



## Module 2: Linguistic Literacy

# IO3: Training package for reinforcing migrants and refugees' competences and promoting their social and labor integration



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## MODULE 2: Linguistic Literacy

<b>Trainer</b>	This training module was written for professionals working with migrants and/or refugees that have arrived in a western European country. Trainers can be language teachers, social workers, people working for employment services, staff of companies or enterprises, volunteers or anyone involved in integration the social and labour integration of migrants and refugees.
<b>Target group</b>	Participants with a migration background that are learning the local language. They should at least have a B1-level of understanding.
<b>Short description of the content</b>	<p>In this module, we will focus on the key issues of language acquisition and verbal communication skills. The intention is not to provide a language course or to go into specific technical aspects (e.g. grammar, vocabulary) of a certain language. As a rule, the participants will already have sufficient knowledge of the language of their host country in order to understand and follow the content and exercises. The main topics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is Language?</li> <li>▪ Language Acquisition</li> <li>▪ Language Courses</li> </ul> <p>Basic Verbal Communication Skills</p>
<b>Work plan for the Module</b>	<p><b>Methodology</b></p> <p>This training module focuses on interaction and group work, more than on frontal/ oral presentation. The information will be retained better when participants can actively use and apply it throughout the training. Therefore, we will make frequent use of (group) exercises, sharing personal experiences and open discussions. In addition, participants are encouraged to reflect on their own situation in relation to language and to be mindful of relevant situations occurring outside of the teaching situation (e.g. communication difficulties, experiencing language barriers).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teaching/learning structure:</li> </ul>

	<p>The module consists of 4 sessions, each starting with an introduction by the trainer, followed by a mix of interactive exercises and/or specific learning tools. Each exercise is structured along three steps: preparation – instruction – debriefing and reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Duration: 12 hours in total (4 lessons)</li> <li>▪ Breaks: according to needs: suggest 15 minute breaks after 90 minutes.</li> <li>▪ Training materials: specific tools that are needed for presenting material of for exercises (flip chart, Power Point ...) are listed for each individual session.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning outcomes (goals)</b>	<p>After completing this module participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Know (Knowledge):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on which levels and in which areas language is important</li> <li>• and define basic verbal communication skills</li> <li>• the differences between written and spoken communication</li> <li>• the difference between formal and informal language use</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Understand (Skills)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how language is acquired and how their level can be improved</li> <li>• how to successfully participate in a language course</li> <li>• how to overcome difficulties in language learning</li> <li>• how and when to apply basic communication skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Be able to (Competences)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use language effectively</li> <li>• use verbal communication skills effectively</li> <li>• use formal, written communication</li> <li>• effectively participate in language courses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Session 1: What is Language?

### Activity 1: Welcome and Introduction to the module

<b>Title</b>	Welcome and introduction to the module
<b>Overview</b>	The participants are welcomed and get to know each other through a welcoming exercise. They are introduced to the contents of the module.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Participants learn about each other's backgrounds and know the contents of the module.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Game, Group discussion
<b>Time required</b>	50 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	up to a group of 10 or 2 smaller groups of 5
<b>Materials needed</b>	Whiteboard/ flipchart, Ball of wool

### Procedure

#### 1. Preparation

Make sure you have a ball of wool ready for the first exercise

#### 2. Instructions

##### Step 1:

After welcoming the participants, introduce them to the topic of today (see Overview above). Indicate that this is an introductory activity.

##### Step 2:

Do the following welcoming exercise:

### **Welcome exercise: Ball of Wool Game**

Participants sit in a circle. One is given the ball of wool and finds the end of it. They throw it to anyone within the circle while they are still holding the end of the ball of wool. The person that caught it says their name, home country and native language. The participants holding the ball of wool then holds part of the wool and then tosses it to anyone that has not received it yet. Repeat this until everyone has had the ball of wool.

Let the participants observe the unique network they have just created among them. It connects all of them!

Use that image to tell them that, this is the way you would expect them to work throughout the training.

They can continue throwing the ball if there are additional questions they need to

### **Step 3: Introduction to the module**

Explain which topics will be covered in the next sessions and ask participants what their expectations are, what they hope to learn and how they hope the training will support them in their professional lives/ integration. Suggest writing these on a flipchart and getting back to this at the end of the training to see if they match with the actual learning outcomes. If participants have specific needs that are not raised in the proposed module, you can decide whether you want to extend the training to further topics, as long as they are relevant to the general topic.

### **3. Debriefing and Reflection**

Ask participants whether the information is clear and whether they have any questions regarding the module.

## Activity 2: What is language?

<b>Title</b>	What is language?
<b>Overview</b>	In this introductory activity, participants learn about the nature of language: What is language? How is it used across different cultures – which differences and similarities exist? What is the importance of language learning? They also get an overview of the other topics covered by this module.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Know how to define ‘language’. Know why language is important. Understand the significance of similarities and differences between languages. Reflect on different uses of language. Understand the goal and personal relevance of this training.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Group discussions, written exercises
<b>Time required</b>	110 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	a group of 10 or more participants
<b>Materials needed</b>	Whiteboard/ flipchart, enough A4 sheets, writing utensils

## Procedure

### 1. Preparation

Prepare for this activity reading the information provided below (definition and the aspects of language learning).

### 2. Instructions

#### Step 1: Definition and Language Learning

Explain and discuss the following with the participants:

According to the Oxford Dictionary, language can be defined as “*The method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way*”<sup>1</sup>. We can think of Language Learning as the **acquisition, development** and **maintenance** and use of complex systems of communication. Discuss with the participants what is meant by those three words in bold:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/language>

- **Acquisition:** the learning of language – when do people learn their first language? When are they able to speak their first words? Who has children – what are your experiences? What is meant by ‘native language’ or ‘mother tongue’? Is it easier to learn a language as a child than when you get older? Why is this so? (Possible answers: brain development, more time available, less fear of making mistakes etc. – but adult learners can have stronger motivations and connect a larger base of knowledge, making it easier to learn new languages).
- **Development:** many people learn many languages after or simultaneously with learning their first language. What is usually meant by basic literacy (ability to read and write)? When do children learn to write? Which script do you use in your language? When have you learnt Western alphabet? What about numbers?
- **Maintenance:** can you forget a language if you don’t use it for a while? Have you experienced this? Is there a difference between your first language and a second or third learnt language? Who speaks more than one language? When and how did you learn it?

### Step 2: Exercise: Write something in your language

Do the following exercise:

#### Exercise: write something in your script/language

Ask your participants to write a few words (e.g. I am living in France) in their first language or in a language they master on an A4 sheet. They should write the name of the language used in smaller character under the sentence. Invite the participants to copy all the sentences they find most challenging for them.

Ask them to read some aloud.

Can they discover similarities between the different languages/scripts? Was this hard or easy? Why?

### Step 3: Types of Language Used.

Explain:

As we are using language on a daily basis, we apply different forms (oral/ written/ formal /informal and so on). Ask the participants to name a few differences between written and oral communication. Even within the written form, there can be different styles according to the situation. If you send a text message to a friend, you will probably use a very different style from writing an official letter to the government. Why do you think this is so? Why do we need those different forms? (Possible answers: politeness, professional distance,

clarity, indicate seriousness of the matter, show friendliness, etc.). Do these differences extend to oral communication as well? In some languages, there is a polite form of address, whereas in others, this doesn't exist (e.g. modern English). Do you have this in your language? Ask participants to give examples.

#### Step 4: Exercise on Formal Language Use

Perform the following exercise on formal language use:

##### **Exercise: formal use of language**

Divide the group in pairs or small groups of three persons. On a sheet of paper, have them make a list of examples in which either formal or informal language would be used. You can also provide a number of examples and ask them to categorise them in formal and informal. After 10 minutes, ask the groups whether they agreed on all examples. If they didn't, ask which about which ones and discuss these together with the others. Is it always perfectly clear where to use which form?

#### Step 5: Group Discussion<sup>2</sup>

##### **Group Discussion: the teaching context**

In Germany, many teachers apply formal address when speaking with their pupils/ students. Why do you think this is (not) so? What could be the advantages or disadvantages of this approach? (e.g. more distance makes it easier when conflicts arise). Are there differences between countries (example: communication with students might be less formal in English speaking countries, in Scandinavia or the Netherlands than in Germany). Is this merely a matter of cultural preference, or are there deliberate, practical reasons? What would you do if you were a teacher in this country? And in your country?

### **3. Debriefing and Reflection**

At the end of this lesson, ask your participants whether they are left with any questions concerning this topic or the training in general:

- Did they find the information, exercises and discussions useful?
- Have they learnt anything important?
- Is the information relevant?
- Was everything clear and understandable?
- Do they have any suggestions for the rest of the course?

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<sup>2</sup> This section is adapted to the local contexts of partner countries in the different language versions.

## Session 2 Language Learning

### Activity 1: Ways to learn a foreign language

<b>Title</b>	Ways to learn a foreign language
<b>Overview</b>	This activity zooms into the process of learning a new language. This is often the most crucial step migrants face before they can really integrate into society, find a job and deal with the authorities without relying on outside help.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	After completing this session, participants will have a clear view as to why learning the local language is important for them and which levels of proficiency are required for certain goals and uses. They will gain insight into the process of mastering the new language and will have more tools at hand in order to make realistic plans for their future learning.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Group discussions, written exercises
<b>Time required</b>	70 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	a group of up to 10 or 2 smaller groups of 5
<b>Materials needed</b>	Whiteboard/ flipchart, A4 sheets

### Procedure

#### 1. Preparation

Consult the websites listed in the info box at the end of this section for background information on language learning.

#### 2. Instructions

##### **Step 1:** Introduction - Learning a foreign language

During the previous lesson, we talked about how children acquire language and the differences between different forms of use. Now, we will delve a bit deeper into the learning process and discuss the joy and excitement of getting to know a new language as well as the difficulties we can face. We will discuss why learning the local language is important and which levels are appropriate to certain areas.

How is language learned? Explain:

Language is a system for communicating with others, which can be thought of as consisting of different elements, such as vocabulary, grammar, spelling, pronunciation etc. There are certain rules one needs to learn or know, but previous knowledge or knowledge of other languages of the same family can be helpful.

Do the exercise on language families with the participants (see annex).

Explain:

Different theories exist as to how humans acquire language. Some state that we have an innate capacity to learn languages structures. It is certain however, that language is learned from a very early age and that children are able to use complex structures, which can appear illogical and contain many exceptions.

Practically speaking, if you are an adult learning a new language: how do you think this is best done?

Have the participants fill in the questionnaire on learning styles (see annex): Questionnaire Learning Style). After that, conduct the following group discussion:

## Step 2: Group discussion

### Group discussion: learning a new language

Discuss the following topics with the participants:

1. What is your learning style? How do you learn best? How have you learned in the past?
2. Vocabulary: how many words do you think you know in German? And in your own/first language? How often do you hear words you do not understand?
3. Pronunciation: how can you learn this? Do you find pronouncing German easy or difficult? Why do you think this is?  
See if you can say this tongue twister out loud:  
*„Fischers Fritze fischt frische Fische; Frische Fische fischt Fischers Fritze.“*  
(Write this on the whiteboard).
4. Grammar: why is grammar important? (i.e. distinction between questions, affirmative and negative statements, expressing past, present and future). What would happen if you would know the words, but not the grammar? As an extra exercise, you can have the participants do a role-playing game in which two people discuss a certain topic and one of them has to omit all forms of grammar. What effect does this have on the conversation?
5. Alphabet: if you are learning a language with a different alphabet, there are specific courses available. Possible tricks are associating letters with images or sounds or train yourself to read from left to right or bottom to top.
6. Practicing: listen, speak, repeat, get in contact with locals and be exposed to the new language as often as possible. Mostly, people who have more social contact with native speakers make the best progress. What else can you do? (watch television, read books, newspapers, magazines, listen to music, ...)
7. Anything else?

### **3. Debriefing and reflexion**

Ask participants whether this lesson was clear to them and whether they are left with any questions. Were the topics useful for them? Have they found new ideas or are there areas they wish to explore further? Briefly indicate the topic of the next lesson.

## Activity 2: The importance of language learning

<b>Title</b>	The importance of language learning
<b>Overview</b>	This activity consists of a set of exercises to discover why language learning is important and which levels are appropriate.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Know why language learning is important. Understand which levels are needed for certain goals and how they correspond with your own goals.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Group and individual exercises, group discussion
<b>Time required</b>	80 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	10 or more
<b>Materials needed</b>	Whiteboard/ flipchart, paper, Annexes 2/1, 2/2, 2/3

### Procedure

#### 1. Preparation

Print out the necessary Annexes – see the list in the info box ‘Training Materials’. No further preparation is needed for this activity.

#### 2. Instruction

**Step 1<sup>3</sup>:** The importance of the local language, goals and expectations

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<sup>3</sup>This section is adapted to the local contexts of partner countries in the different language versions.

**Group exercise: the importance of learning the local language**

Divide the participants into small groups or pairs and ask them to name the three most important reasons for learning the local language. Allow them enough time to discuss and have them write the outcome on a sheet of paper. Afterwards, compare the answers and create a final top three. Write the result on the whiteboard.

Possible answers:

- Getting a job
- Be able to study or take training
- Be able to get on with locals in daily life
- Communication with authorities
- Understand politics/ culture
- Shopping
- Travelling/ getting around
- Communication in healthcare

**Individual exercise: 'My Dream Job'**

Ask what your participants' dream job is in the host country: How does it relate to language and how does this goal correspond to the previous exercise?

Let participants write their answers on a sheet of paper and have them indicate which level of German they need in order to get this job.

After finishing the exercise, continue with checking whether their expectations are realistic. Are they ready for this job? What could still be needed?

## Step 2: Group Discussion<sup>4</sup>

Group discussion: realistic expectations

Which level of German is needed?

Hand out the annex on the Common European Framework.

Explain: certain work/tasks/activities may require different levels of linguistic ability.

Provide examples one by one and let participants estimate which level is needed (levels may vary according to country and region, please adapt as necessary):

- Vocational training in health care (nurse, elderly care, ...) (B2)
- Studies at university/ college (C1)
- Become a doctor (C1)
- Working in logistics centre (B1)
- Cleaning (B1)
- Self-employed running a restaurant (B2)
- Hair Dresser (B2)
- ...

Discuss with the participants why a certain level is expected (e.g. communication with clients/patients).

## 3. Debriefing and reflexion

Ask participants whether this lesson was clear to them and if they are left with any questions. Were the topics useful for them? Have they found new ideas or are there areas they wish to explore further? Briefly indicate the topic of the next lesson.

### Annexes and Handouts

ANNEX 2/1 Linguistic Literacy Session 2, activity 2: Language Families

ANNEX 2/2 Linguistic Literacy Session 2, activity 2: Questionnaire Learning Styles

ANNEX 2/3 Linguistic Literacy Session 2, activity 2: Common European Framework

<sup>4</sup> This section is adapted to the local contexts of partner countries in the different language versions.

**Info box****Links on language learning**

Theory on language acquisition:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language\\_acquisition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_acquisition)

Tips for learning:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Learn-Any-Language>

On language families:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_language\\_families](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_language_families)

A world map of language families:

<http://www.altissia.com/blog/fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2012/08/langues-monde-altissia-e1345647591624.jpg>

## Session 3 Language Courses

### Activity 1: Types of Language Courses

<b>Title</b>	Types of Language Courses
<b>Overview</b>	To learn a foreign language, taking part in a language course is widely used method of acquiring the necessary skills, knowledge and practice. Language courses can be organised in group (classes) and they can also be directed at online (self-) learning or take place on a one-to-one basis. In addition, there may be volunteering or social initiatives that can help with bringing what has been learnt into practice. In this activity, we will look at these different forms of training and find out which method is better suited according to the needs and circumstances of the individual.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Know which forms of language training/education are available and understand the advantages and possible disadvantages of each method; Know which supporting initiatives might be available for extra help; Find out which language level I have at the moment and how I can improve.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Group discussions, written exercises
<b>Time required</b>	100 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	A group of 10 or more
<b>Materials needed</b>	Whiteboard/ flipchart, writing materials, A4 sheets, Annexes 2/4 and 2/5

### Procedure

#### Preparation

Read the information in step 2 before discussing with the participants and starting the exercises. You can go online and look for examples to show in class.

#### Instructions

**Step 1:** Introduction – Language courses

Start the activity with a brief introduction to the topic (see Overview).

**Step 2: Different forms of language courses**

Consult the information in the annex 'Types of Language Courses' and discuss this with the participants.

**Step 3: Group Discussion**

**Group discussion: Language courses**

Using the above information as your guide, discuss the different forms of language education with your participants. Possible questions:

- Have you participated in any language courses?
- On which level(s).
- In which form did the training take place? (Individual, group, self, online...)
- Were you satisfied with the learning outcome?
- To what extent did the training help you further in your personal development?
- How important is the role of the teacher/trainer?
- What did you like/dislike about your teacher and why?

**Step 3: Individual Exercise on Language Courses**

**Individual exercise**

Hand out the exercise on language courses and allow your participants time to fill out the form (see annexes).

**Step 4<sup>5</sup>:** Which kind of courses suit me?

In this step, we will look at which courses are best suited for the aims and expectations of the participants and work on this using two exercises.

**Interview exercise in pairs**

Create pairs and let participants interview each other asking the following questions (see annex interview):

- What is your current language level in German?
- Are you currently taking part in any courses?
- In which form does the education take place? (group/online etc.)
- How much does it cost you?
- What is the goal of this training? Which level do you want to reach?
- What is your goal when taking part in the training?
- Are you satisfied? Why/ why not?
- Have you considered other forms of training?
- Do you think this is the best possible format for you? Why?
- If you had complete freedom, which kind of training/course would you choose and why?
- Do you consider your current course/training to be complete for all aspects of language learning?

Let each participant interview their partner for 15 minutes writing down the answers, then switch roles.

**Agree/Disagree Exercise**

Ask participants to stand up and divide them into two groups. Draw an imaginary line between them. Explain that they have to move to the left of the line if they agree or to the right of the line if they disagree with the following statements. Then start by reading the statements out loud. After the participants have chosen position, ask them to clarify their choice.

- I am satisfied with my current/ past training.
- A different form of training would suit me better.
- The training matches my goals and expectations.
- Group courses (classes) are the best way to learn a language.
- I would not use online training.
- A language course is sufficient method to learn a new language.

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<sup>5</sup> This section is adapted to the local contexts of partner countries in the different language versions.

## Debriefing and Reflection

Ask participants whether the information presented in this activity was clear to them and if they are left with any questions. Were the topics useful for them? Have they found new ideas or are there areas they wish to explore further? Briefly indicate the topic of the next activity.

<b>Annexes and Handouts</b>	ANNEX 2/4 Linguistic Literacy Session 3, activity 1: exercise on language courses
	ANNEX 2/5 Linguistic Literacy Session 3, activity 1: Pair Exercise Interview Guide Language Courses

## Activity 2: Taking part in a group language course

<b>Title</b>	Taking part in a group language course
<b>Overview</b>	Group courses are the most popular form of language education for our target group. We will therefore have a closer look at those and conclude with some tips on how to successfully participate.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Know how to successfully participate in an organised group language course.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Group discussions, written exercises
<b>Time required</b>	60 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	A group of 10 or more
<b>Materials needed</b>	Whiteboard/ flipchart, Annexes 2/5 and 2/6

## Preparation

No specific preparation is necessary for this activity.

## Instructions

### Step 1: Taking part in an organised (group) course

Information for the trainer: As this is the most widely used course form for migrants and refugees, we will devote some extra time to this topic and conclude with some

tips on how to make the most out of language classes. Start with an introductory group discussion.

### Group discussion

Ask who is currently in a (group) language course or who has joined one in the past.

- Was it easy to find a course?
- Often, these classes have participants with very different backgrounds and come from various countries and continents. How do you experience this? Do you think it is an enrichment for the course?
- In general, do you get on well with the other participants?
- Do you have more than one teacher for this class? How do you find this?
- Is the pace of the lessons ok for you?

### Tips for taking part in a course

Without exception, there will be some rules to follow when taking part in a class. Go over these, writing keywords on the whiteboard.

- Be **respectful** to others, don't laugh or make fun of others who might be progressing more slowly.
- **Don't interrupt** other participants or your teacher
- In some courses: don't talk with other participants in your own language
- Be **punctual**, be on time
- **Practice** at home: participants who also work at home make better progress (do your **homework**, study vocabulary, review learnt grammar, ...)
- Ask questions, **participate** actively
- It is good to be critical and curious, but don't undermine the **authority** of the teacher.
- Follow the teacher's **advice**.
- If you think the teacher is being unfair, **do not discuss** this in front of the whole class, but address this individually.
- Can you think of any other rules to add?

### Debriefing and reflection

Ask participants whether this lesson was clear to them and if they are left with any questions. Were the topics useful for them? Have they found new ideas or are there areas they wish to explore further? Briefly indicate the topic of the next activity.

**Annexes and Handouts**

ANNEX 2/5 Linguistic Literacy Session 3, activity 2:  
Exercise Different types of Language Courses

ANNEX 2/6 Linguistic Literacy Session 3, activity 2:  
Different types of language courses

## Session 4: language as a communication tool

### Activity 1: Body Language

<b>Title</b>	Body Language
<b>Overview</b>	This activity is about language as a means of communication. Participants are invited to reflect on different aspects of communication and learn which role non-verbal communication plays as well.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Knowing how to effectively communicate; Know the importance non-verbal communication versus verbal communication; Understand how non-verbal communication influences verbal communication. Understand and apply different aspects of verbal communication. Learn written communication skills; Learn about the formal use of language.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Group discussions, written exercises
<b>Time required</b>	80 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	up to a group of 10 or 2 smaller groups of 5
<b>Materials needed</b>	Whiteboard/ flipchart/ Beamer + Computer

### Procedure

#### 1. Preparation

Read the information of Step 1 and use it to introduce the topic.

#### 2. Instructions

**Step 1:** Language as a communication tool

Introduction (use the following text and adapt to your needs)

In the first lesson, we tried to find a definition of language and discussed different forms and uses. Now, we will take a closer look at language as a means of communication. But what is verbal communication and how can we communicate effectively?

Firstly, we cannot fully separate verbal from other communication skills as they can occur simultaneously (for instance listening and non-verbal communication).

Let's look at some of the skills that are considered important in verbal communication<sup>6</sup>:

**1. Starting communication**

The first minutes are usually crucial as you make your first impression and can impact the rest of the conversation.

At a first encounter, formalities and greetings are usually expressed. Which greetings are being used in your culture? There are different options, such as a handshake, some small words of welcome, making eye contact and so on. Showing an interest in the other person and smiling is often important to make that first good impression.

**2. Reinforcement**

Small signs of encouragement are likely to evoke openness in the other person. Examples are:

- Ask questions and signal interest in what the other has to say,
- Head nods, 'hmm-ing'
- Friendly facial expression
- Maintaining eye contact

**3. Active listening** is often overlooked, but it is a vital communication skill. Good listening skills are important to understand what the other person is saying. We call it active listening, because it is more than just hearing what the other is saying. It includes paying attention to body language, the tone of voice, and checking whether you have understood the person correctly by repeating in your own words what you've heard (paraphrasing).

**4. Asking questions.** Why do we ask questions? Because we are looking for information, because we want to make sure we understood correctly, but also to start a conversation or to encourage someone to speak. A distinction is usually made between closed and open questions. Do you know what that is? Closed questions can be answered with yes or no, whereas open questions have question words like: why, when, where, what? Refer to the exercise to be done after this introduction.

**5. Reflecting** means checking with the other person whether you have understood them correctly. You repeat in your own words what the other person has said. It improves any communication as you actively show an interest in what has been said, while also paying attention to emotions. It is an important tool in encouraging the other to continue talking or deepening the conversation.

**Step 2: A word on non-verbal communication**

Some people argue that non-verbal communication is even more important at creating impressions than the actual words we speak. It is often perceived prior to verbal communication and can influence the way we understand the other person to a considerable extent. Therefore, paying attention to your body language is

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<sup>6</sup> This section is based on the information on <https://www.skillsyouneed.com>

essential, especially in situations where there's a lot at stake (e.g. a job interview). We interpret body language in a verbal way. That means if I stand like this (put your hands on your hips and look at the participants), you would interpret my posture as....? (possible answers: waiting, expecting someone to answer etc.). Crossing your arms in conversation might signify distance or not being open to what the other person has to say.

Can you think of any examples?

Let's look at the following slides together. Can you put the body language to words? (Show the Power Point presentation on body language).

### Step 3: Exercise<sup>7</sup>

#### Greeting exercise

Introduce the exercise: "In Germany, brief formal greetings usually consist of a handshake accompanied by expressing your name and a short phrase like: 'nice to meet you'. There is no distinction between genders for this form of greeting. Making eye contact is very important, otherwise you could come across as disinterested or evasive – as if you have something to hide (demonstrate this with a participant).

This can be very different in other cultures. As an exercise, go around the group (move freely) and greet everyone individually as you would normally do in your culture. Note how the other reacts."

After the exercise, ask participants how they experienced those different forms of greeting. Were they surprised, confused, amused? Why?

What do they think of the German way of greeting? Does it feel natural?

### 3. Debriefing and reflection

Ask participants whether the information presented in this activity was clear to them and if they are left with any questions. Were the topics useful for them? Have they found new ideas or are there areas they wish to explore further? Briefly indicate the topic of the next activity.

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<sup>7</sup> This section is adapted to the local contexts of partner countries in the different language versions.

## Activity 2: Oral Skills

<b>Title</b>	Oral Skills
<b>Overview</b>	In this activity, we will look at how language is actually applied in verbal communication and how to communicate effectively. The activity consists of two exercises.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Know important verbal communication skills and how to use them. Understand the effect of verbal communication skills on a conversation.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Verbal exercises
<b>Time required</b>	80 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	A group of 10 or more
<b>Materials needed</b>	Writing utensils, paper to make notes

### Procedure

#### 1. Preparation

No specific preparation is needed for this activity.

#### 2. Instructions

Perform the following two exercises with the participants.

**Step 1:** Questions exercise in pairs<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> This section is adapted to the local contexts of partner countries in the different language versions.

**Questions exercise in pairs**

Divide the participants into pairs and let each pair experiment with a closed-ended question as well as the alternative an open-ended question. Then have the take note of how the other answers. The idea is to let the participants experience the different types of answers they get from open-ended and closed-closed questions.

Suggestions for questions:

- A. Did you arrive here by tram today? (closed)
- B. How did you travel here today? (open)
  
- A. Do you have a big family?
- B. How would you describe your family?
  
- A. Do you find learning German easy?
- B. How do you experience learning German?
  
- A. Which job do you want to do?
- B. Can you tell me something about the kind of work you are interested in?

**Step 2: Reflection exercise****Reflection exercise in pairs**

In this exercise, let participants practice reflecting what another person says by restating the information in his or her own words. To make it easier, they can start the reflection by using the phrase: "If I understood correctly..."

Example:

- P1: "Yesterday I felt really tired because I hadn't slept enough"
- P2: "If I understood correctly, you had a really bad night and the following day you felt without energy?"

You can use the following opening sentences:

- "I find this exercise really difficult"
- "Reading books helps me to calm down"
- "Listening to music makes me happy!"
- "Watching the news and what is happening in the world sometimes makes me sad".
- "I like meeting new people and making new friends"

### 3. Debriefing and reflection

Ask how did participants experience these exercises? Were they easy or difficult for them? Why?

#### Activity 3: Written Skills

<b>Title</b>	Written Communication
<b>Overview</b>	In this activity, we will discuss writing styles and practice with written communication.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	Know which writing style is required under which circumstances and can able applied to +a formal style of writing for a specific purpose.
<b>Type of activities</b>	Discussions / Writing exercises
<b>Time required</b>	90 minutes
<b>Size of the group</b>	A group of 10 or more
<b>Materials needed</b>	Writing material/ A4 sheets , Annex 2/7

#### Procedure

##### 1. Preparation

No special preparation needed.

##### 2. Instructions

###### Step 1: Written communication

Explain: as we have seen in the first lesson, written communication can be very different from oral communication, especially when it concerns formal writing. In this section, we will talk about situations where formal writing is expected and practice this skill with an example.

###### Step 2: What is formal writing? Where do you use formal writing?

Let the participants stand up and move to where there is enough space to split into two groups. Explain that you are going to name a few situations and those who think that formal writing is used move to one side whereas those who think formal writing is OK move to the right.

Go over the following items one by one and discuss with the participants where necessary:

- A letter to complain about a faulty product.
- An email to a colleague at work
- A text message to your best friend
- A letter/email to a grandparent
- A birthday card for your boss
- An invitation to attend your wedding party
- A letter to the job centre
- An email to your school to let them know you are ill
- A letter or email to your landlord

### **Discussion: what is formal writing?**

Start by explaining what formal writing is:

There is no right or wrong writing style – both formal and informal writing have their place under the right circumstances. With formal writing, we usually mean writing in a professional context, or when communicating about official and important subjects. An example could be an email you write to a client, or a letter to the government regarding childcare. In other words, your writing style differs according to the audience you are addressing.

Here are some of characteristics of formal writing:

- Should have a serious tone
- Should be purposeful: stick to the message you want to convey
- Use polite form of address (according to the language).
- Should be grammatically correct
- No dialect and colloquial terms
- Often a passive voice is used to stress neutral language
- Avoid abbreviations (TV – Television / Photo – Photograph)

### **Step 3: Writing exercise, individual: writing a formal letter?**

Next, we are going to practice writing a formal letter. For this exercise, we will use the example of a complaint. First, let me explain the elements a formal letter usually has (write this on the whiteboard):

- Sender's name followed by the address

- Receiver's name and address
- Date of writing
- Salutation (Dear Mr./Ms. ...) (make sure you use the surname)
- Body (not more than three paragraphs)
  - Friendly opening stating the reason or goal of writing
  - Explain why you are complaining
  - Briefly summarise and indicate how you want to proceed further.
- Signing off with proper salutation (Sincerely, With kind regards)

Let's concentrate on the body part of the letter. Put very simply it could look like this:

*"I am writing you to complain about an item I have ordered that was delivered broken.*

*Three weeks ago, I ordered a mobile phone through your website ([www.example.com](http://www.example.com)). As promised, it was delivered within two days, but I noticed upon delivery that the packaging was damaged. After I correctly assembled as described in the manual, I noticed that the device would not start. I immediately repackaged the item and used the return slip to send it back. Since then I have heard nothing. I have not received a new mobile phone, nor was I reimbursed. I have contacted your customer services by telephone on three occasions, but I was put on hold and could not speak to any representatives.*

*As it has already been three weeks after I have sent back a broken product, I expect this issue to be resolved as soon as possible. As your general conditions state, I am entitled to full reimbursement. I would welcome a sign from your customer services that they are taking this seriously without further delay"*

Can you identify the three distinct parts of the body?

Now let's practice writing a similar letter!

Here are some examples:

- Complaint about a bad learning experience in a language course
- Complaint about an unfriendly service on the train/public transport
- Complaint about bad service in a restaurant: you were kept waiting for 30 minutes before the waiter took your order and the food was bad and overpriced.

Let one or two participants read out their letter aloud and provide feedback.

### **3. Debriefing and reflexion**

Ask participants whether this lesson was clear to them and if they are left with any questions. Were the topics useful for them? Have they found new ideas or are there areas they wish to explore further?

**Annexes and Handouts**

ANNEX 2/7 Linguistic Literacy Session 4, activity 3: Power  
Point Presentation on Body Language