



MMM Migrant Mentorship Model Newsletter

3rd Edition

April 2019

MMM Innovative Approach to Teaching of Basic Skills

Migrants arriving in Europe face linguistic, cultural and social barriers that make their learning and subsequent integration a slow and stressful process. At the same time these new type of learners presents a challenge to educators. Especially linguistic barriers make acquisition of new skills, needed for integration, a complicated process, even more so in the case of low-skilled migrants who represent a significant share of all new migrants. New educational tools and approaches, addressing the needs of both sides must be offered to migrants and educators alike. In the MMM project we have therefore developed an innovative approach for teaching of basic skills which is tailored to migrants.

There are five main outputs of the MMM project:

1. Migrant Mentorship Model Teaching Plan,
2. Migrant Mentorship Model Training Curriculum,
3. Guided Reflection and Tips for Educators,
4. Guided Reflection and Recommendations for Employers,
5. Efficiency Study.

Guided Reflection and Tips for Educators

Of all five outputs we see *Guided Reflection and Tips for Educators* as the most innovative aspect of the MMM project. The rationale behind this intellectual output is that migrant perspective and input are needed to improve the way migrants acquire basic skills. The intellectual output was thus created from a viewpoint of migrant mentors who understand migrant culture and migrant experience on a deeply personal level and also have a more direct access to the hearts and minds of the migrants. In this way *Guided Reflection and Tips for Educators* represents a unique and valuable insight into the process of migrant education.

A joint guided reflection was created with an input from all partners of the MMM project who each carried out the 96-hour pilot programme. The pilot migrant training in each of the countries (Italy, Germany, Slovenia) took place from September to December 2018. During this period not only training, but also intense and focused observations and reflections of the training process were conducted on the part of both, the migrant mentors and the partner staff. Migrant mentors reflected the entire MMM pilot training on a weekly basis. The reflection focused on:

- learning difficulties and how to approach them,

- improvement of participating migrants,
- attitudes of migrants and how they change during the programme,
- cultural aspects in regard to basic skills teaching/learning,
- what worked and what did not work with migrants in regard of basic skills teaching/learning.

Teaching Tips as Follow-Up of Guided Reflection

As an extension and follow-up of the general reflections, a set of teaching tips for educators has been developed. Here is how practical, functional and feasible teaching tips might work for any future educators of migrants.

1. The first and most important task for educators is to provide support and confidence for migrant learners. Many migrants do not have sufficient level of education to build upon, but this precisely is the great challenge.
2. The social class, gender, religion or ethnicity affect the different everyday life of migrant learners. Learning should always be about the development of an equal togetherness and not about an adaptation of the migrants' systems of values and norms to those of the teachers/mentors. Consideration should also be given to religious holidays, fasting times or special times of day.
3. Learning process for migrants is predominantly target oriented which means that the learners have to see the practical value of what they are taught.
4. Many of migrant learners lack understanding of basic grammar concepts, grammatical and abstract thinking, therefore we do not recommend such contents. Literacy exercises should be carried out at the lowest and simplest of levels and mathematical tasks should be put in real life situations.
5. Very important is the comprehensibility of the teaching content, so it is crucial that the learning contents are concrete, personalized, useful and adapted to the current level of the participants' knowledge and abilities.
6. The language should also be simplified, short sentences should be used and complicated vocabulary should be replaced with everyday language terms. Lessons should be designed to suit the language level of migrant learners.
7. When giving a task, the educators must focus primarily on clarifying the instructions. During the course of an assignment educators must also constantly check learners' understanding.
8. For migrant learners not only learning as such, but also the aspect of activity, socializing and qualitatively spending their learning time is as much important. A teacher can

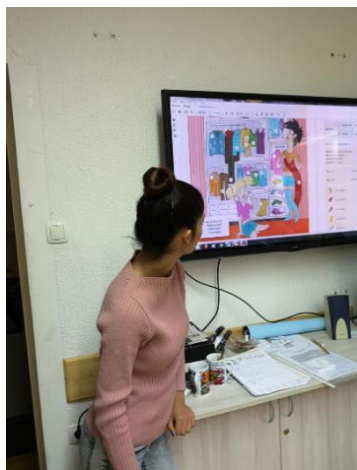
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make a good use of this attitude, making the learning process varied, attractive, fun, interesting, creative.

9. Spending more time on a specific activity proves to be very effective. It is more efficient to do less and this well.

10. The teaching should also be playful, various social games, board games and interactive computer games are most welcome.

11. When selecting teaching materials and educator will have to combine multiple communication channels. Audio-visual teaching aids are indispensable and should present imperative in teaching this target group.



effect will be (e.g. when learning language in kitchen one can learn with one's eyes, hands, nose and ears and ultimately with one's sense of taste).

12. Theory should be applied to a real activity. The possibility of inserting theoretical elements closely linked to what learners are doing, produces much better results than classroom lessons.

13. The more senses are included in learning the more impressive and lasting the learning



14. The teachers should bear in mind that teaching must not be monotonous, so kinaesthetic learning and physical activity in the classroom should also be considered.

15. The migrant learners will also often explicitly express their wishes for activities which would strengthen their social inclusion, they are eager to have more contact with the majority population. Educators should provide opportunities for social activities with the involvement of local people (e.g. traditional dinners, fashion shows where women wear their traditional clothes and explain their origins, religious celebrations ...)

16. When following the MMM or any other teaching plan, the actual training will still require a lot of modifications and adaptation on the spot. The training demands constant adjustment and also a great deal of improvisation.

We expect the intellectual output, containing tips for educators, will impact the way educators think about migrants as learners and will motivate them to rethink their approach. We also expect them to include teaching tips into their teaching practice thus making the teaching/learning process better for teachers and migrants alike.

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