Language & Culture Animateur Training

Module 7:

Setting up and running a Language Club

My learning goals

Take 2 minutes to record what you want to achieve from this session in your learning diary.

Module 7 contents:

We will look at:

• Presenting the Language Club to community stakeholders

• Recruiting & engaging learners

• Organising the Language Club space, including online

• Flexible arrangements to support learners

By the end you will you will be able to:

✔ Understand how to best present the Language Club to community stakeholders

✔ Understand recruitment & engagement options for your Language Club

✔ Know how to organise the Language Club space, including online

✔ Being flexible to support learners' participation

How to present your Language Club

Preparing to meet stakeholder groups - some tips

➔ Make sure you know **who** you want to meet & make an appointment in advance

➔ Decide the **location**: in your Language Club (if available) or in a community venue would be ideal - but be accommodating!

➔ Make sure you know your **objectives** for the meeting:
  ◆ What do you need from them? How can they support your project?
  ◆ What do they need from you? How can your project support them?
  ◆ How will you be able to say that the meeting has been successful?

➔ Don't improvise! **Prepare a presentation**, with slides that help you remember the points you want to make and their order (you can use any tool: Power Point, Canva, Prezi or other) - a list on paper will be ok if digital tools can't be used

➔ Don't forget that you are PART OF THE COMMUNITY - you are one of "them"

Presenting your Language Club

We saw in [Module 6](#) how to identify your stakeholders and map them. Presenting your Language Club to community stakeholders is important and and a good strategy to ensure that the aims of the Club are understood and supported.

While preparing to present your project to local stakeholders, it's important to understand what the specific interests of your stakeholder are. Your SWOT analysis will help you idenitfy and explore these issues:

- STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES: how would the community benefit (directly or indirectly)?
- WEAKNESSES & THREATS: what issues/risks could can be foreseen for the community?
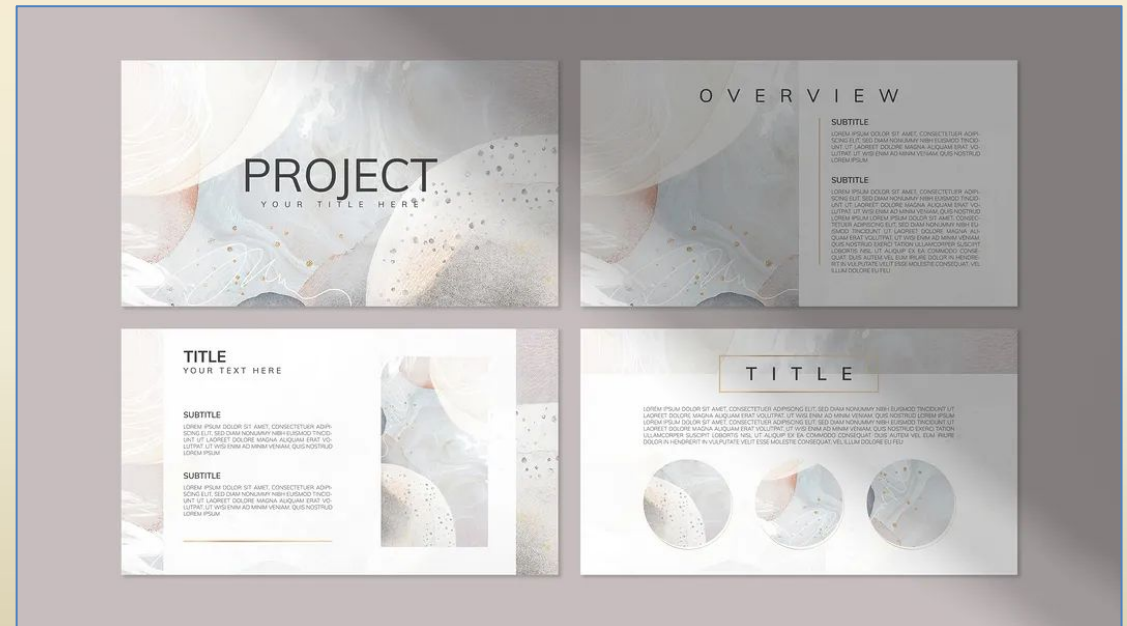
Presenting your S.W.O.T.

Make sure that your presentation addresses the S.W.O.T. points that you have analysed

❖ Emphasise the **Strengths** and **Opportunities** that the SWOT has highlighted. Be prepared to respond to the Weaknesses and Threats. Make sure that you have as much information as possible to hand about the local situation.

An example

Strengths and opportunities

- By improving the language skills of its learners the language club contributes to the development of the potential workforce.
- The Language Club will provide opportunities for local people to volunteer.
- The Language Club will enable its learners to progress to further learning.

Weaknesses and threats (that may be perceived by different community stakeholders.

- The Language Club will take up already scarce resources. RESPONSE: Language Clubs can be run at very low cost by volunteers with few resources: at a minimum they just need a space e.g. in a library, cafe, place of worship with some chairs.
- The Language Club isn't needed. RESPONSE: this is where you can show you have done good research to identify the numbers of people who do not speak English and that there is no similar provision in the area (or the existing provision is oversubscribed).

Activity

Time: 20 minutes

How would you respond to a community stakeholder that is concerned that your proposed Language Club will not be well-used?

Here are some possible responses.

- Your needs analysis has consulted with x no. of ESOL professionals and training providers who say there is a demand.
- Your needs analysis has consulted with x no. of potential ESOL learners who say would use a language club.
- You have identified the best times to run the club to attract learners
- The Club will be in a location that is easily accessible
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Outreach & Engagement

Recruiting and engaging learners

What's the difference between "outreach" and "engagement" strategies?

This is a crucial difference, and it's important to understand why - because the two activities require completely different approaches and strategies

OUTREACH	ENGAGEMENT
The strategy initially to involve learners in project activities. This may include different ways of getting in touch with them, presenting them with a learning opportunity, eliciting their interest etc.	The strategy used to maintain interest and motivation in learners. It refers to both initial and continued engagement in project activities. It may include strategies to make learning opportunities relevant to specific needs, learning venues accessible etc.
➔ Short to medium term activities	➔ Longer term activities

Outreach strategies: planning

It won't surprise you to hear that Outreach strategies must be planned:

The first step in any planning activity to reach your target group should relate to acquiring as much information as possible about:

● **Your target group**: who do you you want to reach out to and how homogenous/diverse is the group?

● **Your local area and its relevant stakeholders**: who lives in the local area and what community resources / stakeholders could become instrumental for you to reach out to your target group?

Outreach strategies: how to plan

BRIDGE Planning Toolkit for Outreach and Engagement

Know your target group	Know your local area	Know your stakeholders
• Main occupation • Interests / hobbies • Community activities (involvement) • Community venues (time spent) • Technology / social media used • Amount of free time • Time of day available for interest activities	• Demographics • Community venues used • Community events • Community interest groups • Community issues & resources • Volunteering in the community • Community press	• Local authorities • Community interest group leaders • Event organisers • Community volunteers • Community reporters (for local press)

Some tested outreach strategies:

STRATEGY 1: USE COMMUNITY RESOURCES
The local community offers invaluable resources to help support your outreach campaign and it is wise to make the best use of this potential and tap into it to reach out to your target group in a strategic way.

STRATEGY 2: USE SOCIAL MEDIA AS A "COMMUNITY"
Social media should be considered as a "community", or a number of already existing communities, with actively engaged members. Potential learners can be targeted by specific ads

OTHER STRATEGIES:
- Communicating individually: ex. email, phone, door to door
- Have a brochure ready - in multiple languages

Engagement strategies: planning

Let's now look at how to maintain interest in your learners following a successful outreach campaign to ensure continued engagement throughout your activities & in the longer term

KEY FACTOR: ADAPTABILITY

ADAPTABILITY OF CONTENT
Know what is "core" to your Language Club programme but give yourself options and have a range of different materials and resources based on the expectations and specific language learning needs of your participants.

ADAPTABILITY OF ARRANGEMENTS
Be flexible about organising sessions at times that suit the group and adapting content and delivery to shorter or longer training sessions depending on group needs

Engagement strategies: retention

As we saw, planning for continued engagement will support retention. Other strategies include:

MEETING EXPECTATIONS

➔ organise an initial session of **goal-setting with the group**, in order to ensure that expectations are realistic and will be met throughout the programme. It is crucial to avoid disappointment during the process!

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

➔ build trust and a positive, safe, non-judgmental environment, where people can share their own life experiences, discuss openly and participate in learning games. We looked at this in Module 5.

Outreach and engagement in BRIDGE

BRIDGE partner organisations have much experience in outreach and engagement of vulnerable groups, including migrants. This wealth of experience, with advice and tips, is now collected in the **BRIDGE PLANNING TOOLKIT FOR OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT**

You can find it on the BRIDGE Learning Village at this LINK:

Quick Break

Let's take a break.

In the next session we will look at how **to practically set up a Language Club**

Planning your Language Club

Planning the physical space

Where can Language Clubs be located?

Clubs are based in the community – They can work successfully in markets, nursery schools, libraries, faith centres and other community organisations – even outdoors in parks and markets.

How many people can attend?

We have found that Language Clubs work best with 8-12 people, meeting for 2-3 hours each week but you can meet with fewer people for a longer or shorter time – it really depends on the individual group – they're all different. We recommend 2+ coaches for groups with more than 12

Equipment & logistics

Before a session:

➔ Check the environment – is the location comfortable, accessible and the right size for the group?

➔ Logistics – arrange chairs in a circle to encourage discussion, provide refreshments (if available), and check on any audio-visual equipment before the session.

Do you have all the resources you need for the learning activities?

Liaising with host organisation

It involves:

➤ Liaising with staff at the organisation hosting the Club (e.g. session times, facilities, communicating with learners, organizing access to resources and refreshments …)

➤ The health and safety of the learners while they are at the Club. This means making sure that any activity they carry out complies with the health and safety policy of the organisation hosting the Club.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding essentially means protecting people's health, wellbeing, safety and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

It is fundamental to creating high - quality services for people, and it is an essential part of planning a Language Club.

Some **key principles of safeguarding**:

- **Empowerment**: presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.
- **Protection**: support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Prevention**: it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality**: proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Partnership**: local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability**: accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Scheduling sessions & flexibility

In order to schedule your sessions, you will need to combine different needs:
1. The availability of the Language Club space (days of the week / times of day when you can use the space)
2. Your learners' availability and preferences: **when can they NOT attend**?

Once you have established a schedule that combines these needs, you can start planning your initial session and the following ones. **BUT…**

…REMEMBER TO BE FLEXIBLE ABOUT CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

➔ **drop activities that fail, and pursue those that resonate with the group. If they find something to talk about that you hadn't planned on – let them take control of the topic and see where it goes.**

Some FUN!

A successful Club is sociable and fun:

o If possible, schedule time at the beginning and end of sessions for learners to chat to each other

o Focus on activities that encourage maximum interaction and try to arrange extra social occasions for the group.

Involving the community

➢ Use resources and examples that are specific to your local area or to a cultural community (e.g. local walks, trips to specific shops/libraries/museums).

➢ Invite people from the local community in to talk to learners.

➢ Encourage learners to bring in their own resources (e.g. family photos, pictures from home, newspaper articles, ornaments, clothes/fabric …).

➢ Give learners opportunities to express themselves creatively e.g. through drama, drawing, poetry and storytelling.

➢ Ask learners questions about their lives and interests but be sensitive –some may be shy or have distressing experiences they do not want to discuss.

➢ Encourage as much discussion as possible and don't correct every little mistake - the most important thing is to improve confidence and encourage more advanced learning at a formal class.

Is a lot of money needed to set up a club?

➜   **NO**

Providing you can find a quiet and secure space so people can hear each other you can start a club. **A few resources are useful**.

➢   Flipchart and markers
➢   Some language [learning activities](#)
➢   Pens and paper for the group
➢   Laptop/tablet/Smartphones with acces to the Internet
➢   Photocopying facility
➢   Access to refreshments
➢   Audio/camera/video (usually on a smartphone)

An online Language Club?

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted our world and changed the way we organise learning. During the pandemic, all organisations had to move their training offer online. At the start, this was difficult, but it has now become generally accepted and most people have acquired digital competences as a consequence.

Ideally, a Language Club is a physical space, but circumstances might lead you to try and establish one online.

BRIDGE project partners WCLL, based in London, UK, have tried this during the pandemic and they were able to deliver the language learning activities online.

You can read more about this experience [here](#)

Congratulations!

You've completed Module 7:
Language Club establishment and running

Don't forget that in the Learning Village, you will find materials and resources to help and inspire.

Click here:

https://www.bridgemigrants.eu/en/learning-village