interest and develop new relations between them, with people who live in other cities. Usually this will be information on the labor market in other cities of the host country. This is the most interesting type and the most difficult to realize, as migrants hesitate to contact people they don’t know, even if they are from their own country.

2. ORGANISATION

Some basic actions to organize a Cyber Language Café based on the 3 above axons of interaction / types of Cyber cafés.

2.1 Organisation of a synchronous Cyber Language Café

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Synchronous cyber café: 13 Steps to organize!

1. A convenient schedule is proposed for the online teleconference sessions. Moderators are advised to be available in 2 different time zones during the day, so to enable different working groups to express interest. Each country has different time schedule habits, so particularities should be considered, for example lunch breaks, working hours etc. For example, a 1st time zone could be inside the morning hours for those who work at night shifts and the 2nd time zone should necessarily be the evening hours, when most migrants might be able to have some free time for language interaction. A third option could be the weekend, where possible.
2. A clear and short email should be sent to all stake holders in the language of the hosting country and other languages (English, and if possible basic languages of migrant target groups in each country) related to migrants announcing the time zones of the Cyber Café, the purposes, the contact email and Skype name of the moderator (is the sessions are on Skype). A phone number of the moderator would also be good to be mentioned, if possible, so that interested migrants can have the possibility to express their interest by phone call, if they are shy or intimidated to write emails for some reason.
3. The communication by emails between the moderator and interested participants should be loose, friendly and encouraging from the very beginning, not at all formal. The moderator should mention to the participant the frame of the Café and its purposes, so not to disappoint one person, if they do not find what they want. (For example, Language certification preparatory lessons that many migrants are interested in). However, in case the Café is organized by an organization, a possibility for participants to get a certificate of attendance should be offered.
4. The moderator would be advised to send a Form of Interest or Registration Form for the Cyber Café (see Annex, 1) so to have some first information on the participant's needs and expectations and be able to contact the person, when necessary. The data of this form shall be maintained confidential, of course, and this should be emphasized by moderators for apparent reasons dealing with such a vulnerable social group. The form of Interest or the registration form could be filled in during the first online session too.
5. A clear and short email for the 1st meeting on Skype mentioning the date and time and again the Skype name of the moderator should be sent as a reminder to participants the day before or the morning of the first session. In

this email, it should be mentioned that the first meeting shall also help people that do not know how to use Skype or other teleconference tools to get familiar with these tools.

6. In case, the teleconference tool is a different one (e.g. Google Hangouts), the moderator should be sure that all participants have the necessary info, e.g. that they have to make a Google + account.
7. In the first meeting the moderator should be loose, pleasant, very encouraging and try to make humour exploring the needs and personalities involved. Some online icebreakers are very important to be used adapted in the needs of the specific group, regarding their level of L2 etc. For example, the role play "*You are the journalist*" when one participant has to ask 3 questions another participant could be good for A2 participants, as each one interacts with the other and the moderator can hear through the process the language used, spot the different learning needs and understand the different personalities so to be able on the way to create a good group dynamics.
8. In every Skype session there should be a presentation of everyone shortly, if new people join the Cyber café. And at the end a reminder from the moderator of the next day and time the Café shall "open" again. Also, a big help would be the use of the Chat tool, so that the moderator can write there key words or phrases and thus participants who are interested can check the spelling or can ask about words/ phrases they do not understand.
9. Every Skype session could work on a different Topic of discussion either brought up by the facilitator or by the participants following also the social circumstances, the everyday life and the communication needs of the migrants. If the facilitator wants, one can also choose material from the Table of Resources on the Metikos site and provide the link of the resource in the Chat tool and organize an activity using that resource. This Resource Table could be enriched by the learners themselves, who may offer some new links for materials.
10. After every synchronous meeting the facilitator could summarise what has been said and send a post for everyone who could not attend. This is useful for the facilitator to organise the next session, and for learners who were not there to follow the process and the life of the café.
11. During the last Skype session (in case the Cyber café has a specific date to come to an end), it would be advised to organize a "goodbye" online activity (see below) like "*I send my gift*", where each person is encouraged to send something to the others as a goodbye gift, a written text, a song, a video, a photo etc. A list of the emails could be good to share so that people can be encouraged to continue the Cyber Café or to communicate, when they would need to, even without the facilitator.
12. As a follow-up activity, an e-mail could be sent to all participants after one or two weeks, allowing them to know any new possibilities they have to go on and inviting some of them to facilitate new sessions in the future. In any case migrants should not feel 'abandoned' when the prescheduled cyber café is over, but should feel that this is an initiative they can use in the future, at their own responsibility. Native speakers who could facilitate sessions

voluntarily, as well as migrants who could also facilitate a language café session because they know the L2 in a higher language level are the best human resources for a language café to go on. The organiser should be available for support.

13. A meeting with possible future online facilitators should be arranged before the prescheduled end of the series of café sessions, so that the sustainability of the language café is ensured. This could also be arranged during the first and not the last sessions, according to the availability of the volunteers. Any trainee language teacher or a native speaker who wants to support should be encouraged to do so.

2.2 Organisation of an asynchronous Cyber Language Café

Asynchronous cyber café → 10 Steps to organize!

1. The learning platform or site involved in the Cyber café activity is organized and the administrator informs / trains the facilitators in some basic features they shall use. (Sign up guidance, navigation, forum posting, chat)
2. The facilitator disseminates widely the purpose of the Cyber Café mentioning the site of the Cyber Café and inviting people to show their interest by email.
3. The same procedure is followed as in the Synchronous Cyber Café (Step 3)
4. As above (Step 4)
5. The facilitator creates some first Topics for presentation of the participants and first discussions – icebreakers. The first Topic (Module) shall be a Topic for presentation of all people like “Let’s present ourselves”. The next Topic could be “ Which is my city? What do I like there? What not?” or “My favorite food! Let’s share a recipe” etc.
6. The Topics are better 2 at the beginning so that participants are not confused or discouraged by entering the Cyber Café platform. Every different topic could be added every 2 days of the Cyber Café, so to present an element for surprise for the users. When a new Topic is added in the platform, it is better that the facilitator sends a reminder to participants’ emails with a helping link to the actual post. This should also be a possibility technically, through the platform (sending a message to participants’ mail box for any recent posts to the forum).
7. The facilitator checks every day the platform and replies with some encouraging replies to the posts of participants. It is very important that the facilitator is there every day and possibly many times of the day during the first days of the language café, so that people can “see and feel” that it is not a machine only they communicate with. One also can make a Topic like a “Feedback’s corner” only for those who ask for correction or other feedback on their posts from facilitators. This topic could have a pleasant title like “Right or wrong! We love it all!” and there one moderator or participants

who are very good in the L2 can help the others by correcting their mistakes and proposing other ways or vocabulary to express something. The facilitator can explain to participants the use of this Topic and that if they want corrections, they should go there to see the corrected written texts as the rest of the cafe shall not be related to corrections but shall aim to free written production with whatever mistakes they do. (*Cyber café loves mistakes!*) This Topic is an idea for more advanced learners who often seek for feedback, as they are interested in taking official exams of language proficiency attainment and to obtain a certificate. Even if the Cyber café is not at all oriented to formal types of learning, this topic/ module could help get satisfaction of the specific needs of this target group of migrants, if the facilitators are of course in a position of providing such feedback.

8. One tries to use simple vocabulary, easy words in the general posts but not always too simple so not to discourage the more advanced learners. One can change the language difficulty and post a comment of a higher level to a more advanced user. (personalized approach)
9. The facilitator does not have his body language to help oneself, so one tries to find one's own writing strategies that can show one's feelings! Emoticons, strange words, mottos...Photos, personal stories...Whatever could enrich the Cyber Café with a more personal element, so that learners are relaxed and feel safe and creative there.
10. The last (scheduled) topic (module) should be a "Farewell and Goodbye " topic, like the one described above (Step 10) or another nice idea of the facilitator!

2.3 Organisation of a blended Cyber Language Café

Blended cyber café : 20 + Steps to organize!

This type of Café should combine all the above steps!

And 3 more Tips to have in mind:

1. The facilitator should try **to orchestrate the activities online and face to face**, so that the ones feed or stimulate the others.
For example,
 - a. one can post in the Forum a Topic related to the Food "Present your beloved recipe" and
 - b. the next session in the Language Café could be inspired by this Topic doing the following Language Café activity face to face :
"Present your beloved recipe!" → the group is divided in 2 groups, each group prepares a recipe to present orally making drawings, each group presents the recipe to the other group! The recipe could also be prepared in situ with real ingredients, if possible.
 - c. During the Language Café, each group then writes down on the platform of the Cyber Café a short text of the recipe already presented with the help of

the facilitator. Adding photos of the poster or other photos could a fun activity that would enhance their ICT skills as well!

- d. Participants in the asynchronous Cyber café (and those who did not participate in the face to face session of the Language Café) are encouraged to write a comment on the Posts made by the 2 groups. The facilitator can send everybody a reminder so that they do so.
- e. Participants in the Skype sessions can see the Posts and the Photos and comment on the experience (reflection) if they participated themselves or describe some of their recipes also following the same procedure but online! (Separate Groups work alone in Skype for some given time , for example 15 min. and then the facilitator calls everybody for a plenary session and each group presents to the other their work)

2. The facilitator could take the opportunity for some discussion in the Language Café to create a new Topic in the Cyber Café.
3. The facilitator creates a Topic called “Skype sessions” in the Forum and then summarizes all activities and sessions done in Skype, mentioning the participants involved and topics discussed, so to give the chance to others to be interested in the process and to keep track of the activities done, like a short informal “diary” that summarized the meetings.

3. TECHNOLOGY IN L2 EDUCATION FOR MIGRANTS

3.1 Challenges of language learning for immigrant's integration and the role of ICT

Second language (L2) education for adult migrants poses many challenges, related to a number of organisational, pedagogical, technical and financial aspects, some of which could be addressed by ICT implementation.

These challenges are:

- adult migrants' diverse educational backgrounds and literacy levels
- their immigration status and duration
- employment and residential conditions (e.g. origins of their spouses)
- short term goals and life project of each migrant

All this heterogeneity defines a territory where diverse needs and requests should be addressed, various L2 abilities should be explored and different learning paths should be proposed. This practically means that learners need to work at different paces and on different contents, which leads us to the pedagogical orientations of personalization and differentiation. These challenges have to be seen in the sociocultural frame of migrants facing personal and work-related constraints on attending courses regularly at a fixed time of the day, in certain places and in given periods of time. Flexibility in their course organization seems to be a significant element to overcome such constraints. In addition to, there is more often a lack of opportunities to practice the L2 with members of the host society.

Facing all these challenges, teachers are usually facing many difficulties in L2 education for migrants. But teachers are rarely trained and qualified for this in their initial training and existing opportunities in this domain for their continuous professional development seem to be inadequate.

Therefore, an effective L2 educational approach for integration should have characteristics such as:

- addressing the actual needs of learners;
- linking L2 courses with personal needs and job orientation;
- making L2 learning opportunities available in a flexible way, at the workplace, at different times of day;
- offering support through mentoring and buddy schemes

ICT could play a useful role in achieving many of these aims, if used in an organized framework, as there is an abundance of ICT based resources for L2 learning:

- full L2 courses available on CD-ROM or DVD or websites and more often on multiple ICT platforms and devices;
- e-Learning platforms for self-study and teacher-led L2 learning;
- a wide range of web-based often specific L2 learning resources (e.g. exercises) and tools (e.g. dictionaries and translation services);
- video and TV series associated with L2 courses (available through TV, Internet, DVD, CD-ROM);
- mobile L2 learning with mobile phones, podcasts, personal digital assistants and other portable devices;

- virtual and gaming environments for L2 learning;
- digital storytelling and other user-learner produced content (on wikis and blogs) in the context of L2 learning;
- and language exchange platforms and communities.

The theoretical analysis therefore shows that ICT could be used to address the L2 education challenges discussed above, in particular the personalization of learning, as it offers greater flexibility in access or production of interesting content for the learner, supporting his autonomous learning motivation. Moreover, the personalized guidance offered promises a better dealing with diverse learning needs and styles. And teachers professional development can be enhanced through ICT-based opportunities like online communities, as they can have access to ready material or resources and explore the pedagogical challenges of this special target group.

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3.2 Benefits and limitations of ICT implementation in L2 education for migrants

The **benefits** are theoretically estimated to be many while using ICT in L2 education for migrant learners, however in a practical level there are many restraints and limitations towards this direction.

A significant benefit stemming from these challenges is the joint acquisition or improvement of L2 and digital skills, which are very much appreciated by learners in the contemporary societies and have proved to have empowering effects among digitally illiterate and less educated migrants.

From the teachers' point of view, they could use ICT to manage the demands for differentiation and personalization in a better way, for a more flexible course delivery and learners' guidance in the classroom and at a distance. Additionally, education institutions can save on costs, if they change their course organization alongside with technology solutions enhanced without deteriorating the teaching quality.

We note however some important limitations about the ICT use experiences in L2 education and the policies regarding this issue:

- poor support of speaking skills and inadequate feedback on mistakes
- stakeholders' lack of awareness about ICT opportunities,
- not sufficient investment in this direction from national stakeholders;
- barriers to ICT access by migrant learners, especially if they live in poor areas and they do not have computers or internet access;
- teachers' lack of digital competence, adequate training opportunities and didactical support,
- teachers' difficulty of searching for and choosing the appropriate ICT-based resources, especially in less widespread languages.

Our Project's Cyber Café's methodology aims to contribute in this specific direction offering practical guidance and a research basis of evidence for such educational directions. The use of Cyber Café could help all stakeholders maximize the benefits and minimize the limitations of ICT use in L2 language learning for migrants and thus help in ameliorating such initiatives and practices.

3.3 Practical aspects of using ICT in the Cyber Café methodology

It is a general acceptance that the skills of women and men with migration backgrounds in particular in the fields of IT-technologies and multi-functional media such as PC, Internet and mobile phone must be better recognised and used, and their social participation must be promoted. In this direction a first helpful and relatively easier tool to use are the teleconference platforms / freeware in Internet. Various platforms for teleconference are in place, which allow for a great variety of interaction between the different users. A helpful reality is that many migrants and refugees, of a very poor educational background, usually come in contact with tools such as Skype, as this is an economical and easy way for them to communicate with their families and friends at their home countries.

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However, for a developed experience in Cyber Café, it would be necessary to develop these skills with the support of facilitators. It would be advisable for facilitators to be informed or discuss with more experienced trainers of the field a set of recommendations that describes how the online skills of women and men with a migration background can be improved, taking into consideration their gender-, generation- and culture- specific aspects. In some EU countries such material has been elaborated and could be very helpful¹. Cyber café activity can contribute in this dual direction:

- present new perspectives to strengthen the use of the Internet among women and men with a migration background
- enable them to feel safe and creative while learning the target language in an online environment, which means a change of their attitude.

In order to avoid the possibility that members with a better knowledge ICT skill marginalize the weaker members of the migrant population (the lower educated and skilled), it is important to develop strategies in order to deal with learners' diverse attitudes towards ICT and with low levels of digital competence among some learners. It is recommended that simple-to-use ICT tools which are already trusted by these learners, such as mobile phones, MP3 players, TV and some Internet media, are selected. Use of simpler devices could potentially familiarize migrants with the idea of using ICT in education and make them feel safe when applying more demanding solutions. When a PC-based application has to be used, introductory actions could provide users with basic digital literacy (if needed, along with basic reading and writing capabilities) and guarantee support from a teacher or tutor in early usage practice. If possible, bilingual tutors and materials, and instructions, which are both written and narrated, can be very useful at this stage.



List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

¹ For example, in Germany a useful guide:

<http://www.bmfsfj.de/BMFSFJ/Service/Publikationen/publikationen,did=129008.html>

- Most immigrants tend to have lower ICT skills than the general population. Therefore,
- the tools that will be used should be as simple as possible and use communication platforms that they already know and use. Skype is a very good example of a communication platform that could be used for online sessions, since it might already be known to the immigrants.
- Skype sessions should be organized in the beginning of the language café scheduled meetings, so that the facilitator can help migrants who hesitate to participate due to lack of ICT skills.
- A possibility for one such session for new participants who want to enter in the course of the meetings should be taken under consideration too.
- The facilitator can start by using trusted tools such as mobile phones, MP3 players, TV and some internet resources so to bring the learners closer to the use of more complicated technology like PC applications.
- A short introduction, written and narrated if possible, for PC-based applications like participating in a learning platform or an Online Community.
- Support by tutor at an early stage of practise. Bilingual tutors are very much useful, if existing.
- In order for the tutor/ facilitator to encourage learners to interact with other learners through ICT, the tutor has to agree with a colleague or a group of learners to have an online appointment during the scheduled meeting with her/his learners. This way there will be a real world situation and the learners will communicate with other learners online or with another facilitator.

4. EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES DURING ONLINE SESSIONS

As in face to face language sessions, within the online sessions there are several examples of activities that could stimulate language learning in an informal environment. Some of them are described below and provide a stimulus for teachers of L2 to migrants, so that they develop their online strategies and sets of activities depending on various factors like their learner's needs, their educational background, their ICT skills, their technology restraints, their time availability etc.:



Examples of Useful Activities

- **"You are the journalist"**: Ice breaker → Role play when one participant has to ask 3 questions another participant. Good for A1 and A2 participants, as they can just ask some already known questions, like "What's your name?", "Where do you come from?" etc.
- **"Find the synonym Quiz"**: The learners read parts of a given text – The facilitator tells them a word which is a synonym of one word of the text. (or writes the synonym on the Skype chat). The learner who finds first the word corresponding to the synonym, could get a prize (an emoticon).
- **"The machine of Time"** : A learner tells a story of what happened today or yesterday. The facilitator says "Stop! The machine of time gets us totomorrow...(or today or yesterday)" and another learner has to repeat the story narrated in another time frame (using past or present or future tenses)
- **"Yesterday – Today – Tomorrow"**: Variation of the above using different skills. (writing – reading) Reading a given text in another tense to practice verbs grammar use in different tenses. The person saying or writing first the correct form would get a star-prize.
- **"Chain of phrases- Surrealistic story"**: Each one makes a phrase with a word/ phrase of the text or exercise - for vocabulary revision and passes on to the other student. Sometimes the story would be realistic and sometimes surrealistic!
- **"I Act in a Role –play"** with different topics. These could be also described in the Cyber Café's Forum and a couple of learners could decide which role play to prepare and present.
- **"Fill in the gaps by chatting"**: The facilitator copies a short text (with relative vocabulary or grammar phenomena) in the Skype chat or the Cyber Café's Forum and asks learners to cooperate in couples and find the missing words.

They have some time to prepare it and fill it and then we would share it writing the correct types in the chat.

- ***“Share your favorite song”***: an activity of presentation and commenting on students' posts in the Forum also.
- ***“I send my gift”***: In case of a goodbye- farewell closing up activity. Each learner and facilitator posts on the Forum a “gift”, like a photo, a link, a recipe etc.
- ***“This week my best sites are....”*** Learners are encouraged to work in couples on Skype, so to help each other and potentially using the target language. The facilitator asks them to visit some resources of the Cyber Café's platform, depending on their interests and find the 3 better sites for them. This activity could be organized as a “homework” for a next meeting in the Language Café's sessions or the synchronous Cyber café's sessions familiarizing learners in making a web quest with an already given set of material they would have to personalize.

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List of things to consider specifically for immigrants

All the activities should take into consideration the skills that the immigrants have and the skills that the immigrants would like to develop. If the immigrants do not have reading or writing skills and they want to practice their conversation skills, then all the activities should give emphasis to that. On the other hand, if the immigrants want to practice writing and reading more, then the facilitator should give emphasis on that.

The facilitator has to have in mind that the immigrants not only want to learn something useful but also they want to communicate with other immigrants as well as with natives. The time they spend in such activity is very precious and has to be worthy.

5. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

For every advantage a cyber language café can have, we must take into account the challenges these advantages entail and even possible disadvantages. Coordinating an online cyber café, one must pay attention to the following statements.

- Learners are independent in the way that they are free to decide when, how and what they want to learn and to adapt the pace of their learning process alike. This also means that learners have to motivate themselves again and again to start learning each time, since there is no prescribed schedule or external pressure. This enlarges the risk of an early drop-out.
- Learners may choose to merely focus on the topics they are interested in and to focus on one certain skill more than on others. This might cause them to select certain materials which do not completely accord to their knowledge level. Trying to fill in the 'gaps', it might be difficult for them to retrieve appropriate materials to make up for the 'missing' knowledge.
- Learners might become overwhelmed by the large quantity of educational materials and resources provided. They should be self-organised enough to be able to cope with the challenges which language structure and grammar pose.
- Learners might get discouraged by the technological requirements for them to use all the tools of the website. The risk of dropping out exists if the learner is not at ease with the technological requirements to be able to profit from the cyber language café. Consequently, the presence of decent and easy to access technical guidelines, a FAQ section, the opportunity to ask questions the coordinator by email and/or phone and seek assistance, and in the best case, be able to offer face to face introduction or guidance to the website, are decisive factors.

For all these reasons we believe that the facilitators' role is crucial: s/he has to decide which learning path s/he will propose, according to every individual's needs, to give shape to the learning process, to propose timeline, a logical sequence of the different activities, to follow the learning process and make proposals as to optimise a fruitful and effective language learning experience. Moreover to encourage learners exchange ideas and comments in the **Online Community** of the Cyber Café platform, helping possibly the language production (if learners do not speak English, which is most probably the common language of many hosting countries of the EU for migrants) so that they understand that also other migrants in other countries aiming to learn other target languages face exactly the same challenges.

6. ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

The facilitator should be aware of the fact that no solution can fit all needs and it is preferable to use a mix of different ICT based L2 learning resources, so to form a personal strategy in this kind of language teaching area. In general, the use of authentic content and interaction through Internet downloads, navigation and communication can be a cheap approach, supporting the profile of the "bricoleur" teacher and until now research shows that it is much appreciated by learners, who also tend to like the more interactive, game-like exercises and applications.

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Apart from the correct and inspired use of ICT resources, a good facilitator should be very careful with the group dynamics and creating a good pedagogical atmosphere in online settings.



Role of the Facilitator

- To find and propose to the participants the online sources available and where they can find useful information and material
- To help the participants to overcome any technical problems that they may face
- To organize online activities
- To be able to use electronic sources rather than sources based on paper
- To find delicate and discreet ways of mistake correction
- To encourage learners to use the Online Community so that they share their language experiences with other migrant - learners in EU

In order for a teacher to become a facilitator in a Cyber Café, it would be good to be interested in a minimum of training so to assure one's professional development. Such training should be a priority for the national policy of integration in each country and should address aspects such as: L2 education; digital literacy and support; the new pedagogies for integrating ICT in L2 education; and the new roles expected from teachers.

Distance learning platforms like the Cyber Café's Platform and other communication and social media services can be effective for delivering teacher training and support. Also, full and instant technical assistance should be organized to ensure that ICT devices in class (when using Cyber Café in a Language Café in the blended type) and in distance education (Cyber Café's platform) are always operational and to avoid the possibility of learners becoming stressed and disappointed once something does not work properly. The facilitator should have a minimum training to have a supportive and friendly

approach in such circumstances, give a “first aid” technical support and ask for more help, if needed.

Another challenging role for the facilitator is to strengthen one’s intercultural ability, in order to combine different practices for very different people and diverse needs and educational or social background. One should try to be informed by more experienced facilitators on the different groups of learners that could be differentiated in a large scale, given the specific historical and social circumstances in each country. The diversity of migrants' competences does not allow the same approach. For example, for the following sub-groups, different approaches are to be envisaged:

- **For mid/high educated migrants**, an effective approach is to work in a way so that they have the possibility, for those who wish so, to sit for the Exams of the L2 attainment in the B or C level or to go to University and take courses on topics they are already specialised in, or undergo some specific further training. In this way they would improve their skills and gain qualifications that give them more chances in the job market.
- **For low educated migrants**, a personalised approach is to be applied. Finding a job that fits the migrant's individuality and skills is a strong incentive for learning. If possible, language courses could be organised for different work categories, addressing people with the same professional profile, in order to provide them with special courses matching their learning needs. This would also allow them to gain self-confidence and help their integration.
- **For uneducated migrants**, focus groups (rather than questionnaires) are very important to assess their L2- related needs. These people want to learn L2 in the first place to cover their basic communication needs, e.g. to socialize, to be able to talk to a doctor, or to the teachers at their children’s school. They are less interested in L2 skills certification and are often intimidated by L2 exams, even if the social circumstances force them to have this motivation due to several countries permit stay policies obliging them to sit for Language Exams. Their education needs to be very practical, close to their goals and needs, so to remove existing fears and perceived barriers. Illiteracy is particularly challenging as traditional language courses involve several reading and writing activities, and special effort and training would be required for completely illiterate learners.

7. CREATING A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE

As explained in the previous sections of the guidelines, one of the main reasons why people are attending the language cafes is to make new friends and meet interesting people. In the case of online learning, every effort should be made to keep this friendly atmosphere. For this reason, the following activities are proposed:



Tips for maintaining a Friendly Atmosphere

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- Creating a good group dynamics through ice breakers in the beginning and every time there is a newcomer
- Encourage participants to share photos
- Encourage the interaction of the group outside the hours of the sessions (for example through chat, blog, forum activities)
- Create a Facebook page (or in another social media) for your Cyber Language Café and invite all the group members to join
- Organize a face to face meeting with the group members if this is possible
- Organize a party where learners can exchange recipes, music and dancing so that their social bonds become stronger

Some face-to-face interaction is very important, especially for the weaker learners, for developing speaking skills, getting feedback from teachers and for socialization reasons.

It can also be effective to use technology to engage learners in projects that encourage them to practise simultaneously their language and ICT skills:

- draw or make a set of interactive online activities on free language platforms
- doing role-plays through chatting / posting
- constructing digital artefacts like photos with bubbles, comic stripes etc.

This also allows activities to be differentiated.

ANNEX

1. REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE CYBER CAFÉ



METIKOS CYBER CAFE REGISTRATION FORM

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The information collected on this form will not be made public other than as an anonymous statistic unless permission is granted from the stakeholder. The information will not be shared with any external organisations without your permission, and will only be used for the purposes of evidencing that you have agreed to participate as a learner on the **METIKOS Cyber café** project.

Please complete all details as requested in BLOCK CAPITALS The MORRIS Association is obliged to collect this information on behalf of the European Commission for the METIKOS project.

First Name				
Surname				
Date of Birth		Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Nationality		Greek <input type="checkbox"/>	Non Greek <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address				
Postcode				

Telephone number	
E mail address	

Position in organisation	
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I declare that the information provided on this form is true at the time of completion. I will inform the MORRIS Association of any changes in my circumstances.

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Please tick below if you agree:

I agree to my details being published on the internal participant database,
which will not be available to the public on the METIKOS project web site

I agree to my details being published on the external participant database,
which will be available to the public on the METIKOS project web site

Stakeholder signature:

Print name:

Date:

2. PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION FORM (ALSO FOR THE CYBER CAFÉ)



Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme



EACEA
Education, Audiovisual & Culture
Executive Agency



PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION FORM

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This evaluation will be used in confidence, but is needed to inform us of your views.

Please let us know what you think of the project by completing and returning this form to your workshop leader / facilitator at the end of the programme

Your name

Location

Type of activity (please ✓ which activity you have participated in)

Language Cafe

Tandem

Cyber Cafe

Please ✓ the appropriate responses to each statement. If you would like to add further comments please add them in the space provided, continuing on a separate sheet if you need to.

1	The METIKOS Cyber Café was what I expected			
2	The information/guidance I was given before/during the Cyber Café was good and helpful			
3	The programme has helped me to develop my language skills for living and working in xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx			
4	The programme was well organised			
5	The support available during the programme was helpful			
6	The materials were well presented and easy to use			
7	I can communicate in xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx much better			
8	I have more confidence in using my language skills in public			

9	I would recommend the pCyber Café to someone else			
10	The facilities / technical support provided were satisfactory			

Other comments

.....
.....

Signed:.....

Date: __ / __ / __

Thank you – we value your opinion**Please return to:**

3. CYBER CAFÉ PARTICIPATION MONITORING FORM



Lifelong Learning Programme



Metikos Cyber café participation monitoring form

We would be glad if you filled this short form to inform us on the initiatives and activities organized so far concerning the Cyber café of Metikos Project.

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Thank you,
Hellenic Culture Centre

1. How many people have participated in your Cyber café piloting sessions all in all?

2. Which were their target language(s)?

3. Which form of interaction they chose in internet in order to practice the target language?

- Skype sessions
- Language communities like Busuu, Livemocha etc
- Metikos Cyber café platform
- Other:

4. Which were their nationalities?

5. Which was their preferred hour of the day for language interaction through internet?

6. What kind of materials or activities did you use?

7. Which was their average age range?

- 16-20
- 20-30
- 30-50
- 50-70
- over 70

8. How many facilitators were involved? Which nationalities?

9. Other comments

Metikos partner :

You can also fill the present form online [here](#). Thank you!