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Guidelines for Trainers

Module 3: Communication and group dynamics in Adult Education

Draft Version



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Introduction

These Guidelines are intended for practical use by adult education practitioners (trainers, educators, instructors, etc.). Its main purpose is to help educators address the pillars of theory, tools and techniques for analysing, managing and improving communication in every area of professional and personal interaction and group dynamics in adult education, as well as didactical and methodical solutions for the contents described in Module 3 of Curriculum globALE titled: Communication and Group Dynamics in Adult Education.

These Guidelines are part of a collaborative effort to build communication skills among adult education workers and, in particular, develop assertiveness, conversational or verbal and nonverbal communication skills and capacity for the effective application in their professional engagement. Accompanying orientation for providers, these Guidelines presents in-depth information on all aspects of communication and Group Dynamics in adult education along with didactic guidelines for practical use.

Understanding the communication process and group dynamics in adult education and their diversity in terms of forms and implementation, the functions of communication and group dynamics and their importance for effective adult learning is one of the most important things for adult educators when working with adults. Through the contents of Module 3, participants will understand the basic terminology in communication and group dynamics, theoretical and practical aspects, elements and challenges that communication and group dynamics present in the process of adult education. The contents address a variety of occupations and professions that involve active work in the field of adult education, as well as competences that adult education professionals are required to possess. After mastering this Module, learners should be able to understand and reflect on their own role in adult education system.

The Guidelines contain five chapters on Communication and five chapters on Group Dynamics, which are compatible with topics of the first module of the Curriculum globALE, presented in the following Graphs.

Graph no. 1: Content of the Guideline - COMMUNICATION



Graph no. 2: Content of the Guideline - GROUP DYNAMICS



Within every topic, there is a content-didactical structure of the topic:

- short thematic description, with goals and outcomes;
- sub-topics with short theoretical inputs and didactic suggestions and ideas (example of the scenario for realisation of the sub-topic or examples of assignments);
- Suggestions for exam ideas and questions and suggestions for the individual work.

This Guideline represents andragogic-didactic support for the implementation of the Module 3 of the Curriculum globALE, as follows:

- Offers theoretical basics of each topic, as a “road map” for implementation of its content by trainers;
- Proposes didactical solutions and models of implementation of some sub-topics;
- Gives numerous instructions and advice for trainers, in regard to selection of methods of work, time dedicated to specific topics, creation of exam questions, instructing learners on how to do individual work, using additional literature.

Minimal Requirements for the Training

Communication

1. Trainees are introduced to basic elements and key features of communication as proposed by major communication models/theories. They are introduced to different types and levels of communication (verbal, non-verbal, paraverbal communication; group vs. individual communication; emotional vs. factual communication level etc.).

2. Trainees learn about different communication styles and about factors which impact on communication (e.g. gender, culture, context/setting; medium).
3. Trainees relate the theoretical communication concepts to adult learning theory and practice. They reflect on how communication is dealt with in adult learning theories; they analyse adult learning practice examples (possibly from their own experience) in the light of the communication concept learned. They learn to recognise communication obstacles which may occur.
4. Trainees are introduced to communication principles to be observed in adult learning practice (e.g. respectful, neutral, transparent, assertive, and supportive). Preferably, this is not done through a trainer input but participants should actively develop these principles through reflection and discussion.
5. Trainees are introduced to a range of communication methods and techniques to be applied in a variety of situations and for different purposes (active listening; group discussion facilitation; countering conversation 'killers', dealing with conflicts, guiding learners, feedback techniques etc.) and perform practical exercises.

For each of the areas 1, 2, and 4 trainees discuss at least 2-3 inputs (e.g. original papers/documents, extracts from original papers/documents, case descriptions or texts/presentations specifically prepared/compiled for the training) and/or perform some reflection or practical exercise (e.g. individual work or group work during the training sessions). Practical exercises are particularly required for area 4.

As regards the various factors which impact on communication (area 1), a brief general introduction should be given to all types of trainees. According to what is particularly relevant to the trainees, one or two specific factors may then also be treated more in-depth (e.g. gender).

Group dynamics

6. Trainees are introduced to basic theoretical principles and key features of group dynamics and group culture (forms and characteristics of learning groups, development phases of groups, roles, hierarchies, values and rules)
7. Trainees relate the theoretical concepts of group dynamics to adult learning theory and practice. They reflect on the importance of group dynamics for the teaching/learning process. They are introduced to and reflect on different roles of the adult educator in the teaching/learning group.
8. Trainees are introduced to different models for working with groups (e.g. topic-centred interaction, sociometry, etc.)
9. Trainees are introduced to a range of methods and techniques for steering group dynamics and coping with challenging situations.

For each of these areas trainees discuss at least 1-2 inputs (e.g. original papers/documents, extracts from original papers/documents, case descriptions or texts/presentations specifically prepared/compiled for the training) and/or perform some reflection or practical exercise (e.g. individual work or group work during the training sessions).

Topic 1: Elements and Key Features of Communication

The first topic addresses the wider theme of Communication in Adult Education which can be observed from different angles and in different contexts. It has several specific sub-topics which are focused on different elements of the main topic and are presented in the Guidelines with descriptions of learning goals and learning outcomes.

Educators have the freedom to decide the timeframe for realisation of every sub-topic, as well as the order of the sub-topics, according to the characteristics and the prior knowledge and experience of the learning group. Optimal time for implementation of this topic is 1 day.

The main purpose of this topic is to understand communication as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of structure, organisation, key elements, principles and models of communication, as well as its importance for effective learning and personal development.

Table 1: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic:

ELEMENTS AND KEY FEATURES OF COMMUNICATION

Learning goal: Understand the meaning and importance of Communication as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of structure, organisation, key elements, principles and models of communication and development of communication skills for better learning and living together.

General learning outcome: After completing this topic, learners know the diversity and variety of forms of adult education and learning, understand the basic functions of adult education and the importance of active participation in adult education.

Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
1. What is Communication?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining communication and describing communication as a process. - Identifying and describing the essential components of communication. - Identifying and describing models of communication. 	<p>Learners understand the communication process;</p> <p>Learners know essential components of communication.</p> <p>Learners can identify and describe models of communication</p>
2. What are elements of Communication?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to communication and elements of communication. - Factors that influence adult education. 	<p>Learners know different forms and elements of communication;</p> <p>Learners can practice different forms of communication.</p>
3. Verbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding verbal communication. - Identifying and describing key principles of verbal communication. 	<p>Learners understand the verbal communication and key principles.</p> <p>Learners can practice different forms of verbal communication.</p>
4. Non-verbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding and learning nonverbal communication. - Demonstrating nonverbal communication and describing its role in the communication process. - Understanding and explaining the principles of nonverbal communication. 	<p>Learners understand the elements of nonverbal communication.</p> <p>Learners understand the principle of nonverbal communication.</p> <p>Learners can analyse nonverbal signs.</p> <p>Learner can practice different forms of nonverbal communication.</p>

5. Paraverbal language	Understanding and learning paraverbal language.	Learners understand the elements of paraverbal language.
6. Group Communication	Understanding and learning group communication.	Learners know what group communication is. Learners can include elements of nonverbal and paraverbal communication in group discussion.

1.1 What is Communication

Communication is a constant on-going process which is an essential element of the world in which all living things exist. The need for communication is as strong as the biological need for water, food and reproduction. The need to communicate with other people and all that lies around is part of human nature. With the help of communication, mankind exchanges and shares spiritual and emotional values, whether in the form of dialogue with its second “I” or in the process of his mutual relations with the people around him. Communication is both an individual and also a collective need.



The word communication derives from the Latin word *communis*, which means common, mutual. Communication is synonymous with exchange, sharing, interaction or life in a community. It represents transfer of symbolic messages and receipt of feedback. With the help of communication we transfer more than information, we transfer among other things ideas, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values and emotional states.

Encyclopaedia defines communication as “exchange of various forms of meaning between individuals or groups through a common system of symbols or language”. It can also be understood as sending of meaningful messages from one person to another. These messages can be expressed orally or in writing, can be verbal or non-verbal, conscious or unconscious, can be expressed through different media or through the deployment of different senses. Communication enables individuals or groups to learn new things, to be convinced of something, to seek information, to receive information or to express their feelings. Communication involves symbols, gestures, rules, practices, cultures, traditions, manner of clothing, etc.

Development of communication is an integral part of the evolution of humanity and societal processes. From signs and signals, characteristic for the dawn of mankind, through verbal oral exchange and the written word, to mass communication and the information revolution, communication has developed into an indispensable inherent component of our civilisation, an instrument for transmitting individual and societal experience, both its agent and consequence. It defines the relationship between humans and their relation to nature, thus shaping man as a social being. It provides people with a sense of belonging, decreases loneliness and frustrations by helping people adapt to their environment.

At the same time, communication is a skills that individuals acquire spontaneously, either without investing efforts (as is the acquisition of the mother tongue, acceptance of slang or symbolic expressions) or by investing efforts and through the process of education, contributing to the emergence of a particular profile of the individual. Acquisition of communication skills largely defines the identity of a person, his or her personality. Thus, people often project an impression of a shy, cunning, arrogant, perceptive, aggressive, withdrawn or intrusive individual. These diverse communication behaviours are a reflection of the individual, of her/his way of thinking, attitudes and even culture.

In adult education, communication entails diverse forms of exchange among participants within a process of education. It is an important prerequisite for achieving efficient, effective and creative cooperation between participants, and also for ensuring the overall quality of the process of education. It is an intricate complex of socio-psychological, motivational and moral relations, which are an integral part of educational endeavours.

In the process of education with adult learners, it is very important that both learners and teachers are familiar with and understand the communication signs and symbols, since it is an important prerequisite for a successful and creative cooperation based on equality.

Three basic types of communication exist:

1. **intrapersonal communication** (dialogue with the second "I" or with oneself);
2. **interpersonal communication** (mutual interaction of two or more persons "face to face" with the possibility for immediate feedback); and
3. **mass or systemic communication**, which uses different technical means and is oriented at a broad range of potential users.

The existence of different types of communication allows for a number of opportunities and different situations in the process of education. Within this context, interpersonal communication is of special importance because through it the process of teaching and learning is carried out. It is a tool for successful education. It helps understand the behaviour of participants and facilitates exchange of their ideas, feelings and thoughts with other participants in the process of education.

Interpersonal communication:

- entails verbal and non-verbal behaviour;
- entails spontaneous, practiced and planned behaviour, or a possible combination thereof;
- is developmental and not static;
- facilitates immediate feedback, interaction and coordination;
- establishes internal and external rules;
- represents an activity; and
- could entail beliefs (Reardon, 1998).

Interpersonal communication can be:

- **direct** (immediate) and
- **indirect** (through intermediaries - technical means. i.e. media).

Communication within the process of education does not always have to be a conscious action of the participants. It occurs even when they are not aware that they are communicating and even when they do not wish to communicate. Even when they are not talking, they are sharing some information. It happens even when they are not interested, when they ignore something or somebody, when they are silent, and when they unconsciously send messages with the way they dress, sit, walk, make unconscious gestures, etc. For this reason, those participating in education of adult learners, especially the teachers, should anticipate the messages they unconsciously send out, which should be in line with the messages that are being transmitted consciously, so that they could be received in the proper way by those they are aimed at.

The process of education entails transmission of different types of information. Not only the content of the information should be paid due attention to, but equally so the manner of transmission. It is important to take into account whether the manner of transmission of the information is acceptable to those receiving information or not.

Table 1.1: Suggestions for implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	What is Communication
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining communication and describing communication as a process. - Identifying and describing the essential components of communication. - Identifying and describing models of communication
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, presentations, Brain storming, Observation.
Time-frame	30 min.
Resources required	Flipchart, moderation cards, crayons, beamer, LCD
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation, movies, audio record
Procedure	<p>Observe some interpersonal communication; make a mental note of the behaviours used, both verbal and non-verbal.</p> <p>Observe and think about the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are the communicators? - What messages were exchanged? - What (if any) noise distorts the message? - How is feedback given? - What is the context of the communication? <p>By observing others - making a conscious effort to understand how communication occurs - you will think about how <i>you</i> communicate and be more aware of the messages you send. Please share your results with your classmates.</p>

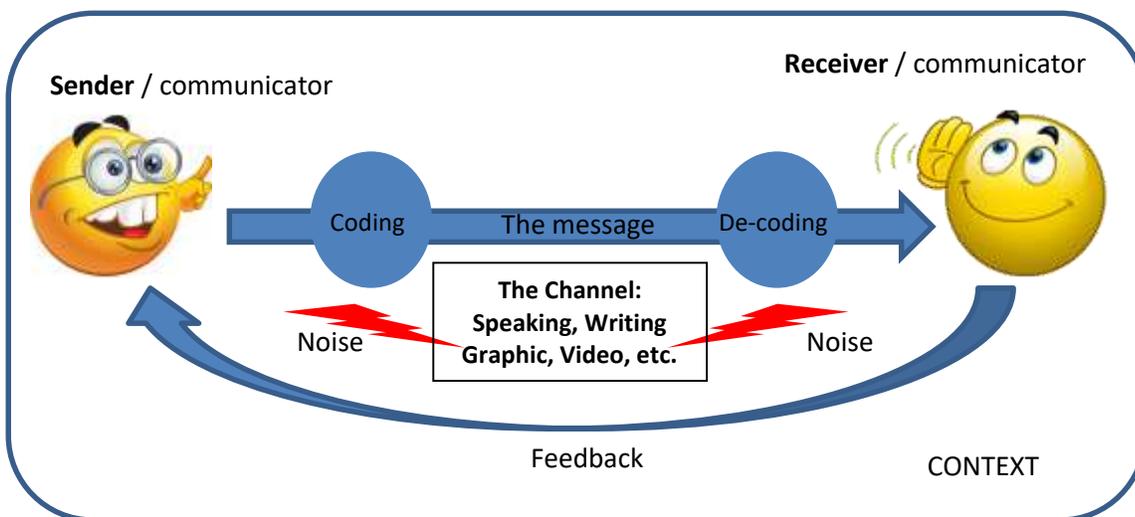
Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Brainstorming (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing different definitions of communication...

1.2 What are elements of communication?

In order for any communication to be going on, it needs to involve at least two persons. Communication is not a straightforward process in which the sender transmits a message to the receiver who receives the respective message. Such a situation occurs very rarely. Even in an education process in which the teacher lectures and the learners listen passively, there is never a unidirectional transmission of messages. The feedback does not have to be conveyed orally or in writing from the learners to the teacher. Their “silent” reactions, expressed through non-verbal communication (smiling, frowning, body or head movement, etc.), represent also feedback to the teacher.

Thus, communication is always a complex two-way interactive process, in which the sender and the receiver constantly change their roles.



Main elements of the communication:

a) The Sender:

The sender is the person who sends the message with the objective of transmitting information to other person(s).

b) The Message:

The message is the object of the communication. It can be an idea, piece of data, opinion, attitude, feeling, order, proposal, etc. The message does not always have to be information and it does not have to be in the form of a specific verbal expression. It can be non-verbal and can be expressed through facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures of body language. Such non-verbal behaviour transmits additional information about the message itself thus creating the message's emotional context and contributing to the end effect of its understanding and accepting. In the educational practice, verbal and non-verbal communication most often go hand in hand. Even in the case of the ideally designed message, it can be badly or incorrectly understood or accepted by the receivers precisely because of the emotional context of the main message. Non-verbal language that accompanies verbal speech can often

annoy learners and cause rejection of the main message. A teacher's high-pitched, scratchy voice, arrogant body posture, inappropriate gestures or other unsuitable manifestations can diminish the effects of her/his communication with the learners.

c) The Coding:

The content of the communication is theoretical and non-substantive. Its transmission requires the use of specific symbols, such as letters, words, images, gestures and actions. The transformation of the content into symbols is referred to as coding. When coding the message, the sender must be focused on the receiver(s) and take into account their prior knowledge, abilities, beliefs, etc. S/he must take care that the message can be properly decoded by the intended recipient in order for its proper meaning to be understood.

d) The Communication Channel:

The sender chooses the communication channel, i.e. the medium, through which s/he sends the message. S/he needs to decide on the best and most effective way for transmitting the message. There are a number of types of channels to choose from, formal or non-formal channels for transmission of spoken words, written materials, graphical representations or electronically designed material, including: voice transmission of the message in a face to face situation, through the Internet, radio, television, by mail, etc. In a face to face situation both speech and visual contacts are established, whereas using a telephone to communicate imposes a limitation of only speaking.

e) The Receiver:

The receiver is a person who receives the message and for whom it is intended. This does not have to be one person. In education of adults, the most frequent situation is when one sender transmits a message to a group of adult learners. Often, one group sends a message to another.

f) The Decoding:

The receiver attempts to understand the message in the best possible way so as to achieve the desired objectives. S/he decodes the symbols used by the sender to interpret the meaning of the message and understand it completely. S/he is responsible for providing feedback to the sender. It can happen that the coded message is not well decoded by the receiver. Whether this is the case, depends mostly on the sender of the message, i.e. on whether s/he prepared it well or whether s/he took into account the capacities of the receiver (prior knowledge, experience, convictions, attitudes and values) to successfully decode the message and understand its meaning.

g) The Feedback:

The feedback needs to inform the sender whether the receiver successfully decoded the content of the message and understood it in the same sense as the sender envisaged. Feedback may be provided in the form of a conscious or unconscious message; it can be expressed directly and verbally, denoting "Would you like to please repeat, I did not understand this well", or "Yes, I understand now!", or non-verbally in the form of obvious or subtle gestures, affirmative nodding of the head, facial expressions or changes in body posture. Such feedback enables the sender of the message to self-correct or regulate, adapt, confirm or supplement the message, in order to improve the communication.

h) The Noise

This is a factor that impedes the transmission of the message. Often it is some kind of noise, which can be internal, coming from the group itself, or external, caused by rainfall, thunder, commotion caused by persons not participating in the process of education, car noise, etc. These obstacles or impediments,

depending on their intensity, can hamper communication and the transfer of messages, and in some cases even discontinue the communication. Teacher’s inappropriate body language, use of complicated jargon, learner’s lack of attention or interest, and cultural differences can also be regarded as “noise” in the context of interpersonal communication. Thus, any disruption or inconsistency arising in the process of communication can be regarded as noise.

i) The Context

Every communication is influenced by the context in which it occurs. In addition to the situational context in which the interaction takes place, such as educational classroom, laboratory, workshop, or maybe outdoors, we should take into account also the social context, including the roles, responsibilities and status of the participants. Emotional climate and learner expectation from the interaction also affect the communication.

Communication is a dynamic process. It is constant, irreversible and contextual. We can never single out one element and neglect the others.

Table 1.2: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	What are elements of communication
Goal	Understanding the key elements of communication and their relation and interaction.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, moderation, presentations, group work.
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	Flipchart, crayons, beamer
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<p>Decide together with your learners on a specific theme for interpersonal communication and persons who will communicate. Appoint several learners to take notes about used verbal expression of the communicators during the discussion about the topic.</p> <p>They should carefully observe and consider the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who were the communicators? - What messages were exchanged? - What was the context of the communication? - Which communication channels were used? - What was the reaction of the receivers of the messages? - Which noise (if any) impeded the messages? - How was feedback provided? <p>After the end of the communication, each note-taker should present to the group what s/he noticed.</p> <p>By observing somebody else’s communication, learners should make a conscious effort to understand the process of communication. They should reflect on how they communicate and what kind of messages they transmit and how.</p>

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Observation, Interactive demonstration (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of elements of communication...

1.3 Verbal communication

The first thought that comes to mind when discussing the term communication is that it is a process in which at least two persons exchange voice symbols, i.e. that they communicate verbally and mutually exchange information with the help of speech. We should be however aware that this is only one of the many levels in which communication occurs, and by all indicators, it has the least impact in the process of communication.

1. Never use metaphor or any other figure of speech that you are used to seeing in printed texts;
2. Never use a long word if a short one is equally appropriate;
3. If it is possible to omit a word, then do it;
4. Never use passive if you can use active voice;
5. Never use foreign phrases, a word you have learned or jargon if you can substitute it with an equivalent word from everyday speech;
6. Break any of the above rules before you say anything rude.

George Orwell

Verbal communication is based on several basic principles¹:

- Language has Rules - Language is a code, a collection of symbols, letters, or words with arbitrary meanings that are arranged according to the rules of syntax and are used to communicate.
- Our Reality is Shaped by Our Language - Our language is like sunglasses, tinting the way we see the world.
- Language is Arbitrary and Symbolic - Words, by themselves, do not have any inherent meaning. Humans give meaning to them, and their meanings change across time. The arbitrary symbols, including letters, numbers, and punctuation marks, stand for concepts in our experience.
- Language Is Abstract - Words represent aspects of our environment, and can play an important role in that environment. They may describe an important idea or concept, but the very act of labelling and invoking a word simplifies and distorts our concept of the thing itself.
- Language Organizes and Classifies Reality - We use language to create and express some sense of order in our world. We often group words that represent concepts by their physical proximity or their similarity to one another.

In order to improve our verbal communication, we need to adhere to several key principles:²

- Define Your Terminology
- Choose Precise Words
- Consider Your Audience
- Control Your Tone
- Check for Understanding
- Be Results Oriented

¹ Communication for Business Success. See: <http://2012books.lardbucket.org/pdfs/communication-for-business-success.pdf>

² Ibid

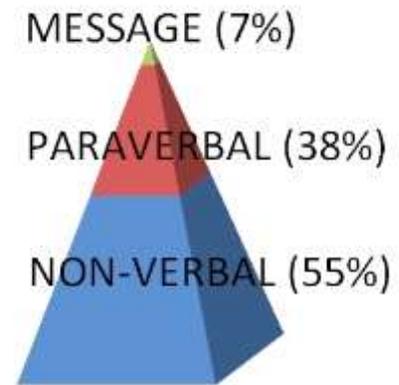
Table 1.3: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Verbal communication
Goal	Understanding the verbal communication and identification and description of key principles of verbal communication.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, moderation, presentations, group work.
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	Flipchart, crayons, beamer
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	List five cars you observe people you know driving and discuss each one, noting whether you perceive that the car says something about them or not. Share and discuss with learners. Learners are describing a simple process, from brushing to opening the top of a bottle, in as precise terms as possible. Present to the class.

Didactic suggestions
 This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Debate (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners)

1.4 Non-verbal communication

From the viewpoint of its evolution history, the word has never stood alone and has always been accompanied by other levels of communication as strong and important for the course of the communication. Experience tells us that each verbal language is accompanied by a certain gesture, body position, facial expression, voice tone and pitch, etc. All these accompanying elements of verbal language constitute the other two levels of communication, non-verbal and paraverbal language.



It has been proven that non-verbal and paraverbal languages make a greater impression in the processes of communication and learning than verbal language.

When we communicate with others, we receive and send voiceless signals. We send strong messages with all non-verbal gestures we make, the way we stand/sit, how fast or how loud we speak, how far apart we stand, or what kind of visual contacts we make. These messages do not stop even when we stop talking. Even when we are silent, we communicate non-verbally.

Sometimes, what we say and what we show through non-verbal signals can be completely different. In such a case, the receiver of the message must choose whether s/he will believe our words or what we have shown with our non-verbal language. In most cases, the choice is in favour of the non-verbal language, because it is the natural and unconscious language that reflects our true feelings, intentions and beliefs.

Let us look at three separate situations:

Situation 1:

If the teacher, with her/his back turned to the adult learners says “Some of you did very good assignments”, s/he uses the verbal channel to convey the message to the adult learners. However, in addition to the voiced message, learners receive very little additional information that they need to properly decode and understand its true meaning.

Situation 2:

If the same message is transmitted by the teacher facing the adult learners and is accompanied by feelings, gestures, tone of voice, punctuation and eye movement, saying “Some of you (fixating with her/his eyes specific learners) did very good assignments (smile)”, then the message is much “juicier” and gives learners the opportunity to understand its meaning fully and receive a lot of additional information (who those learners are, how good they were, whether the teacher is pleased, etc.).

Situation 3:

If the teacher accompanies the same message facing the adult learners with an angry facial expression, sarcasm and nervous gestures, the same message receives a completely different meaning for the learners. It is no longer affirmative, does not praise but criticize and express the teacher’s dissatisfaction. In this way, the non-verbal communication becomes more certain and true than the verbal one.

In cases 2 and 3, the teacher communicated not only verbally but also non-verbally with the learners, by including a spoken message and physical signals to express her/his feelings, opinions, agreement, satisfaction, etc.

Generally, unlike signals in verbal language, signals in non-verbal communication occur on a subconscious level; they are very direct, instinctive and immediate, and are more difficult to control. With the help of non-verbal signals, the message becomes clearer, “richer” and more accurate for the receivers, as well as more revealing for the sender, as they reveal what s/he really thinks.

When our non-verbal signals match the words we utter, they enhance the trust, clarity and the message we send. When they do not match, they generate tension, mistrust and confusion. A good communicator must pay due attention to the non-verbal signals of other as well as to her/his own.

Non-verbal speech facilitates:

Truthfulness: it can corroborate the truthfulness of the verbal message.

Repetition: it can repeat the message we send verbally.

Contradictoriness: it can contradict the message we are trying to convey.

Replacement: it can replace verbal speech or the verbal message.

Belief: it can demonstrate that we believe what we say verbally.

Completion: it can complete the verbal message.

Stressing: it can stress the importance of the message, by for example banging on the table or using a high-pitched voice.

Elements of non-verbal communication:

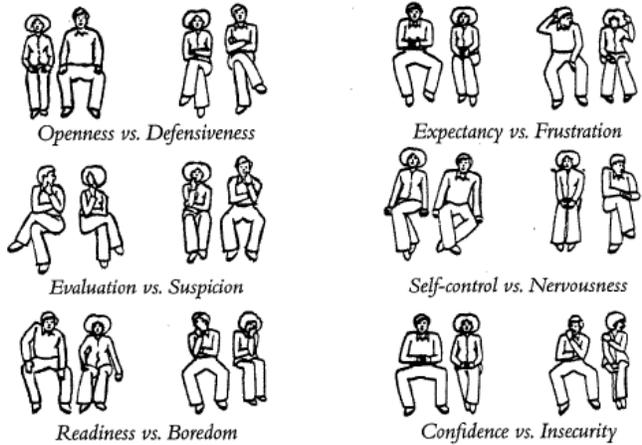
Body position

This type of non-verbal communication encompasses gestures, position of the body, of the head, signs, movements of the hands, posture and subtle movements.

Body movement can be used to strengthen or emphasise what is verbally stated. That can show whether we are interested, attentive, bored, self-confident, whether we care or not, or whether we have doubts or are open, or have expectations, or ...

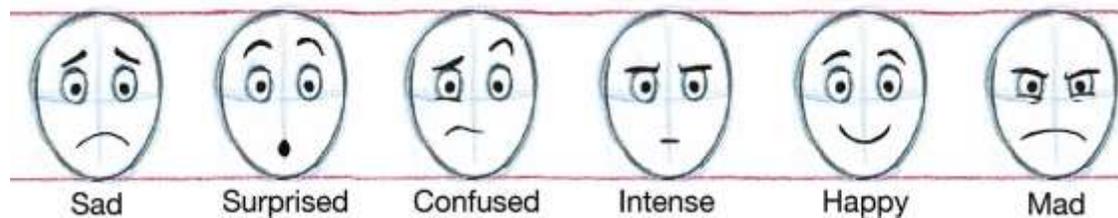
Often generally familiar signs, such as the

sign "OK"  are used the communication, which is acceptable. However, care should be taken not to use signs which in another cultural context may be misinterpreted and harm the communication.



Facial expression

The human face is very expressive and can express many emotions without the support of verbal language.



Gesture

Gestures can highlight the verbal content as for example ironic or serious.



Boredom Gesture

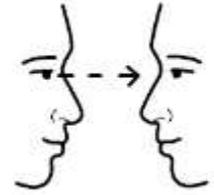


Interested, Evaluation Gesture

Direction of the gaze

With the help of the gaze a broad spectre of emotions can be expressed, from love to hate, boredom, disgust, domination, servility or provocation.

The direction of the gaze and establishment of visual contact is an exceptionally important type of non-verbal communication. Maintaining eye contact is also important for maintaining the discussion flow and for assessing the other person's response.



Clothing, jewellery, objects

Often, the clothing and objects people wear speak volumes about them, about, among other things, their style, character, profession, beliefs, origin or culture. In the process of learning, we should pay attention that clothing or objects are not provocative, do not distract the attention of the learners and do not cause comments.

Distance

Maintaining distance between communicators is often viewed as something insignificant, forgetting that too great distancing can cause barriers in the communication and decrease in the motivation of the interlocutors, whereas too small a distance can cause uncomfortable feelings and unease. It is generally accepted that a distance of at least one step should be maintained.

- Intimate Distance (touching to 45 cm)
- Personal Distance (45 cm to 1.2 m)
- Social Distance (1.2 m to 3.6 m)
- Public Distance (3.7 m to 4.5 m)

Halo effect

The halo effect reflects the first impression that we make when meeting a person for the first time, and it can be reflected throughout their mutual relations and affect significantly the communication. It can enhance but also hinder the communication. The emergence of the Halo Effect is influenced by the overall appearance of the person and the impression s/he leaves: the similarity with persons with whom we share good or bad memories and emotions, the height, weight, moves, attitude, facial features, colour of the eyes or hair, the smell, voice, clothing and details.

Table 1.4: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Non-verbal communication
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Understanding and learning nonverbal communication.– Demonstrating nonverbal communication and describing its role in the communication process.– Understanding and explaining the principles of nonverbal communication.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, moderation, presentations.
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	Flipchart, crayons, beamer, TV
Didactic material required	Power Point and TV presentation

<p>Procedure</p>	<p>Choose a television personality you admire. What do learners know about this person? Learners watch this person for several minutes with the sound turned off, and make notes of the nonverbal expressions they observe. Turn the sound back on. Learners take notes of their tone of voice, timing, and other audible expressions. Start a discussion with learners, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Body position: Is the body relaxed or stiff and immobile? Are shoulders tense and raised, or slightly sloped? - Facial expression: What is the face showing? Is it masklike and inexpressive, or emotionally present and filled with interest? - Gesture: Is the verbal language accompanied by gestures? Are the gestures in tune with the verbal language or not? - Direction of the gaze: Is eye contact being made? If so, is it overly intense or just right? - Clothing, objects: Does the clothing irritate you or not? - Distance: Is there any physical contact? Is it appropriate to the situation? - Speech: Do you hear sounds that indicate caring or concern?
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Didactic suggestions

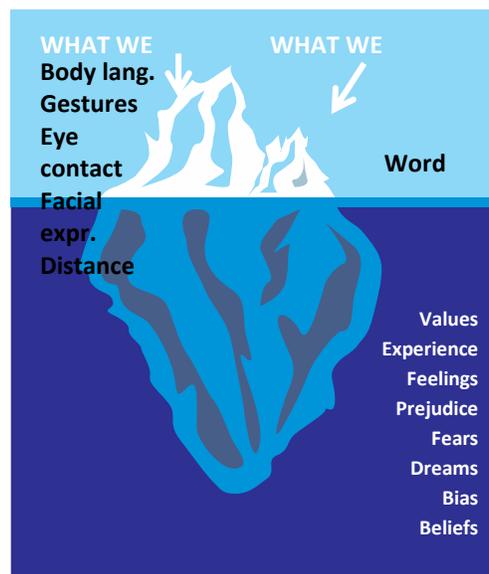
This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Body language demonstration (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of nonverbal communication...

1.6 Paraverbal language

In addition to verbal and non-verbal language, there is a third type of expression, namely paraverbal language. It involves all communication signals contained in the pitch, tempo and intonation of the verbal language.

Paraverbal language goes deeper in revealing the speaker. It helps us find much about her/his values, experiences, feelings, prejudice, fears, dreams and beliefs.

When the speaker is sure of her/himself, s/he is calm and confident. Her/his voice is clear and pleasant to listen. On the other hand, when s/he is nervous or aggressive, s/he speaks faster and often in a higher pitch. Fear and insecurity are manifested by a muted voice and higher pitch, and shyness with an unclear and often quit voice



Paraverbal signals are not fully straightforward or unambiguous. During communication the easiest emotions to detect in the voice are fear and anger. Nevertheless, they can provide us with additional information on our interlocutor; for example if s/he speaks in a dialect or reveals his origin or culture. Paraverbal signals are a great indication of everything that our conscious thinking is trying to hide and of whether somebody is speaking the truth or not.

- Speaking too loudly creates an impression of aggression and anger.
- Speaking too quietly is connected with shyness, fear or weak personality.
- Speaking nasally (when not caused by a cold) can be attributed to laziness or arrogance.
- Shrill voice makes us seem weak or hysterical.
- Speaking brashly and with resolve is connected with dynamic but also insensitive persons.
- Speaking gently creates an impression of tenderness and sensitivity.

Important elements of paraverbal language

Rhythm:

The rhythm in which we speak is important for the process of learning. If we want to separate important information, then we need to speak slowly, so that the learners can understand us well and understand the importance of the information for them. This does not mean however, that we should talk slowly all the time, because the listener would tire quickly and lose interest.

Speaking fast ensures dynamism and determination, but quickly tires out the listeners.

Pauses:

The use of pauses during speaking is another way of stressing the importance of information. The pause always comes after the stated information. However, pauses should not be too long; it is sufficient that they last for 3 to 5 seconds.

Emotions:

Emotions are most easily highlighted in short sentences. Long sentences are more appropriate for contemplation.

Beliefs:

Paraverbal language needs to demonstrate whether the sender of the message believes in it or not. Passionate speech accompanied by positive emotions sends clear signals to the listeners that the speaker believes what s/he is saying, and there can be no doubt about her/his sincerity. Such speech can motivate and build trust between the communicators.

Table 1.5: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Paraverbal language
Goal	Understanding and learning paraverbal language.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, moderation, presentations.
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	Flipchart, crayons, beamer, TV
Didactic material required	Power Point and TV presentation
Procedure	Choose a different television personality you admire. What do learners know about their paraverbal expression? Learners watch for several minutes and make notes about their feelings. Start a discussion with learners, about her/his values, experiences, feelings, prejudice, fears, dreams and beliefs:

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Role play (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of paraverbal communication...

1.7 Group Communication

Communication between two people is called a dialogue and communication within a group of more than two people is called group communication. In the process of education, the group should not be larger than 12 participants, because effective communication is hard to achieve in larger groups. The group is characterised by strong interactive relations, joint resolve towards the goal, and sense of belonging and mutual respect. Verbal and non-verbal communication are integral components of group communication.

Successful group communication is essential in adult education. In order to achieve it, we need to ensure that the group members can make eye contact between each other, that everybody can hear everybody else and exchange ideas with any other member in the group. Usually, positioning the group members in a circle (whether sitting or standing) can meet these requirements.



When the primary goal of the training is for the teacher/trainer to transmit new knowledge to all group members or when it is not necessary for them to maintain visual contact, it is desirable to use a different sitting arrangement. In such a case, the teacher/trainer provides information and the members of the group provide individually feedback.

Table 1.6: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Group Communication
Goal	Understanding and learning the group communication.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation, presentations
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	Flipchart, moderation cards, crayons, beamer
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	Play "Lie to Me," a game in which each person creates three statements (one is a lie) and tells all three statements to a classmate or the group. The listeners have to guess which statement is a lie.

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
Buzz techniques (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
Analysis of texts addressing other issues of group communication

Topic 2: Communication Styles

The second topic addresses the wider theme of Communication Styles, which can be observed from different angles and in different contexts. It has several specific sub-topics focused on different elements of the main Topic and presented in the Guidelines with descriptions of learning goals and learning outcomes.

Educators have the freedom to decide the timeframe for realisation of every sub-topic, as well as the order of the sub-topics, according to the characteristics and the previous knowledge and experience of the learning group. Optimal time for implementation of this topic is 1 day.

The main purpose of this topic is to understand communication as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of forms and implementation, as well as its importance for effective learning and personal development.

Table 2: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic:

COMMUNICATION STYLES

Learning Goal: Understand the meaning and importance of Communication as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of: Structure, Organisation, Key Elements, Principles and Models of communication and development Of communication skills for better learning and living together.

General learning outcome: After completing this topic, learners know the diversity and variety of forms of adult education and learning, understand basic functions of adult education and the importance of active participation in adult education.

Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
1. Communication style	Identifying and describing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aggressive communication style. - Passive communication style - Passive - aggressive communication style - Assertive communication style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners understand the communication process; - Learners know the essential components of communication. - Learners can identify and describe models of communication - Learners improve their assertive skills for communication
2. Gender and Communication	Identifying and describing a variety of practical communication skills appropriate for successful cross-gender communication to maintain healthy relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners know a variety of practical communication skills appropriate for successful cross-gender communication - Learners have reduced level of communication apprehension when discussing gender issues.
3. Culture and Communication	Introducing and analysing the impact of cultural differences in communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners improve their skills and strategies for multicultural collaboration and teamwork. - Learners will recognize and demonstrate the behaviours which represent open-mindedness.

4. Communication media	Presenting and analysing different types of communication media in adult education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners are able to design communication through different media. - Learners know implications of different media in communication. - Learners are able to use technology to communicate effectively in various settings and contexts.
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2.1. Aggressive communication style

Aggressive communicators are not afraid to express their feelings and opinions and to strive to satisfy their needs at any cost, even if necessary through impinging on the rights of the others. The aggressive communicator is prone to verbal and/or physical abuse.

In the communication, they want to dominate others and control them; they are often impulsive, rough and threatening. Loud and not good listeners, they have a low tolerance threshold and like criticising and humiliating others and blaming them for it. Their body language is threatening and arrogant; they are not very sociable and feel comfortable in an atmosphere of fear and hatred, which they cause themselves.



The aggressive communicator will say, believe, or behave like:

- "I'll get my way no matter what."
- "I'm loud, bossy and pushy."
- "I react instantly."
- "I can dominate and intimidate you."
- "I can violate your rights."
- "You're not worth anything."
- "It's all your fault."
- "I'm superior and right and you're inferior and wrong."
- "I'm entitled."

2.2. Passive communication style

Passive communicators make efforts to avoid the expression of their opinions and feelings, have difficulties in identifying and satisfying their needs, do not stand up for rights and sometimes even give up on them. Most often, they place other people's needs ahead of their own and strive to make an impression on others.

When communicating they talk quietly, apologise often, avoid making eye contact and display passive body position. They often express anxiety, depressive behaviour, hidden anger and confusion.



They do not react openly to attacks and withdraw in situations that result in angry reactions. But if their high tolerance threshold is breached, they can react violently and explosively, and they can also be prone to incidents. After a possible episode, the passive communicator questions her/himself, regrets and is ashamed of her/his actions.

A passive communicator will say, believe, or behave like:

- "I'm weak "
- "I'm unable to take care of myself."
- "I'm unable to stand up for my rights."
- "I get stepped on by everyone."
- "People never consider my feelings."

2.3. Passive - aggressive communication style

Passive-aggressive communicators are seemingly passive communication participants. However, wrath, frustration, bitterness or feelings of powerlessness hide behind this passivity. These communicators passively resist external requirements, feel "trapped" and unable to directly deal with the cause of their bitterness, which brings about a sense of incompetence, subtle manifesting of wrath, prolonging of the argument, stubbornness, laziness and inefficiency.



When communicating, the passive-aggressive communicators often withdraw without asking questions. Their non-verbal language is often in contradiction with their verbal language. They cover their wrath and bitterness with sarcasm or use facial expressions that contradict their feelings (smiling while being angry). They seem collaborative but cause deliberately, through subtle "sabotage", anxiety and disruption of the communication.

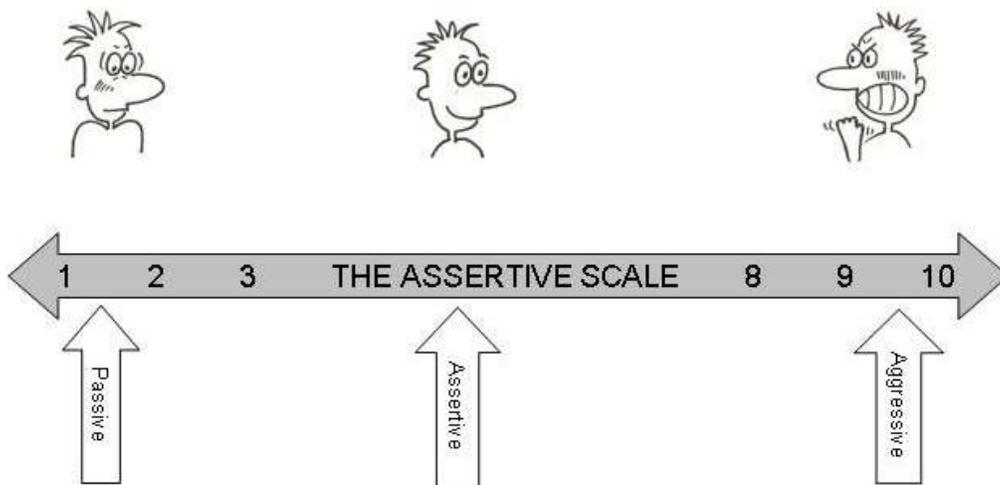
In the processes of learning, because of their sense of powerlessness and lack of faith in their competences, they often try to create barriers that prevent others from achieving their goals.

The passive-aggressive communicator will say, believe, or behave like:

- "I will appear cooperative but I'm not."
- "I'm weak and resentful, so I sabotage, frustrate, and disrupt."
- "I'm powerless to deal with you head on so I must use guerrilla warfare."

2.4. Assertive communication style

Assertive communication is spontaneous, direct, responsible and sincere. Individuals express their opinion and feelings clearly and strongly stand for their rights and needs, without impinging on the rights of others in the process. These individuals respect themselves, their own time, their emotional, spiritual and physical needs, stand up for themselves and are focused on the goal, but at the same time respect the rights of the others and are concerned about maintaining the relationship.



The person who possesses assertive skills communicates openly, sincerely and directly and expresses her/his ideas, does not back down, but also does not attack. S/he confronts others but also makes every effort to find a common solution to conflict situations and takes responsibility for her/his own actions, without laying blame on others.

The assertive communicator will say, believe, or behave in a way that says:

- "I am confident about who I am."
- "I respect the rights of others."
- "We are equally entitled to express ourselves respectfully to one another."
- "I speak clearly, honestly, and to the point."
- "I am responsible for getting my needs met in a respectful manner."
- "I can't control others but I can control myself."
- "I place a high priority on having my rights respected."
- "I realize I have choices in my life and I consider my options."
- "Nobody owes me anything unless they've agreed to give it to me."
- "I'm responsible for my own happiness."

Communication Styles

	Passive	Aggressive	Passive - Aggressive	Assertive
Active toward reaching one's goal?	No, ineffective strategy	Yes, but at the expense of others	Yes, but usually too late and inappropriately	Yes, and appropriately
Respectful?	Communicates apathy or submissiveness	No, intentions are to hurt others	No, mostly blame	Yes, even when defending their own safety
Listen to Others?	Maybe, but does not actively respond	Probably more concerned with own perspective	Maybe, but with hidden intentions	Yes, then responds at the appropriate time
Communicates Confidence?	No	Yes, probably too much	Maybe when acting aggressive	Yes, to set appropriate boundaries
Uses Nonverbal Communication?	Yes, displays weakness and vulnerability	Yes, from threat gestures to injuring others	Yes, used to manipulate others	Yes, to reinforce appropriate verbal communication
Impression given to others?	Weakness, apathy	"Jerk", "Mean"	Difficult to read, unpredictable	Easy to get along with, confident, cooperative
Reinforced by achievement of goals?	Yes, temporarily, if goal is to avoid conflict	Yes, immediate gratification, poor long term outcome	Yes, at the expense of relationships	Yes, and improves relationships
Examples of verbal interaction	I don't care Whatever Silent	Go to hell You're stupid	It's your fault You should have... Sarcasm	"I" Statements When is a good time to talk?

Table 2.1: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Communication style
Goal	Identifying and describing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aggressive communication style. - Passive communication style - Passive - aggressive communication style - Assertive communication style
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation, presentations
Time-frame	90 min
Resources required	Flipchart, moderation cards, crayons, beamer
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<p><u>Self-assessment</u></p> <p>Every learner has to complete the following self-assessment by responding to these statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You are generally passive and keep quiet. You never or rarely state your opinion as well as what you want or need. - You have difficulty saying "No." - You keep things bottled up inside you and eventually blow up. - You find that the only way you can get what you need is by being aggressive. - You feel that others take advantage of you or give you too much to do.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You eventually give in to what others want. - You feel that you are not respected by others. - You have little or no self-respect because you do not communicate your needs, wants or opinions.
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Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
De Bono’s Hats (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
Analysis of texts addressing other issues of communication style...

2.5. Gender and Communication

One of the factors affecting communication is the communicator’s gender. Men and women have “hidden rules” that are unique for their respective gender. Each gender is a “culture” for itself with “invisible” rules that are unique for it. A specific behaviour that seems natural and appropriate for the one may seem confusing and unacceptable for the other gender. This differing “culture” appears among persons of different sex who have lived in the same family, attended the same school and grow in the same environment. Exceptions, naturally, exist but are not common enough to contest the general existence of two different cultures among women and men.



Understanding the invisible rules for each gender may help in selecting the best possible way of communicating.

- Communication style. In non-verbal communication the head nod means that the woman is listening rather than agreeing, but men get the impression that she agrees. When a woman speaks and the man does not respond and stands in a neutral position in regard to his body language, the woman may think that he is bored and that he is disinterested. This may cause communication problems. She may repeat what she said or ask “Did you understand?” On the other hand, the man may interpret this as a sign of insecurity or desire to talk too much.
- Way of processing information. Women, when making decisions, often review other options and possibilities, whilst men tend to process internally information until they reach a decision. Because of this, women often believe that men are irresponsible and do not react to suggestion, whereas men often believe that women seek approval because they are not sure of what they are doing.
- Relationship towards assignments. Women are firstly oriented towards building relations and then towards solving the assignment. They know whom to ask and do not hesitate to ask the others to work. Men have a tendency to be more task oriented and to focus on its direct completion. They build relations in the course of task realisation.
- Women often use direct eye contact in the communication. She wants to establish an appropriate relationship, where the man will interpret this as a challenge and show of power. Men understand the long eye contact as too personal or aggressive whereas women understand avoiding direct eye contact as reservation on the part of the man or as a sign that he is hiding something.

Table 2.2: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Gender and Communication
Goal	Identifying and describing a variety of practical communication skills appropriate for successful cross-gender communication to maintain healthy relationships
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation, presentations, case study or Albatross technique.
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	crayons, paper
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<p>Give the learners a short description of the book “Ana Karenina” from L. N. Tolstoy. Keep the focus on the actions of Ana Karenina and her relationship with her husband and her lover, without offering your opinion or judgement.</p> <p>Select two learners (male and female) who will take notes of the main opinions of the learners. The male should record the opinions of the female learners, and the female should record the opinions of the male learners.</p> <p>Discuss with your learners their opinions on the actions of Ana Karenina. Are her actions justifiable or not?</p> <p>In the end, let the note takers read their opinions. Discuss the differences that appear in the opinions of male and of female learners.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Albatross: is a nonverbal role-playing activity that can incorporate a variety of themes, such as male-female relationships and privilege. Participants are asked to watch a brief role-play and then describe what they saw. Most will interpret what they saw and begin to judge the characters in the role while only having seen, but not heard anything. This exercise provides a good example of how people give meaning to unique events based on their own experiences.</p>

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Case Study (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of gender in communication...

2.6. Culture and Communication

Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises open and respectful exchange between individuals, groups and organisations with different cultural backgrounds or world views. Among its aims are: to develop a deeper understanding of different perspectives and practices; to increase participation (or the freedom to make choices); to ensure equality; and to enhance creative processes.³

At the same time, lack of knowledge of another culture can lead, at the best, to embarrassing or amusing mistakes in communication. Individuals who deal with people from other cultures want to learn how to improve their performance through improving their communication skills.



It is important to shape one's practices to see beyond the stereotypical, the binary opposition, the simplification, the regularity and the expected, and look into the details, the discriminate interpretation, the personal and critical engagement, and the sensitiveness to the world's many representations. Through the exploration of other cultural identities, opportunities are provided to recognise points of similarity between cultures that may be hidden from view or not immediately apparent. The focus is on exploring where cultures meet and develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable interaction and negotiation between them. This process of coming to an understanding of others requires self-reflection and confrontation and deconstruction of sometimes deeply embedded stereotypical views. It challenges both learners and teachers to understand how views are constructed and to appreciate that views about oneself are constructed in relation to how we see others.

Communicating across cultures is challenging. And while some of the culture's knowledge, rules, beliefs, values, phobias, and anxieties are taught explicitly, most of the information is absorbed subconsciously.

All international communication is influenced by cultural differences. Even the choice of communication medium can have cultural overtones.

Teachers must be prepared to effectively facilitate learning for every individual learner, regardless of their cultural similarities or differences.

Educators, activists, and others must take a more active role in the re-examination of all educational practices and of how they affect the learning of all learners: assessment methods, pedagogies, psychology and counselling practices, educational materials and textbooks, etc.

³ Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe, <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/intercultural-dialogue.php> (12.11.2011)

Table 2.3: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Culture and Communication
Goal	Introducing and analysing the impact of cultural differences in communication
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation, Ecotonos: A Simulation for Collaborating Across Cultures
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	crayons, paper
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ecotonos breaks the usual stereotypes and barriers. Ecotonos can be used multiple times with the same people by selecting a new problem and different variables, with each replay offering new and different cross-cultural perspectives. <p>Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners form three groups and create their own cultures. - Participants begin to work in their monocultural groups - Then mix groups to continue the task multiculturally.

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 BAFA BAFA, Role Play (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of intercultural communication

2.7. Communication medium

People actually are becoming more social and more interactive with others, but the style of communication has changed so that we're not meeting face-to-face as often as we used to.

When a communication medium changes, our practices and experiences of communication also change. The technology of writing liberated human communication from the medium of face-to-face interaction. This change affected both the process and experience of communication, as persons no longer needed to be physically present to communicate with one another. The technology of the printing press further promoted the medium of writing by mechanizing the creation and distributing the written word. Thus began the new communication form of mass communication in pamphlets, newspapers, and cheap books, in contrast to the medium of handwritten documents and books. Most recently, the medium of digital technology has again been changing the process and experience of human communication.⁴



⁴ Paula S. Tompkins, *Practicing Communication Ethics: Development, Discernment, and Decision-Making*. Routledge, 2016

Some of the earlier methods used for communication were visual and audio in the form of gestures, sound and pictures/drawings. Technology today has transformed these sounds and gestures to produce speech, videos, films, posters and theatre. The evolution of different means has opened up a vast potential for communication. With a plethora of tools and methods to use, the communicator may find it difficult to choose an appropriate one.

Communication medium refers to the means of delivering and receiving data or information. The communication medium acts as a communication channel for linking various computing devices so that they may interact with each other.

The medium used to send a message may range from an individual's voice, writing, clothing, and body language to forms of mass communication such as television and the Internet.

Traditional mass media channels such as TV, radio and magazines, on the other hand, promote one-to-many communication. Contemporary communication media facilitate communication and data exchange among a large number of individuals across long distances via email, teleconferencing, Internet forums, etc.

It is relevant be aware of the categories visual media because professional adult educators have plenty occasions to use them; they include: pictures, puppets, drama, street plays and roles plays, audio cassettes, videos, broadcasting media and teleconferencing.⁵

- Telephone contact - requires good verbal skills and an awareness of voice tones as nonverbal communication.
- Letter - requires writing skills.
- E-mail - needs to be short and to the point, not get lost in clutter. May require frequent follow-up.
- News release - requires writing skills and cooperation of the media and time.

Table 2.4: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Communication medium
Goal	Presenting and analysing different types of communication media in adult education
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation,
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	crayons, paper,
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<p>Paper Folding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give everyone a sheet of paper. - Tell everyone to close their eyes and follow your instructions. - Start giving instructions about what to do with the piece of paper examples : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o fold it in half o fold the lower left corner over the upper right corner o turn it 90 degrees to the left o fold it again

⁵ Unesco, Learning Package on Participatory Adult Learning, Documentation and Information Networking (Paldin) Documentation Dissemination and Networking, Course 02, Unit 13

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ rip a half-circle in the middle of the right side etc....• Once you have given quite a few instructions (more than 10 at least for a great success), tell everyone to open their eyes and unfold their piece of paper.• Even though they all received the same instructions and had the same starting material, pretty much everyone will have a different result.- Repeat the exercise; now give them the same instruction through a picture/drawing.- Check and compare results. Discuss which medium is better suited for the transmission of the same information.
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Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
Case study (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
Analysis of texts addressing other issues of communication media

Topic 3: Communication Theory and Barriers in Communication

The third topic addresses the wider theme of Communication Theory, which can be observed from different angles and in different contexts. This topic also addresses the wider area of communication barriers. It has several specific sub-topics focused on different elements of the main topic and presented in the Guidelines with descriptions of learning goals and learning outcomes.

Educators have the freedom to decide the timeframe for realisation of every sub-topic, as well as the order of the sub-topics, according to the characteristics and the previous knowledge and experience of the learning group. Optimal time for implementation of this topic is 1 day.

The main purpose of this Topic is to understand Communication theory and communication barriers as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of forms and implementation, as well as its importance for effective communication.

Table 3: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic: **COMMUNICATION THEORY AND BARRIERS IN COMMUNICATION**

<p><i>Learning Goal:</i> Understand the meaning and importance of communication as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of: structure, organisation, key elements, principles and models of communication and development of communication skills for better learning and living together.</p> <p><i>General learning outcome:</i> After completing this topic, learners know the diversity and variety of forms of adult education and learning, understand basic functions of adult education and the importance of active participation in adult education.</p>		
Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
1. Communication theory	Introducing basic communication theories and their implications for the adult learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners know the essence and principles of basic theories of communication and can relate them to adult learning. - Learners are able to apply communication theories.
2. Barriers to Communication	Introducing barriers to communication and their implications for the communication process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners are able to recognize and explain barriers to communication. - Learners are able to prevent barriers in communication.

3.1. Communication theory

Theories provide an abstract understanding of the communication process. Most humanists believe that people have control over their behaviour; they believe that people make *conscious choices* to communicate to meet their goals. Theorists taking this stance are called pragmatists because they believe that people are practical and that they plan their behaviour. In short, pragmatists believe that human beings are not passive reactors to situations, but dynamic actors. Humanists, then, tend to focus on the choices that people make.

John Dewey's ideas on education, experience and communication constitute three main pillars of adult education and lifelong learning. Dewey considered education as a process of growing in meaning, social responsibility and maturity and said, "all genuine education comes about through experience." Experience gives meaning, a person can find multiple – even infinite meanings of a thing and use it accordingly. Meaning can also denote the consequences and relationships of events and things. Throughout their lives, people seek to understand their worlds, and share (communicate) their meanings. Education and communication thus imply a social and historical process of having shared meanings and purposes. According to Dewey's philosophy, education, communication and experience constitute a triad in a democratic environment and serve to maintain a culture's continuity. Education, communication and experience are thus powerful tools in mobilizing a community towards lifelong learning and towards social transformation. Dewey also provides us the main elements of his democratic ideal which consists of (a) existence of genuine shared purposes within the members of an organisation or a community; (b) freedom to communicate with one another, and with other groups; and (c) genuine educative experiences, which promote personal and social growth.⁶



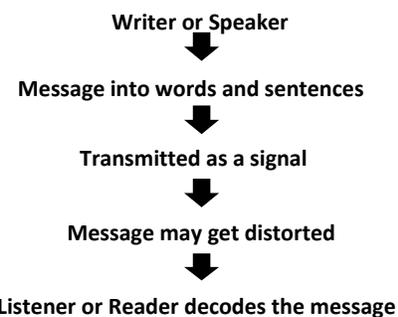
For Paulo Freire, verbalism is an empty word, which means words without action. According to him, transformation cannot happen with action alone, it requires reflection as well. Transformation based on pure activism is impossible, because without reflection, there can be no commitment to transformation, it would be an empty action. Transformation requires praxis, which is action and reflection. It is praxis, alone which enables transformation to take place.⁷



Freire (1972: 62) held that 'Dialogue cannot exist without humility'. You cannot dialogue if you place yourself above another, seeing yourself as the owner of truth. Dialogue requires faith in humanity. "Faith is an a priori requirement for dialogue." For Freire (1972: 63-72), "Founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence". Dialogue further requires hope in order to exist. "Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it". Finally, a 'true dialogue cannot exist unless it involves critical thinking'. 'Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication, there can be no true education.'⁸

The Basic Communication theory

Mathematical theory of communication is a very influential theory and is called electronic theory of communication. This idea emphasizes the technical problems of transmitting a



⁶ Unesco, Learning Package on Participatory Adult Learning, Documentation and Information Networking (Paldin) Documentation Dissemination and Networking, Course 01, Unit 4

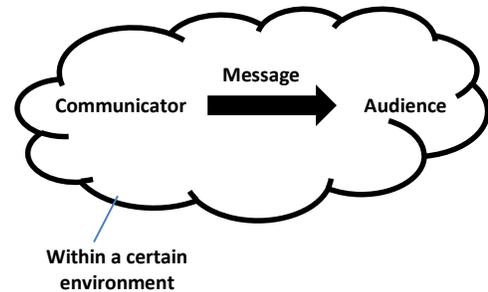
⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

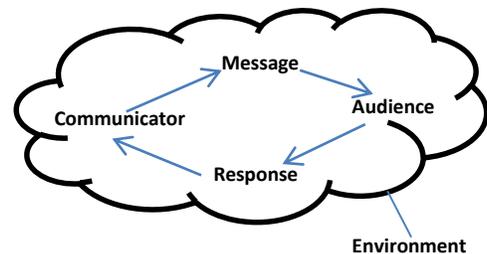
message from a sender to a receiver and possible interference. It uses the language of electronics. The message begins with an information source, the mind of the sender who encodes a message into words and sentences. The message is transmitted as a signal through a channel, where it may be distorted by noise.

As a last step, the receiver (listener or reader) decodes the message. This theory introduces the ideas of senders and receivers and of possible interference. It emphasizes one important aspect of communication: accuracy. Its usefulness is limited. One may express an idea very accurately, but other may think he does not have the right to talk.

Social environment theory of communication is of the social and behavioural scientists. It says that we must consider the situation, the social context in which we will work. When we work and communicate together, we all participate in a social situation, within that situation; each agrees to assume certain roles - such as "compromiser," "initiator," "or "encourager" - based on our part in the activity. We each have a certain status prescribed officially, such as our job title. We need to understand the rules, or the "culture," of the environment in order to communicate: both the official rules - such as company policies and practices - and those unwritten rules regarding to whom, how, and when, and for how long it is appropriate for us to communicate within a certain organisation. Within a certain environment, Social environment theory is helpful because it adds the important dimension of the specific social situation. A nicely tailored message may still fail to achieve its objective if you write to the wrong person at the wrong time.



Rhetorical theory of communication is based on the available means of persuasion. It says that communication process is not linear but circular. Communication is not just sending a message to be received, but producing a response. That is, a speaker who is interested in persuading his or her audience should consider three rhetorical proofs: logical, emotional, and ethical. Audiences are key to effective persuasion as well. Rhetorical syllogism, requiring audiences to supply missing pieces of a speech, are also used in persuasion.



Communication Accommodation Theory examines the underlying motivations and consequences of what happens when two speakers shift their communication styles. Communication Accommodation theorists argue that during communication, people will try to accommodate or adjust their style of speaking to others. This is done in two ways: divergence and convergence. Groups with strong ethnic or racial pride often use divergence to highlight group identity. Convergence occurs when there is a strong need for social approval, frequently from powerless individuals.

Social Exchange Theory argues that the major force in interpersonal relationships is the satisfaction of both people's self-interest. Theorists in Social Exchange posit that self-interest is not necessarily a bad thing and that it can actually enhance relationships. The Social Exchange approach views interpersonal exchange posit that self-interest is not necessarily a bad thing and that it can actually enhance relationships. The Social Exchange approach views interpersonal exchanges as analogous to economic exchanges where people are satisfied when they receive a fair return on their expenditures.

Social Judgement theory⁹ states that you have a statement or message and you accept it or reject it based on your cognitive map. You accept or reject a message based on one's own ego-involvement and if it falls within their latitude of acceptance.

Constructivism¹⁰ argues that the people who are cognitively complex in their perceptions of others have a greater capacity for sophisticated communication that will achieve positive outcomes. They can employ a rhetorical message design logic that creates person-centred message that simultaneously pursues multiple communication goals.

Constructivism allows for multiple truths depending on both the abilities of the communicator and receiver in creating and understanding cognitively complex messages. Some people have the ability to act (humanistic) using rhetorical design logic while others are forced to react (scientific) through the use of either expressive or conventional design logic. This theory is value-conscious because while it recognizes the capacity for value influence, it does not subscribe to any particular patterns.

Those who are more cognitively complex in their formation of messages are more capable of achieving their interpersonal communication goals. These people are also better suited for interpreting messages in a clearer manner.

Table 3.1: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Communication theory
Goal	Introducing communication theories and their implications for the adult learning process.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation,
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	crayons, paper,
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	Teacher will be responsible for facilitating a lesson that showcases a specific communication theory and principle. During this time learners will be responsible for (a) explaining the major tenets of the communication theory and principles, (b) applying the theory and principles to real-life communication and group communication, (c) discussing how the theory informs research and practice, and (d) engaging learners in an interactive way to enhance understanding of the theory.

Didactic suggestions
 This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Case study (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of communication theory...

⁹ Sherif, M., & Hovland, C.I. (1961). *Social Judgement*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

¹⁰ Delia, J. O'Keefe, B., & O'Keefe, D. (1982). The constructivist approach to communication. *Human Communication Theory*. New York: Harper and Row, 147-91.

3.2. Barriers to Communication

General types of barriers to effective communication:

– Language barriers

Even during one language communication, the terminology used in the message can become a barrier for proper and full understanding by the learners. If a message contains a large number of specific phrases, abbreviations or professional terminology, there is a risk that it will not be understood by the learners who are not familiar with the terminology used. Sometime, the use of local or regional dialects or phrases can be misconstrued or even regarded as offensive.



Speaking unclearly, too quietly or too loudly, existence of differences or difficulties in understanding unfamiliar accents or use of jargon can all be serious barriers to communication.

– Emotional barriers

Some people may have difficulties expressing their emotions, and particular topics may cause them to feel uneasy.

The psychological condition of the communicators affects how the message is sent, received and understood. For example, if a learner is under stress, irritable, sad, angry or preoccupied with personal problems, then s/he will not be receptive to a given message, or her/his receptiveness would differ from the situation when s/he would not be in this psychological state. In addition, learners with low self-esteem can be less intrusive and as such may not feel comfortable in that communication. Such people are often shy and hide their emotional state and in some case are prone to reading negative subtexts into the messages sent to them.



– Different backgrounds

All learners are not the same. They can differ, among other things, in their educational, experiential, religious, gender and social background. These differences make the task of the teachers when transmitting messages to them more difficult. Dilemmas focus on the question how can the content of one single message be transmitted so that all receivers can accept it and understand its real meaning despite of the differences that exist between them.

– Lack of attention, interest or diverting the receiver's attention

Adult education is largely conditioned on the learners' level of motivation for learning. If the motivation for learning is low, then so is the willingness of adults to take part in learning. They will display poor attention to and interest in what is being transmitted as message to them. Such individuals are prone to attention distractions.

Sometimes, their attention can be distracted because of certain social links, such as an important event that preoccupies their attention at a particular moment.

Decreased interest and poor attention can also be caused by the sender of the message. If the message is not well chosen, if it is poorly formatted or sent through the wrong channel, then it can cause drop in the receivers' interest and attention.

- **Wrong choice of medium**

There is an appropriate medium for each message, through which it can best achieve its objective. If the message is coded and sent through a medium that is inappropriate for the receiver, then the message cannot be decoded and cannot achieve the desired objective. An example of incorrect choice of medium is the use of Internet with receivers who are not familiar with this medium.

- **Differences in perception and viewpoint**

Differences in perception and viewpoint can result from different experiences, attitudes, culture and values between the sender and the receiver of the message.

- **Physical disability**

The communication flow can be disrupted if the receiver of the message has hearing problems or speech impediments. Modern technological innovations can help overcome this communication barrier.

- **Physical barriers**

A number of physical barriers can obstruct communication, primarily inappropriate working conditions in the room where the process of education is carried out arising from factors such as small room, poor lighting, unadjusted temperature, presence of noise, events of objects that divert the attention, geographic distance between the sender and the receiver, etc.



Although modern technology is often used to decrease the impact of physical barriers, the advantages and disadvantages of each communication channel should be carefully reviewed in order for the most appropriate one to be selected, one that among other things helps eliminate physical barriers.

- **Physical barriers to non-verbal communication**

Often, inability to notice non-verbal signs, gestures, body posture and body language can render communication less effective. This is a major shortcoming of communication transpiring through some indirect channels, such as telephone or written texts.

- **Expectations and prejudice**

Different expectations from the effects of communication or the overall learning can lead receivers to wrong assumptions or stereotypes. People often hear what they expect to hear, and not what is being said, which may lead them to wrong conclusions.

- **Cultural differences**

Norms of social interaction vary greatly in different cultures, and so do the ways in which people express emotions.

Table 3.2: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Barriers to Communication
Goal	Introducing barriers to communication and their implications for the communication process.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation,
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	whiteboard, crayons, pen and paper for each learner,
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Split the group into teams of 3 or 4 people. - Each team is asked to come up with a practical solution in removing listening obstacles such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o People working in isolated office or environment o Dealing with a customer who talks too much o Working in a noisy workplace o Dealing with a frustrated client o Dealing with visual distractions at workplace - Each team has 10 minutes to come up with at least one solution for each scenario. - At the end of the activity, one representative from each team writes down their ideas on the board and explains how his or her team came up with the solutions.

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 ZIN obelisk (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of communication theory...

Topic 4: Principles of Communication

The fourth topic addresses the wider theme of Basic Principles of Communication, which can be observed from different angles and in different contexts. This topic also addresses specific principles of Effective Verbal Communication. Specific sub-topics are focused on different elements of the main topic and presented in the Guidelines with descriptions of learning goals and learning outcomes.

Educators have the freedom to decide the timeframe for realisation of every sub-topic, as well as the order of the sub-topics, according to the characteristics and the previous knowledge and experience of the learning group.

The main purpose of this topic is to understand principles of communication and methods for Effective Verbal Communication as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of forms and implementation, as well as its importance for effective learning and personal development.

Table 4: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic: **PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION**

<i>Learning Goal:</i> Understanding the meaning and importance of principles of Communication as an integral part of adult education and development of communication skills for better learning and living together.		
<i>General learning outcome:</i> After completing this topic, learners know the diversity and variety of principles of communication and can implement them in active participation in adult education.		
Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
5. Basic Principles of Communication	Introducing and analysing the basic principles of interpersonal communication	Learners know the essence of the basic principles of interpersonal communication and can relate them to adult learning
6. Principles of Effective Verbal Communication	Introducing and analysing the principles of effective verbal communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learners are able to recognize and explain principles of effective verbal communication. – Learners have competences for effective verbal communication.

4.1. Basic Principles of Communication

Several principles underpin interpersonal communication, including the following:

- interpersonal communication is inevitable,
- interpersonal communication is an irreversible process,
- interpersonal communication is complicated,
- interpersonal communication is contextual.

The first principle points out that interpersonal communication is inevitable and consists of more than the word, and pertains also to the tone of voice, the gestures, body language and posture, facial expression and similar.



The second principle indicates that interpersonal communication is an irreversible process, and the impact of this principle is inevitable. The transmitted statement can be supplemented, augmented, corrected, denied or affirmed, but it can never be taken back from where it was sent or erased as if it had never existed.

The third principle highlights the complexity of communication. Due to the great number of variables involved in the process of interpersonal communication, it is a complicated and complex process. A message that is being transmitted offers more than one way for its interpretation and understanding and as a rule the one being selected is the one that creates the least damage.

The fourth principle specifies the contextuality of interpersonal communication and dismisses the possibility that it is carried out in isolation. It indicates that interpersonal communication always includes relational context, situational context, psychological context, cultural context and environmental context.

In addition to these primary principles, educational work with adults must take into account the following ones as well:

- completeness,
- conciseness,
- deliberateness,
- concreteness,
- clarity,
- politeness,
- correctness,
- interaction, and
- dynamism

The message that is sent to adult learners is complete only when it contains all the facts they need to demonstrate the action that the teacher expects. It is of importance which and what kind of message is being sent, to whom and in what way. It should be kept in mind that each adult learner is strongly influenced by her/his needs, attitudes, emotions, status, origin and culture, among other things. In order to maintain the completeness of the message, the teacher must take into account to always answer questions posed and to provide additional messages and/or information if s/he considers it necessary or if anybody requires it.

Conciseness in communication ensures time saving for both teacher and adult learners. By eliminating unnecessary words, the teacher will manage to single out those ideas that s/he wishes to transmit and to highlight their importance. Care should be taken to avoid unnecessary repetitions and include messages that are relevant for the adult learners.

Deliberateness of the message refers to the prior preparation and the change of the role of the teacher. S/he should put her/himself in the shoes of the learners and assume or imagine how they, with all their prior knowledge, prejudice, desires, problems, particular circumstances and emotions will react to the respective message. Then s/he should assess how to deal with their reactions. The message can in such a case be modified, amended, supplemented or erased.

Concreteness in the communication requires the message to be precise, defined and realistic, rather than general, vague or unclear.

Clarity: The teacher wants the adult learner to interpret her/his words and messages with the same meaning that s/he had planned. For that to happen, the words and messages need to be formulated in such a way as to ensure that the adult learner understands what the teacher is attempting to transmit. Given that all adult learners have different experiences, words and messages often have different meanings to different learners. This renders the application of this principle exceptionally challenging. To avoid such difficulties, the teacher should opt for choosing short and familiar words, constructing effective sentences, ensuring that the message is easy to understand, read and listen to, and incorporating examples, illustrations and other aids, as necessary.

Politeness helps strengthen the bond between the teacher and the adult learner. It should be authentic, rather than a mere mechanical courtesy. To this end, in addition to being sincere in the communication, the teachers should also display tact and care; s/he should use praise, when necessary, and avoid phrases that irritate, hurt or demean adult learners.

In order to implement the principle of correctness, the teacher should not only take due care of the proper grammatical and orthographic formulation of the message. A message can be grammatically correct but can still cause annoyance or insult among adult learners. Hence, the teacher should pay attention to the linguistic register, using phrases that are neither too easy nor too difficult, should ensure that s/he uses only correct facts, words and demonstrations and should refrain from using discriminatory phrases.

The teacher needs to ensure interaction instead of a process of direct transfer of the message. Handing out assignments who should do what, or mere listening on the part of the adult learners is not sufficient. The adult learner should not be put into a position of a passive recipient of the message. Interaction should facilitate the processing of the message, exchange of ideas, thoughts, understanding, etc. between the teacher and the learners and among the learners themselves. Interaction also decreases the insecurity of adult learners.

The teacher should demonstrate dynamism, enthusiasm, involvement and flexibility in the communication with different adult learners and in different contexts.

Table 4.1: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

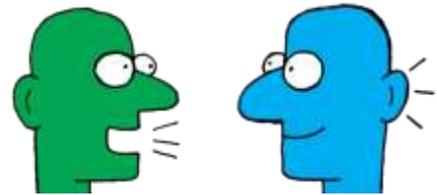
Sub-topic	Basic Principles of Communication
Goal	Introducing and analysing the basic principles of interpersonal communication
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation,
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	Whiteboard, crayons, pen and paper for each learner
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	The teacher will be responsible for facilitating a lesson that showcases a basic principle of interpersonal communication. During this time learners will be responsible for (a) explaining the major tenets of the principles of communication, (b) applying the principles to real-life and group communication, (c) discussing how the principle informs research and practice, and (d) engaging learners in an interactive way to enhance understanding of the principle of communication.

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
ZIN obelisk (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
Analysis of texts addressing other issues of the principles of communication...

4.2. Principles of Effective Verbal Communication

Having your own opinion. Be firm in the protection of your rights and needs. Undervaluing yourself, you encourage others to undervalue you as well. Emphasise your rights and expect others to respect them. Do not quit, pose questions, summarise and paraphrase.



Focusing on the problem, and not the person. Do not take everything personally and express only your own opinions and needs. It is better to focus on solving the problem than to criticise and/or control the others.

Criticising. Always be positive when you give or receive criticism. It should result from your careful listening, analysing and clarifying and not from your instinctive reaction. If the interlocutor accepts the criticism you are giving with difficulty and reacts emotionally, try to empathise with her/him and use more moderate language.

The ability to accept criticism is a virtue and skill; if the criticism is correct and well ascertained, it will enable you to correct your behaviour. You can only learn from it.

Being cooperative instead of manipulative. Be what you are - sincere and open for communication with others. Try to demonstrate a desire for collaboration, but maintain your identity and integrity.

Sending "I" messages. Do not hesitate to express your feelings clearly but also moderately. In this way, you will show the effect a certain action has had on you. Do not blame or insult anyone, and do not overwhelm the communication with your feelings.

Coexisting instead of existing separately. Although relations between adult learners are marked with certain boundaries regarding their interaction, it is important to show sensitivity to others. If you do not show care and readiness to coexist, then they will not show it back.

Rejecting. Show your disagreement and rejection clearly when unreasonable demands are made to you. Acceptance, in spite of your internal disagreement, can lead you to a trap - not to be able to fulfil what is being asked of you, or to fulfil it at the cost of your inner discomfort. The refusal should be clear and decisive and should not be accompanied by too many explanations, excuses or apologies. Offer other possible solutions.

Being flexible. Be open to other ideas, opinions and viewpoints. Multitude of different approaches to and ways of resolving problems enhances creativity and innovation.

Presenting yourself as equal and not as superior. Even when you are in position to show your superiority, focus on what you and the others can contribute together to the issue.

Using affirmative answers. Respond to others by fully respecting their experience. Thank them for their contribution and affirm their right to their own feelings, even if you disagree. Ask questions.

Using feedback. Use feedback so that the interlocutor can be sure that you have understood her/him well. Maybe because of certain barriers in the course of the communication, the interlocutor did not hear you well or you misunderstood her/him. If the communication continues without feedback, misunderstandings can arise or it can be disrupted, go into a different direction or even terminate. Feedback has a motivating and also corrective effect. It not only enhances communication, but also controls it so that it is not interrupted, and possibly rectifies it.

Proper feedback requires that we commend and explain what is good about a participant, focusing, among other things on what s/he has done, achieved or said. Such specific statements are necessary also in situations when a participant is criticised or assessed. In such cases, the goal of the feedback is to enable the participant to realize and correct her/his own mistakes. For this purpose, feedback is provided in the following form: "I believe that you can achieve better results..." or "All this is encouraging, but we should take into account also..." or "Maybe we should hear the opinions of one or two more people on this question..." or "I propose that you consider once again..." "It would be good if you worked a little bit more on this question..."

You get verbal feedback, what people say, and non-verbal feedback, what their body language and actions tell you.

We can distinguish different types of feedback:

Confirmatory feedback: The recipient of the information simply acknowledges the receipt of the information.

Corrective/affirmative feedback: A corrective feedback either provides correction to the statement or agrees with it.

Explanatory feedback: Apart from confirming and affirming the statement, the person provides reason to her/his opinion or view.

Diagnostic feedback: Provides clarification on the subject although it may not always be logical or right.

Elaborative feedback: Include reference to personal experiences, studies or researches – and other information that can enlighten the discussion.

Principles of Effective Feedback:

Clarity: Feedback should be clear and easily understandable.

Promptness: Feedback should be provided as early as possible after getting the message.

Validity: Feedback must be reliable and valid in order to make it effective

Solicited: Feedback is most effective when it is solicited rather than volunteered.

Table 4.2: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Principles of Effective Verbal Communication
Goal	Introducing and analysing the principles of effective verbal communication
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	Whiteboard, crayons, paper
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<p>Eyewitnesses</p> <p>This exercise shows how a story changes or gets distorted depending on the teller. How the activity plays out confirms research that indicates eyewitnesses to crimes view events filtered through their own past experiences rather than with an objective eye.</p> <p>Prepare for this role-playing exercise by typing up the following story so you can project it on screen at the end of the activity:</p> <p>'A southbound truck was turning right while a northbound sports car was attempting to turn left. When the two drivers figured out they were trying to turn into the same lane, they both honked but continued to turn without slowing down. In fact, the sports car seemed to speed up just before the crash.'</p> <p>Send four witnesses and a "police officer" out of the room and then read the scenario above to a witness in the room, who is not allowed to take notes. Witnesses outside the room should have no knowledge of the story. Call in one of the witnesses from outside the room and ask the witness who has just heard the story to tell it to the second witness. After this, call in a third witness and ask the second to tell the story to the third. Continue until all the witnesses have heard the story. Finally ask the police officer to come in and record information from the last witness on a white board or chalkboard, if possible. Compare the story the police officer records to the original story. Ask participants and observers to describe how they felt during this exercise. Discuss what conclusions they have drawn from this activity.</p>

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 Drama, (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of principles of communication

Topic 5: Communication Methods and Techniques

The fifth topic addresses the wider theme of Communication Methods and Techniques, which can be observed from different angles and in different contexts. It has four specific sub-topics: active listening, group discussion, communication spoilers and communication and conflict solving, focused on different elements of the main topic and presented in the Guidelines with descriptions of learning goals and learning outcomes.

Educators have the freedom to decide the timeframe for realisation of every sub-topic, as well as the order of the sub-topics, according to the characteristics and the previous knowledge and experience of the learning group.

The main purpose of this topic is to understand the communication methods and techniques as an important part of the communication process and its diversity in the terms of forms and implementation, as well as its importance for effective learning and personal development.

Table 5: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic:

COMMUNICATION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Learning Goal: Understanding the meaning and importance of different communication methods and techniques as an important part of adult education and its diversity in the terms of: structure, organisation, key elements, principles and models of communication and development of communication skills for better learning and living together.

General learning outcome: After completing this topic, learners will know the diversity and variety of communication methods and techniques, be able to use a variety of methods and communication techniques in adult education.

Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
1. Active listening	Explaining the main characteristics of active listening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learners know the main characteristics of active listening can relate them to adult learning. – Learners are able to assess and articulate appropriate listening responses for a variety of communication situations/contexts. – Learners are active listeners.
2. Group discussion	Introducing and analysing group discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learners have competences for group discussion.
3. Communication spoilers	Detecting and analysing communication spoilers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learners know the main communication spoilers
4. Communication and conflict solving	Introducing theories and strategies for conflict management and negotiation across contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learners are able to manage conflict situations in the communication process.

In communicating with adult learners, use the most appropriate communications method. One way to do this is to ask yourself the following questions.

- What is the purpose of your message? Do you plan to say something new? Inform? Do you plan to change her/his view? Persuade?
- What facts must be presented in order to achieve your desired effect?
- What action, if any, do you expect her/him to take?
- What general ideas, opinions and conclusions must be stressed?
- Are you thoroughly familiar with all the important information?
- Which method, or combination of methods, will work most effectively for this situation?
Personal contact - requires scheduling, time and interpersonal skills.

5.1 Active listening

In order for verbal communication to be carried out efficiently, active listening is as necessary as speaking. Listening is one of the most important skills that communication participants should possess. With the help of listening, we receive the message addressed to us, we can understand it and send feedback.



If our active listening skills are developed, we can comprehend what the interlocutor is saying to us, to show understanding, to control our emotions and to respond to the messages we have received. Active listening is important for adult education since it facilitates, among other things, additional (self) motivation, mutual understanding, empathy and building of trust among the communication participants.

Active listening stands contrary to selective or passive listening and encompasses: focusing the attention on the sender of the message, putting oneself in the interlocutor's situation, decoding and understanding the message in the way suggested by the interlocutor, memorising and interpretation.

The person who listens actively:

- **Establishes eye contact** with the interlocutor making it clear to her/him that s/he is listening carefully.
- **Shows interest.** S/he demonstrates to the interlocutor that what the latter is saying is important to her/him and that at the moment it is what the attention is focused on.
- **Follows her/his non-verbal language**, i.e. pays attention to and registers the signals that the interlocutor sends in order to enrich her/his spoken message (hand movements, position of body parts, voice pitch and tone, pauses in the speech, facial expressions).
- **Provides feedback gestures.** By a simple nod of the head, satisfied facial expression, hand movement or slight forward leaning of the body, we show to the interlocutor that we understand what s/he is saying and we support it.
- **Does not interrupt the speaker** in order to criticise or present her/his own views.

- **Poses questions.** Questions should be posed when the listener did not hear the interlocutor well or something is not clear. Otherwise, the interlocutor may think that her/his messages were clear and well understood by the listener.
- **Paraphrases and concludes.** Paraphrasing is useful for retaining the focus and intensity of the communication. If a learner says “I find this difficult to learn”, the teacher should conclude “You need more effort to learn this” and paraphrase. The feedback sent clearly tells the interlocutor that we are actively listening and motivating her/him to say what it important. In such a communication, it is very important not to make judgements upfront, such as “I don’t believe that it is difficult” or “So you are not capable of learning this”. Such feedback can demotivate and render the interlocutor passive.
- **Talks about feelings.** No verbal communication is devoid of feelings. Feelings can be triggered directly (by the message content, the attitude of the interlocutor, barriers in the communication channel) or indirectly (by prejudice, personal problems, physical or medical condition, etc.). It is not advisable to talk about feelings during the communication, and especially in the presence of other persons. In such a case, the interlocutor may feel hurt or ashamed and as a result may terminate the communication. It is best to talk alone after the completion of the communication. Thus we show compassion, respect the person’s dignity and build trust.
- **Uses “I” messages.** The “I” message is a sincere and personal statement that a person uses in a situation when the interlocutor displays feelings caused by some inappropriate behaviour. An example for such a message is: “You have not learned this well and I am concerned that it will be difficult for you to do it in practice!”, or “You are nervous when you talk about this topic. Yes, I sometimes get nervous about it too”. By using “I” messages, we help the interlocutor to fully and freely open up, thus advancing the communication.

The active listener must take care:

- to listen more and talk less;
- to show with his/her body language that he/she is an interested and attentive listener;
- not to listen selectively;
- not to answer questions with other questions;
- not to finish other people’s sentences;
- not to wander with her/his thoughts while others talk;
- to give emotional support;
- not to dominate the discussion;
- not to interrupt others until they finish what they are saying;
- to give feedback;
- not to cut in while other speak;
- to analyse and summarise what was said;
- to lead the discussion within the context of what was said;
- to paraphrase;
- to use “I” messages.

Techniques for Active Listening

Focusing. Focus on the interlocutors, their thoughts and feelings. Suppress your inner commentary, your problems and think only about the interlocutor; focus your full attention on her/him.

Body language. Lean with your body slightly forward, make eye contact and give non-verbal signals which send the message to the interlocutor that you are listening attentively and are interested in what s/he is saying.

Observing. Pay attention to the non-verbal messages sent by the interlocutor and “catch them”. Do not miss anything. Identify the body language and the non-verbal signs so that you can understand the interlocutor’s point.

Listening fully and not in fragments. Hear the essence of the spoken message, its details, main ideas it carries and their meaning. Try to understand fully what the interlocutor is conveying to you. Do not react to single words, terms or phrases the interlocutor uses. Otherwise, you might miss the essence of the message.

Paraphrasing. To avoid repetition of what has already been said, you need to paraphrase and stress the most important parts. Take care that you don’t step outside the basic idea of the interlocutor.

Expressing empathy. Put yourself and imagine how you would feel in their situation. Try to understand them. Verbalise the emotional content but do not allow to be fully drawn into all their problems and responsibilities they face.

Posing questions. Use questions to clarify the understanding of the message. By asking questions you show that you are interested in what is being said.

Table 5.1: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Active listening
Goal	Explaining the main characteristics of active listening
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation, active listening
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	Whiteboard, crayons, paper
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	This technique is an excellent way of ensuring that participants listen to each other and can help move the group toward consensus by reducing misunderstandings and clarifying the rationale of various participants. The technique is especially useful when opinions in a group are sharply divided. A participant on one side of the debate states his case. A participant on the other side of the debate then summarizes, in her/his own words, what the first participant said. The first participant then comments on the summary, correcting any errors, misunderstandings, or omissions. There are variations of the technique, with one example being: for 5 minutes A talks, B listens (no discussion); for 2 minutes B summarizes, A listens (no discussion); for 1 minute A corrects, B listens (no discussion).

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
Pair work (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
Analysis of texts addressing other issues of active listening...

5.2 Group discussion

Group discussion is a form of an interactive systematic verbal exchange of information, attitudes and opinions on any given topic, problem or situation between members of a group who share some common goals. It helps develop better perspectives on questions for which different opinions exist. Confrontation of different opinions and viewpoints about one problem leads to the emergence of a much clearer picture, the problem becomes clearer and “exposed”, which in turn leads to better understanding. Simply stated, the purpose of a group discussion is the discussion about a specific topic and/or problem in details. It can pertain to a communication situation, which allows the participants to express their attitudes and opinions and share them with the other participants.

Group discussion is a structured exchange of ideas. Each participant has the opportunity to express her/his opinion and make comments on the opinions of the other members of the group. The group members should listen to each other carefully and use verbal expression and gestures, clear language and a convincing style.



Group discussion is characterised by a specific group dynamics, which entails interaction in the communication one on one and group with a group. Each member of the group should develop goal oriented or group oriented interaction.

Group discussion also helps in the processes of problem solving, decision making and personality assessment. In every problem solving situation, perceptions of different participants are reviewed and possible solutions proposed. The best option should be selected by the group. Until a decision is made, all questions are discussed openly, analysed, interpreted and evaluated.

Characteristics of group discussion

For a group discussion to be successful, it is necessary that the achievement of the goal is of crucial importance.

It is characterised by:

Existence of a clear goal: Participants should be familiar with the goal of the group discussion so that they can concentrate and contribute actively to its achievement. As a rule, the goal of group discussion is explained by the teacher or the one making the proposal. In adult education, any participant can make a proposal.

Motivation: When there is high level of motivation among the members, the discussion is fruitful and the members of the group put the interests of the group above their own interests.

Rules: Before the discussion begins, the teacher and participants set the rules. They decide how they will organise the presentation of individual opinions, how the exchange of opinions will be carried out, and how consensus will be reached. If they fail to do so, it can happen that some of the members of the group impose their own rules and dominate, making the entire discussion pointless.

Cordial atmosphere: Group discussion should occur in a collaborative and friendly atmosphere in order to avoid confrontation between the group members.

Communication skills: The success of the group discussion depends on the efficient use of communication techniques. Clear speech, use of simple language, maintenance of the focus on the discussion and tolerance are preconditions for group discussion, as for any other verbal communication. Non-verbal language is an integral element of group discussion and should be given due attention to, especially body language.

Involvement: It is necessary for all members in the group discussion to take active part; the teacher should not only encourage them, but they should also encourage one another.

Guidance skills: The teacher should possess diverse skills necessary for successful realisation of the group discussion, such as organisational abilities, initiative, logical presentation, ability to encourage, ability to summarise the discussion.

Table 5.2: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Group discussion
Goal	Introducing and analysing group discussion.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	Whiteboard, crayons, paper,
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	You can hand out a set of cards with 15 (personality) values written on them and given to each person. Then, have each learner order them by priority, and discard five, and then discard 5 more. Then, they can discuss in groups of 5-7 what their remaining 5 are and how they relate to their own views of project management. Each group can report to the whole group. Share motivators, group discussion, communication styles.

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 BUZZ techniques (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
 Analysis of texts addressing other issues of group discussion

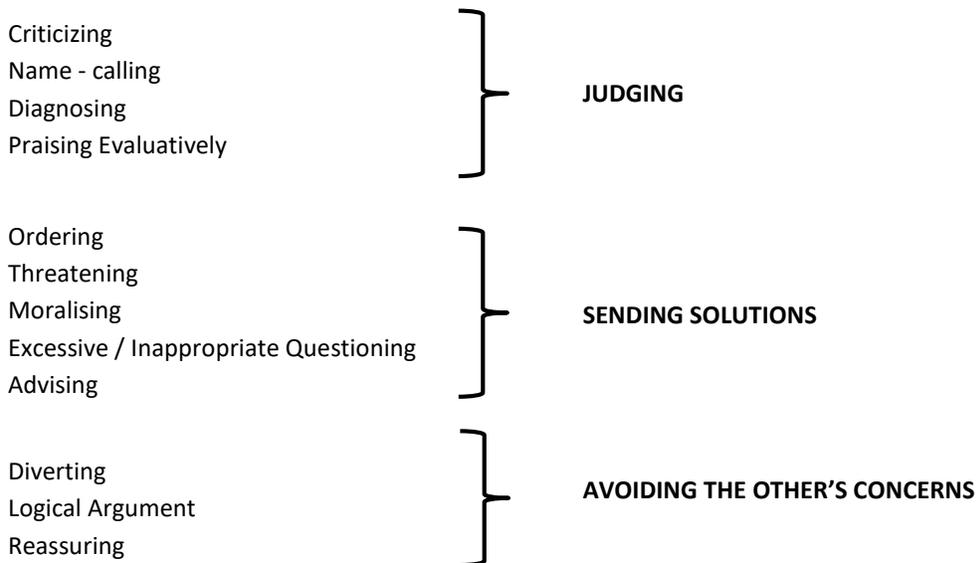
5.3 Communication spoilers

Sometimes in the course of a communication, certain communicators introduce different elements, that through their “hidden messages” can adversely affect the motivation of the interlocutor, cause tension or even disrupt the communication itself. These elements can be introduced into the communication consciously, but most frequently occur unconsciously.



Certain ways of verbalizing carry a high risk of putting a damper on the conversation, being harmful to the relationship, triggering feelings of inadequacy, anger, or dependency in the other person, or all of these things. As a result of one or more roadblocks, the others may become more submissive and compliant. Or they may become more resistant, rebellious, and argumentative. These barriers to conversation tend to diminish the others’ self-esteem and to undermine motivation. Roadblocks are prevalent in our culture; they are used in over 90 per cent of the conversations where one or both persons have a problem or a strong need.¹¹

Thomas Gordon devised a comprehensive list that he calls the “dirty dozen” of communication spoilers. These undesirable responses include:¹²



According to: Thomas Gordon

Criticizing: Making a negative evaluation of the other person, her/his actions, or attitudes. “You brought it on yourself—you’ve got nobody else to blame for the mess you are in.”

¹¹ Robert Bolton, Ph.D. (2009): People Skills, A Touchstone Book, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, p. 62

¹² Ibid, pp. 46-57

Name-calling: “Putting down” or stereotyping the other person “What a dope!” “Just like a woman...” “Egghead.” “You hardhats are all alike.” “You are just another insensitive male.”

Diagnosing: Analysing why a person is behaving as s/he is; playing amateur psychiatrist. “I can read you like a book—you are just doing that to irritate me.” “Just because you went to college, you think you are better than I.”

Praising evaluatively: Making a positive judgment of the other person, her/his actions, or attitudes. “You are always such a good girl. I know you will help me with the lawn tonight.” Teacher to teenage learner: “You are a great poet.”

Ordering: Commanding the other person to do what you want to have done. “Do your homework right now.” “Why?! Because I said so...”

Threatening: Trying to control the other’s actions by warning of negative consequences that you will instigate. “You’ll do it or *else* ...” “Stop that noise right now or I will keep the whole class after school.”

Moralizing: Telling another person what s/he *should* do. “Preaching” at the other. “You shouldn’t get a divorce; think of what will happen to the children.” “You ought to tell him you are sorry.”

Excessive/Inappropriate questioning: Closed-ended questions are often barriers in a relationship; these are those that can usually be answered in a few words— often with a simple yes or no. “When did it happen?” “Are you sorry that you did it?”

Advising: Giving the other person a solution to her/his problems. “If I were you, I’d sure tell him off.” “That’s an easy one to solve. First ...”

Diverting: Pushing the other’s problems aside through distraction. “Don’t dwell on it, Sarah. Let’s talk about something more pleasant.” Or; “Think you’ve got it bad?! Let me tell you what happened to me.”

Logical argument: Attempting to convince the other with an appeal to facts or logic, usually without consideration of the emotional factors involved. “Look at the facts; if you hadn’t bought that new car, we could have made the down payment on the house.”

Reassuring: Trying to stop the other person from feeling the negative emotions s/he is experiencing. “Don’t worry, it is always darkest before the dawn.” “It will all work out OK in the end.”

Alleviation of the adverse effects of “communication spoilers” requires communicators to possess skills for their prevention and skills for their elimination should they appear. For this, it is necessary for them to be able to identify communication spoilers and to efficiently deal with them. In order to avoid unpleasant situations cause by “spoilers”, we need to approach the emerging issue through constructive problem solving, for example though the following actions¹³:

- Remain calm, emotionless, and maintain control over oneself and the situation;
- Revisit the goal of the conversation, the facts and the content;

¹³ Šefika Alibabić; Katarina Popović; Emir Avdagić. *Andragogic Manual for Working with Adults, dvv international – Skopje Office, 2013*

- Clarify rationally and with precision, provide additional information;
- Be sincere and open in presenting and explaining;
- Demonstrate self-criticism, full acceptance, acknowledgement;
- Express positive energy, kindness, encouragement of the interlocutor;
- Express empathy, compassion, understanding, identification with the others;
- Encourage changing the roles (both ways - Myself in your place... You in my place...);
- Demonstrate manners, adherence to defined standards of conduct;
- Express praise, support, compliment, possible acceptance of the others;
- Show humour, laughter!
- Call for and reiterate professionalism and professional standards;
- Display silence, complete ignoring; (Ignoring of the “silent voice”)
- Leave the situation entirely;
- Use carefully chosen “killer of killers”, if that seems to have good chances of “killing” the conflict that is emerging;
- By decreasing the tension, deflect and minimise the problem;
- Go to extremes, make non-harmful parody;
- Be proactive, offer constructive solutions;
- Call for cooperation;
- React tenaciously and assertively.

Good and effective communication is possible only when interlocutors respect each other and are open to different viewpoints. By providing expert advice and examples of communication spoilers, we wish to send a message to those who behave in such a way so that they can correct their behaviour. We send the same message to the others at the same time, in order to prevent them from becoming unproductive communicators.

Table 5.3: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Communication spoilers
Goal	Detecting and analysing communication spoilers.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation, game
Time-frame	60 min
Resources required	Whiteboard, crayons, paper,
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	Based on the children's Hot/Cold game. Have a volunteer leave the room, pick an object that's somewhere in the room, explain to the group that they will only be allowed to tell the volunteer when s/he is moving away from the object (cold) and they are to make very negative statements like “Hey, stupid - wrong way”. Time how long it takes to find the object (hint: prepare the volunteer thoroughly for this type of negative communication). Next use another volunteer, have them leave the room and this time use only positive communication as they get nearer the object “That's great, you're wonderful, keep going”. Time it. Next have a 3 rd volunteer and allow the group to use negative and positive communication. They should find the object very quickly vs. the other 2 methods. Both types of communication can be useful to help guide someone on the correct path to obtaining their goals. This is also a good time to open up a discussion about communication spoilers.

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
Role Play (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
Analysis of text discussing other communication spoilers

5.4 Communication and conflict solving

Words are ... most inexhaustible source of magic. Capable of both inflicting injury and remedying it.
Albus Dumbledore, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows", J. K. Rowling

When conflicts or pronounced disagreements arise between at least two persons in the process of communication, the connection becomes temporarily destabilised.

Each person approaches conflict management differently. Some try to distance themselves from it and act as if does not exist, others face it directly, yet others try to avoid it. Most often the blame for the conflict is put on "the other". There are also those who place the blame on themselves.



Compromise and collaboration are the most constructive ways of overcoming conflict. Compromise requires willingness to share the blame between the parties, whereas collaboration reflects team work and willingness to come to a solution that respects the needs of all. Here, conflict is approached with a clear thought of what it is and how to arrive at a way out of the situation. By clearly articulating thoughts and needs, the resolution of the conflict is promoted in a direct but nonthreatening way.

Before we resort to conflict resolution, we need to pause and review thoughts and needs and reduce them to only several themes, without favouring either of the interlocutors. By approaching the conflict situation with a clear portrayal, we show interest in the opinions and needs of the other person and in finding a compromise. This approach facilitates a process of constructive conflict resolution.

Steps for successful conflict solving:

- View and accept conflict as a constructive way of strengthening relations;
- Ask yourself "Do I want to cause or avoid conflict with persons I care about?";
- Communicate in a way that facilitates problem solving and maintenance of a climate of collaboration;
- Be open; do not run away from conflict;
- Be careful of what you say and how you say it;
- Be an active listener. Allow others to recognise that you have understanding for their wishes and needs;
- Summarise what you discussed and plan for the continuation of the communication until a solution is found.

On a personal level:

- Trust your own abilities to handle conflict situations through conscious and constructive communication;
- Do not expect others to suppress conflict to suit your interests;
- Do not expect others to resolve the conflict;
- Do not attempt to surprise others by causing conflict with them;
- Suppress your sense of helplessness and self-sacrifice;
- Find the energy and be creative in your communication with the others.

Conflict resolution requires approaching the problem or misunderstanding without fighting. Irrespective of one’s own feelings. The ability to handle conflicts without resorting to violence has a positive impact on us, makes us feel good and teaches us to respect others.

Insults, threats, physical violence, intimidation, annoyance and other forms of disorderly communication can have serious consequences, not only to the process of communication, but ourselves as well.

Good communication requires being a good listener, respecting other people’s opinions and viewpoints, working together and contemplating common solutions.

Table 5.4: Suggestions for the implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Communication and conflict solving
Goal	Introducing theories and strategies for conflict management and negotiation across contexts.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, moderation, Role play scenarios
Time-frame	30 min
Resources required	Flipchart paper to write feelings and ideas
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<p>Ask half the class to exit the room for 2 minutes. While they are out debrief the remaining group to pair up with their colleagues when they re-enter the room and to ask her/his partner to raise their arms in front of them so that their palms are facing them.</p> <p>Step 1: Participants start pushing their partners without any explanation to try and get them to go to the opposite side of the room, so instinctively their partner will start resisting.</p> <p>Step 2: Each participant has to ask her/his partner very gently and give them a reason why they want them to accompany him/her to the other side of the room so his / her partner will willingly go without any resistance.</p> <p>What's the point? There are two ways to influence people PUSH as we have seen from this simple activity. If we push others into what we want them to do, they will instinctively resist.</p>

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
De Bono’s Hats, (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences of learners);
Analysis of texts addressing other issues of conflict solving

Topic 6: Basic Theoretical Principles and Key Characteristics of Group Dynamics and Group Culture

Table 6: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic: **Basic Theoretical Principles and Key Characteristics of Group Dynamics and Group Culture**

<p><i>Learning goal:</i> Introduction to the basic theoretical Principles and Key Characteristics of Group Dynamics and Group Culture and understanding the meaning and importance of Group Dynamics in adult education and its diversity in terms of theoretical principles, forms and characteristics of learning groups, and developing skills for better learning and better group relations.</p> <p><i>General learning outcome:</i> After implementation of this topic, learners know the diversity and variety of group work in adult education and learning, understand the basic characteristics of group dynamics and the importance of active participation in adult education and learning.</p>		
Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
7. Theories and principles of group work	Introducing basic theories and their implications for understanding of group work in adult learning	Learners know the essence and principles of basic theories of group work and relate them to adult learning
8. Forms and characteristics of learning groups	Introducing and analysing forms and characteristics of learning groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners know the characteristics of learning groups. - Learners are able to recognise and explain all significant features of the learning group.

6.1. Theory and principle of group work

Systems theory describes how individuals behave within a system. Theory states groups are open systems, which are influenced by such independent variables as; openness to environment, interdependence, input variables, process variables, and output variables. As groups are considered systems, systems theory helps us begin to understand group dynamics. Systems theory involves understanding that group dynamics is a more complex process than just summing up the individual characteristics of each group member. Instead, group dynamics is best understood by combining the characteristics of each group member, how each group member's actions affect the group, and how these group interactions affect each group member. This creates a cyclical and reciprocal feedback loop which simultaneously impacts all group members and all group relations.



Field theory (Kurt Lewin) describes the effects of three different leadership styles on outcomes group work. Three different styles were classified as democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire. It was found that in the group with an autocratic leader, there was more dissatisfaction and behaviours became either more aggressive or apathetic. In the group with a democratic leader, there was more co-operation and enjoyment, while those in the laissez-faire led group showed no particular dissatisfaction, though they were not particularly productive either.

Field theory has an impact on a generation of researchers and thinkers concerned with group dynamics. In particular, two key ideas which emerged out of field theory, it is argued are crucial to an appreciation of group processes; they are interdependence of fate and task interdependence.

Constellation Model builds from a systems perspective and states that in order for a group to be successful it must consider all possible sender, receiver, and message variables which occur in a small group. The model posits that there is a relationship between communication, leadership, goals, norms, roles, cohesiveness, and situation. Each must be analysed to determine group effectiveness. Constellation Model clearly demonstrates how a member of a group can affect others in the group based on his or her communication skills. The interconnectedness of the communication traits is vital in the effectiveness of a group member, and the awareness of this fact that Beebe and Masterson portray is very informative from a communicative standpoint.

Basic principles of group work which are relevant to the practice of learning and teaching:

- The members of the group must have a strong sense of belonging to the group.
- The group emerges and functions on the basis of common motives.
- Groups survive by placing the members into functional hierarchy and facilitating action towards the goals.
- Changes in one part of the group may produce stress in other person, which can be reduced only by either eliminating or allowing the change by bringing about readjustment in the related parts.
- Information relating to needs for change, plans for change and consequences of changes must be shared by members of a group.
- The intergroup relations, group organization and member participation is essential for effectiveness of a group.

Table 6.1: Suggestions for implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Theory and principle of group work
Goal	Introducing basic theory and its implications for understanding group work in adult learning
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions.
Time-frame	30 min.
Resources required	Blackboard, Writing resources
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	Teacher will be responsible for facilitating a lesson that showcases a specific theory and principle of group work. During this time, learners will be responsible for (a) explaining the major tenets of the theory and principles, (b) applying the theory and principles to real-life and group situations, (c) discussing how the theory informs research and practice, and (d) engaging learners in an interactive way to enhance understanding of theory.

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
Group work or pair work (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences among learners);
Analysis of texts with different definitions of group work...

6.2. Forms and characteristics of learning groups

Study of groups and processes of interaction which occur there has been of interest to many researchers in the development of the andragogical theory and practice. The relations that are established among the members of the group, their interaction, level of communication and the socio-emotional climate that prevails within the group are of particular importance for the survival of the group, but equally, if not more, important for the achievement of the goals and objectives of the group as a whole and for the achievement of the individual goals and objectives of its members.

“The group is a distinctive, structured, relatively permanent, cohesive social formation, based on mutual interests and social values, whose members have, thanks to their common goals and in accordance with accepted standards of evaluation behavioural norms, reciprocal roles”.¹⁴

In order to establish the essence of the group more adequately and precisely, it is necessary for certain other characteristics to be taken into account, such as:

- groups have defined and measurable sizes;
- each group is in a certain way separated, has a meeting centre and is distinguishable from the other social communities, organisations and institutions;
- group members are bound in space and time, they participate in a given time in realisation of the assignments of the group and as its members perform specific functions;
- groups possess a certain degree of internal physical and spiritual connection; in addition to the internal connection, group members share a sense of personal responsibility for other group members;
- communication is maintained inside the group between its members;
- common goals lead to solidarity between group members;
- the group has an internal structure - there are differences between the roles and status inside the group and the internal division of work, social mobility, etc.

The learning group is a micro-social community with strong internal connection and consistency, ensured by the unity of educational needs and educational goals, with strong interactive social ties (camaraderie, friendship, solidarity, group opinion), with appropriate structure of functions and hierarchy of relations, with approximately similar societal values, and thus also social behaviour.”¹⁵

¹⁴ Samolovcev, Borivoj, *General Andragogy*, “Cyril and Methodius” University - Skopje, 1981.

¹⁵ Samolovcev, Borivoj, *General Andragogy*, “Cyril and Methodius” University - Skopje, 1981

This definition contains all significant features of the learning group, namely:

a) Internal connection and consistency

The group’s internal connection and consistency are of exceptional significance even at the very start, in the period of creation of the learning group and also later in the course of it functioning. Its internal strength is the basis on which the overall social behaviour of the group members depends, as do the abilities of its members for group work and the ultimate effects of the learning process.



Group members strive to maintain the group and contribute to the accomplishment of the common goals. The consistency is affected by a number of factors, the most important ones being: the size of the group, the type of group organisation, the atmosphere in the group and the way of working. The internal connection within a group is a sign of its maturity and ability to meet the needs of its members.

The connection within the group is defined in different ways: as mutual attraction of the group members, as unity of the group members in regard to different issues and as coordination of efforts invested by the group members.

COHESIVENESS		
Sources	Indicators	Effects
Motivational foundation of the group	Desire to remain in the group	Strength of the group to retain the members
Characteristics of the group	Identification with the group	Power of influence of the group
Expectations of the members	Achievement of the goals of the group	Involvement of the members in solving group assignments
	Loyalty towards the group	Sense of security among the members

According to Cartwright, 1968¹⁶

If a person joined the learning group expecting to satisfy specific educational needs and goals, and that did not happen, there is a high likelihood that her/his attachment to the group will decline.

b) Unity of educational needs and educational goals

Adults are mature persons, capable of making their own decisions on the basis of rational conclusions, motivated by different needs and encouraged by goals they wish to achieve. Although these needs are individual to each members of the learning group they nevertheless appear as a factor that affects the process of coming together of the group members. Although the level of expectation is different for each member, the needs have a relatively similar origin and become a strong bond between them.

¹⁶ Dorwin Cartwright, Alvin Frederick Zander, Group dynamics, Harper & Row, 1968

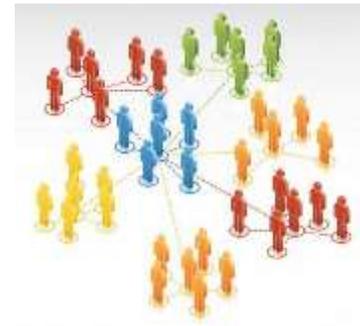
c) Interaction

The existence of interactive social ties between group members is inevitable, if we take into account the unity of educational goals and needs within the group. The teacher has a central position in establishing and developing the interaction in the group. S/he organises and guides the education process in the group and initiates the feedback and reactions of group members, stimulating collaborative relations that develop between them. The teacher, assisted by the selection of contents and especially the selection of working techniques gradually impacts the creation of collaborative relations that often develop outside of the teaching process and grow into higher order relations - into friendships.



d) Developed structure of relations

The organisation and structure of relationships in the group is another important factor for group cohesion. The relationship structure depends on the roles and functions of the group members, and is comprised of the teacher and group members. With time, each member will acquire a role or function in the work of the group. What role and function each group member acquires depends primarily on her/his abilities, goals and specific characteristics.



e) Relatively common societal values

Group members possess a relatively common value orientation, i.e. similar attitudes towards the basic values in society, and also towards the values of the learning group to which they themselves belong.

f) Roles

There are three main activities that group teachers have to manage simultaneously:

- managing the group
- managing activities
- managing the learning.

In many group teaching situations, the role of the teacher is that of facilitator of learning: leading discussions, asking open-ended questions, guiding process and task, and enabling active participation of learners and engagement with ideas. Teachers therefore need to be able to adopt a range of roles and skills to suit specific situations, often during the same teaching session.

To understand how a group operates it is necessary look the roles of the individual members of the group. The “roles” describe how people behave, contribute and relate with others, in other words we attempt to categorise personality types so that strengths and weaknesses can be identified and recognised amongst the group.

Facilitator: keeps group on task; facilitates the participation of others; helps keep communication channels open; suggests procedures that permit sharing remarks.

Initiator: suggests ways to solve a problem; proposes tasks or goals; defines a group problem.

Resource manager; collects pens/paper etc.

Energizer: stimulates group members to act and raise the level of their actions.

Opinion giver: provides relevant information; states an opinion; gives suggestions and ideas.

Encourager: is friendly, warm, and responsive to others; indicates by facial expression or remarks the acceptance of others' contributions.

Clarifier and elaborator: clears up confusion; defines terms; interprets ideas or suggestions; indicates alternatives and issues before the group.

Harmoniser: harmonises and resolves conflicts.

Summariser: offers a decision or conclusion for the group to accept or reject; restates suggestions after the group has discussed them.

Compromiser: offers a compromise which yields status.

Follower: accepts the group's ideas and listens to their discussion and decisions

Dominator: launches on long monologues; interrupts others; tries to lead group and assert authority.

Negativist: takes a negative attitude on issues; rejects ideas suggested by others; argues frequently and unnecessarily; is pessimistic, refuses to cooperate.

Aggressor: tries to get attention; criticizes or blames others; deflates importance or position of others in group; shows anger or irritation against group or individuals.

Storyteller: likes to tell long stories which are not relevant to the group.

Interrupter: engages in side conversations; talks over others.

Team representative: attends any information meetings & talks for group at feedback.

g) The size of the group

The larger the group, the harder it is to develop efficient interaction. In such cases it is necessary to divide the group into several subgroups. Work in smaller groups allows for greater contact between group members and enables the teacher to monitor more easily. Smaller groups usually comprise 6 to 8 members.

Table 6.2: Suggestions for implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Forms and characteristics of learning groups
Goal	Introducing and analysing forms and characteristics of learning groups
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work - Role-play, presentations
Time-frame	60 min.
Resources required	Flipchart, moderation cards, crayons, beamer
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	This exercise is often done after a group has been together for a period of time so that roles in the group have emerged. You announce to the group that you will need some of them to play some roles that are often found in groups. State that you need eight (six to ten) volunteers to role-play and they will draw their roles randomly out of a hat (basket). Each role is described and each will have one or two goals that demonstrate some characteristics of the role. In your introduction, make it sound like fun because it is in most situations.

	Role-players will sit in a circle facing each other in the middle of the room while the rest of the group becomes observers. Their task will be to determine each role. The observers will then tell what they observed and then the role-players will tell what it was like to play the role.”
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Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:

- ZIN obelisk (which is an attractive, interesting and dynamic form to find out how decisions are made, and how typical roles in a group are assumed)
- Group work or pair work (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences among learners)...

Topic 7: Group Dynamics

Topic 7 addresses the wider theme of group dynamics (processes, activities and changes occurring in the group) as well as phases of group forming and phases of group development which can be observed from different angles and in different contexts. It has two specific sub-topics which are focused on different elements of the main topic and are presented in the Handbook with descriptions of learning goals and learning outcomes. Educators have the freedom to decide the timeframe for realisation of every sub-topic, as well as the order of the sub-topics, according to the characteristics and prior knowledge and experience of the learning group.

Main purpose of this topic is to understand communication as an integral part of adult education and its diversity in terms of forms and implementation, as well as its importance for effective learning and personal development.

Table 7: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic

<i>Learning goal:</i> Introduction to the basic theoretical principles and key characteristics of group dynamics and group culture and understanding the meaning and importance of group dynamics in adult education and its diversity in terms of theoretical principles, forms and characteristics of learning groups, and developing skills for better learning and better group relations.		
<i>General learning outcome:</i> After implementation of this topic, learners know the diversity and variety of group work in adult education and learning, understand basic characteristics of group dynamics and the importance of active participation in adult education and learning.		
Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
1. Phases of group forming	Introducing and analysing all phases of group forming.	Learners are able to recognise and explain all phases of group forming.
2. Phases of group development	Introducing and analysing all phases of group development.	Learners are able to recognise and explain all phases of group development.

A group is composed of members whose mutual relationships and influences make up the essence of the functioning of the group. Members' efforts for maintaining the group or for achieving the goals are manifested through their diverse interactions. The dynamics are important for the group, the processes which occur within the group and changes resulting from these activities and processes.



Group dynamics reflects processes, activities and changes occurring in the group, on the basis of which the group itself exists and functions, primarily those that allow the group to exist, fulfil its tasks and achieve its goals.

From the viewpoint of the group members as individuals and group as a whole, two types of processes that go on in a group should be reviewed. Firstly, processes that bring about permanent changes in the characteristics of the group members and that are viewed as a result of socialisation. Secondly, interactive processes of group members which lead to temporary changes in the behaviour of individuals, to changes in the relations between them and above all in the execution of group assignments and realisation of group goals. Group dynamics is interested in these processes and their

characteristics, as processes that contribute to group growth and development, as well as in those that lead to disintegration and ultimately to break up.

7.1. Phases of group forming

The effects of the work in a learning group depend, among other things, on the relations between group members and processes of interaction occurring within the group. Group integration and processes of mutual attraction or rejection of group members are affected by a number of factors, internal to the group itself and also external. Internal factors include established relations between the educators and group members, the way of guiding the group, the status of the group members, whereas external factors include all those information and influences listeners receive from the external environment and not directly related to the learning process.



The gathering of individuals at the same place in the same time does not necessarily constitute them as a group. A group begins to develop with the commencement of joint activities and interactions between its members. A group is much more than a simple sum of participants.

The process of forming a group is gradual. The development of the integration between group members most often unfolds in several phases: 1) pre-integration, 2) establishment of first contacts, 3) integration and 4) post-integration.

The phase of **pre-integration** begins when an individual decides to take part in a learning process and ends with the moment of involvement. First contacts between members in the learning group are aimed at development of a positive attitude towards the group as a new social environment where they can achieve self-realisation and accomplishment of their personal goals. The first emotional experience and bonding of the participants with the group happens during this phase.

During the phase of **establishment of first contacts** relations emerge: teacher-group and member-member, and first contacts are established. Organising these first contacts well has a positive influence over the integration into the group. Behaviour and communication between group members during these first meetings is rather formal and mainly focuses on introductions, familiarisation with the work plan and programme, introduction to the history, function and rules of conduct in the institution where the teaching process takes place.



The phase of **integration** occurs usually at a slow pace and development flow. Here, individual assignments are defined and undertaken. In this period, joint work advances slowly, supported by application of appropriate work techniques. The establishment of a working atmosphere in the group is important for the integration of its members. The teacher, by encouraging joint activities, proper distribution of tasks in accordance with the individual characteristics of the members, provision of feedback on success and progress in the respective endeavours, nurtures the working atmosphere in the group.



Factors that affect the group's integration process, and with the group development, include:

- Prior preparation of learners;
- Structure of the status of group members;
- Size of the group;
- Development of social bonds or mechanisms of group life and work;
- Age structure of group members;
- Manner of addressing each other;
- Educational and motivational development of members;
- The teacher;
- Guidance and way of working; and
- Communication within the group.

The phase of **post-integration** covers the period after the learning process is complete and the group formally does not exist, but members nevertheless continue to communicate with each other. The process of integration does not stop its impact even after the end of the organised learning process. The results from the group work, acquired experience and knowledge, achieved level of integration and good guidance style continue to influence adults in a way that even after the completion of a specific process of education, they are still interested in learning, education and self-education.

Teachers should be familiar with the signs or indicators of development of the ability of the group to function. These indications serve as benchmarks for determining the growth of the group or the phase of development which the group is at.

Signs of group growth:	
Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased openness of members - Ability to expand group contacts - Ability to change group habits and rules in the basis of new information - Successful balancing of "I" and „The others”.
Achievement of the goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to keep in mind alternative goals during the process of achieving the goal - Ability to change the goal
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to guarantee freedom of choice to of group members - Orientation towards reality
Preservation and expansion of the structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to accept new members and their induction into the group - Ability to multiply group experiences, to learn from them and convey them to other groups - Outward transfer

According to Karlheinz A. Geißler

The learning group achieves the pinnacle of its growth when it acquires all features of a team and of team work.

A group becomes a team when¹⁷:

- its members feel a sense of ownership over their work and a commitment to commonly established objectives;
- there is a shared understanding that personal and team goals are best reached with mutual support;
- there is participative decision making;
- members can contribute their personal resources, qualities and competencies to the success of the work;
- there is a climate of trust and encouragement to express ideas, opinions, disagreements, feelings and questions, where members make efforts to understand each other's point of view;
- members are encouraged to develop their skills and apply them during the work;
- Conflict is considered a normal aspect of interaction and is viewed as an opportunity for new ideas, creativity and improvement.



Table 7.1: Suggestions for implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Phases of group forming
Goal	Introducing and analysing all phases of group forming.
Methods and techniques	Lecture, demonstration, discussions, presentations, building a pyramid
Time-frame	30 min.
Resources required	Plastic clubs, rubber bands (1 per group), 8" strings (for each person)
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	<p>Ask learners to come up with 6 words that are essential for a good group (e.g. trust, communication). Give out 6 plastic cups for each table/group and tell them to write down a word on each cup. Once they label their cups, give them string (1 for each person) and 1 rubber band Using the string and rubber band, they must build a pyramid with the cups They can't touch the cups, and must use only the tool. Each learner must use at least 1 string Ask about the words they chose and how they worked as a team.</p> <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How easy or difficult was this activity? - When the task was first revealed, what were your immediate thoughts? - What did you need to be successful? Or, what would you have needed to do to be successful?

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:
 NASA moon landing (which is attractive, interesting and dynamic form for understanding the impact of group agreement and group pressure, and compares the efficiency of the individual and the group)
 Group work or pair work (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences among learners)

¹⁷ T-Kit 6: Training Essentials (2002), Council of Europe and the European Commission

7.2. Phases of group development¹⁸

Group dynamics is never constant and never happens with the same pace. It has its highs and lows and depends on the phase of development the group is at.

Phase of orientation

This phase can be recognised by the fact that the group does not exist as such yet. Each participant is focused on her/his own individual situation, needs and goals. Cautious behaviour and insecurity dominate. Participants seek out and focus on the teacher. In this phase, s/he plays a central role and all are focused on her/him.

The first common thing about the group members is that they have nothing in common; therefore all are heavily dependent on the teacher and accept all instruction and guidance provided from her/him.

Since this first phase is one of “orienting”, the teacher should take action in this regard.

Process guidance:

The teacher should be focused on reducing insecurities. He/she should firstly work on creating unity between the members so that he/she can later, on the basis of this unity, highlight the differences that exist between group members. Relatively direct guidance by the teachers is advisable at the beginning.

Phase of differentiation

In this phase the participants already have an impression about what the members are like, and that makes them feel more secure. Some see that some of their expectations have been or will be met, while others do not. In time, because of this some participants will feel or demonstrate disappointment, uneasiness or criticism. As the sense of dependence from the teacher is reduced after having received basic orientation, individual participants are in this phase in a position to resist the teacher’s demands, instructions and the way of working. Increasing competitiveness and rivalry develop between participants. Fractions and informal subgroups emerge and appropriate differentiation of roles. Often, conflicts and misunderstandings appear in this phase between individual group members. Most frequent reactions include absenteeism, tardiness or disturbance during activities.

The level of aggression in the group rises, and with it, openness to feelings. Personal arguments, distancing or coalitions in regard to assignments and topics often emerge.

Participants wish to take part in influencing the process. They express clearly their own interests and begin searching for partners with whom they share similarities, through the following questions:

“Who is like me?”

“Who do I have to be careful with?”

“Whom can I trust?”

“What do I need to do so that my opinion is heard and respected?”

“With whom could I understand myself easily?”

These questions and the search for answers affect the individual’s behaviour.

¹⁸ According to: Dorwin Cartwright, Alvin Frederick Zander, Group dynamics, Harper & Row, 1968

Process guidance:

Allow learners to experience and overcome their need for differing, arguing and solidarity. Be reserved and do not allow them to involve you in this process. Do not assume the role of a judge. Give the group members time and space for their rivalries, for their competitiveness and need for distancing themselves. Wait, watch, listen and observe. If you intervene, do it openly and clearly, even if there is a need for confrontation. Use confrontation for encouragement and not prevention. Help group members find their place inside the group.

Cutting these tendencies short and halting their dynamics may have adverse consequences. Without clarification, the roles, positions and structures of power and influence remain blurred. Only after everybody has found her/his place in the group, after it is clear who can do, wish or afford what, can the work process be realised with higher intensity.

Phase of working ability

Clarification of relations in the previous phase leads to defining group norms and rules, which facilitates relaxed working and learning. In accordance with the participants' abilities, which are already known in this phase, specific functions can be undertaken in line with pertinent needs, but some functions can also be handed over and delegated to other members.

Difference in opinions and interests are acceptable and can be used for a creative learning process. Dynamics is governed by the principle of reality. We find what the group can do and what not, and what can be learned.

In this phase conflicts are presented openly, with efforts being made not to hurt the partners in the process. Questions and issues related to the content matter are discussed openly. The learning process is very successful, and participants' motivation, in relation to the involvement around the learning goals, is high.

This is a phase of a strong and stable WE-sentiment which permeates the group. This "WE" will become a norm and gain on importance. The group is able and willing to present itself to the outside world. Subgroups form that are not a threat to the existence of the entire group. The openness enhances the integration of the members, which in turn positively reflects itself on the attractiveness of the group.

The group is goal oriented and self corrects in difficult situations. In this phase, the group can for the first time accept new members without fear of creating factions or dissolution. Collaborative relations dominate, and results are attributed to the entire group, not only to individual members.

Group members feel safe and accepted. They have a double identity, one of an individual subject and one of a group subject. They can show their differences and characteristics without fear and act accordingly. Possibilities for individual development are noticed and used; they work with satisfaction and commitment on the achievement of learning goals. The existence of different learning goals among different group members is acceptable, and there is recognition that their realisation does not need to be pursued through competition. There is a sense of closeness, and the possible existence of coldness between certain members is not a threat to the group.

Process guidance:

The guidance should be carried out with restraint. A large portion of the guidance can be handed over to the group members. It is advisable in this phase to divide the work into subgroups.

Instructions and orientation can be limited to precisely formulating new assignment and using what has been previously done or learned.

Assess critically the progress in learning and in group development, so that you can prevent unrealistic tendencies. Take into account the realistic goals of the work and do not allow emergence of unrealistic goals caused by the ambitions of the group.

Phase of separation

Group members display sense of separation and visible feelings of happiness and joy because of the accomplishments, sorrow because of the forthcoming separation and disappointment with what was not achieved, learned or experienced, but also gratitude and satisfaction with the experience gained, friends met and pleasant moments spent together.

On one hand, participants are still working in a group, but are thinking about the “outside world” and are concerned with the end. Sensitivities in the group are high, but not open. The behaviour is reserved, level of fear is high and openness is declining. The group moves towards a situation to again be a sum of persons who cannot express their individuality. Unity in this phase is limited to the awareness and feeling that they will not have anything in common any more.

Feelings of loneliness and abandonment prevent activities oriented to the learning goals. The desire to engage in the work of the group declines; the wish to invest into a social community that is separating diminishes. The members are faced with the questions: How much feeling can they afford? What should not be shown openly? That is the helplessness of the end, which is commensurate to the lack of orientation from the beginning.

Process guidance:

It is necessary that you guide with clarity and decisiveness. Giving time to the group and all its members separately is highly important. It would be counterproductive to devote the last lesson in a longer process of teaching and learning to content matter. It is even less effective to burden the end with criticism of the educational activity. In this phase, we must support the cognitive and emotional transition to the following situation.

The presented phases are ideally presented, which means that they cannot always be well recognised as such or have the above structure and sequencing in a practical situation. In practices they are never identical as above. The framework conditions for the processes of teaching and learning and processes of self-organisation allow only for certain dynamics.

Difficulties that need to be overcome in the course of group development in order to ensure a higher level of stability, integration, working abilities and dedication include:

- The group must establish clear rules and principles for membership;
- Borders for tolerating the behaviour of group members must be established borders to define which behaviour is acceptable and which is not;
- Participants must be clear how to react to unusual behaviour or behaviour that bothers others;
- The group must create a clear picture on who performs which function;
- Group members must know which abilities, knowledge and skills each member could bring into the group;
- Group members must know how to decide;
- The group must develop collaboration goals and forms that are likely to satisfy the needs of the members;
- Group members must establish methods and ways of collaboration and communication.

Table 7.2: Suggestions for implementation of this sub-topic:

Sub-topic	Phases of group development
Goal	Introducing and analysing forms and characteristics of learning groups
Methods and techniques	Lecture, discussions, group work, presentations, self-assessment test
Time-frame	30 min.
Resources required	Flipchart, moderation cards, crayons, beamer
Didactic material required	Power Point presentation
Procedure	Self-assessment; see Tbl. Self-assessment

Table 7.3: Self-assessment

	--	-	+	++
1. Can I recognise the phases of group development?				
2. Can I diagnose group situations?				
3. Can I activate the group to collaborate with me and each other?				
4. Can I accept when the group members discuss my role and my function?				
5. Can I talk to the group about my role and my function?				
6. Can I create rules with the group?				
7. Can I accept the relatively large differences between the group members?				
8. Can I analyse obstacles and elaborate them in a group process?				
9. Can I productively handle conflicts in the group?				
10. Can I leave the group time to come to solutions by myself?				
11. Can diversion from the topic prompt curiosity about my goals among some group members?				
12. Can I encourage originality and creativity among group members?				
13. Can I handle originality and creativity that exceed my expectations?				
14. Can I accept group members who are in high positions?				
15. Can I handle outbursts of emotions from group members?				
16. Can I accept it when the group makes it without me?				
17. Can I handle non-transparent, chaotic situations in the learning process?				
18. Do I feel competent to navigate through chaotic situations?				
19. Do I feel that I have at my disposal necessary opportunities for intervening when guiding the group process?				
20. Can I process my own insecurity in regard to future new group processes?				
-- = Not at all ; ++ = Very well				
Recommendation: Find a person whom you trust and talk to her/him about your self-assessment.				

Didactic suggestions

This learning unit could be implemented in other ways, such as:

NASA moon landing (which is attractive, interesting and dynamic form for understanding the impact of group agreement and group pressure, and compares the efficiency of the individual and the group)

Group work or pair work (which enhances exchange of ideas and experiences among learners)

Topic 8: Models for working with groups

Topic 8 addresses the wider theme of models for working with groups as well as the role of teacher in group work which can be observed from different angles and in different contexts. It has two specific sub-topics which are focused on different elements of the main topic and are presented in the Handbook with descriptions of learning goals and learning outcomes.

Educators have the freedom to decide the timeframe for realisation of every sub-topic, as well as the order of the sub-topics, according to the characteristics and prior knowledge and experience of the learning group.

Main purpose of this topic is to understand to use different models for group work in adult education and learning.

Table 8: Sub-topics, learning goals and learning outcomes for the implementation of the topic: **Models for working with groups**

<i>Learning goal:</i> Introduction to the basic models for group work and their use in adult education.		
<i>General learning outcome:</i> After implementation of this topic, learners know the different models of group work, are able to recognise and explain all their strengths and weaknesses, and to actively participate in their application.		
Sub-topics	Goal	Outcome
1. Models for Successful Group Work	Introducing and analysing basic models of group work.	Learners are able to recognise and explain basic models of group work.
2. The Teacher and Group Work	Introducing and analysing the role of the teacher in group work.	Learners are able to recognise the role of the teacher in group work.

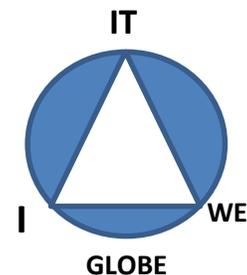
8.1. Models for Successful Group Work

The importance of the phase flow of the group development process can be used for building an entire set of models for group work. The models must be focused towards learning opportunities for those who want and ought to learn and towards the dynamics of the development of the social community in which they learn.

Theme Centred Interaction is a model for personal development and working with groups.¹⁹

This model focuses on the following:

- active, creative and discovering process of learning and working
- process and structure



¹⁹ <http://ehornecker.de/Papers/TZI.pdf>

- making visible the invisible components of group dynamics
- tools and attitudes to optimize interactions in group processes
- applicable to a broad range of group purposes, work teams, department teams
- holistic view of personhood
- integrating feelings, thoughts, perceptions and instincts (head, heart, gut).

The triangle surrounded by the circle is the symbol for Theme Centred Interaction: components of the group work that need to be kept in a dynamic balance for a group to achieve its goals, namely: - the individual ego (I); - the need of the group (WE) and the theme (IT). (GLOBE) is the surrounding environment or context with its demands and constraints which affect group work.

A sociogram is the charting of the inter-relationships within a group. Its purpose is to discover group structure: i.e., the basic "network" of friendship patterns and sub-group organization. The relations of any one learner to the group as a whole are another type of information which can be derived from a sociogram. A sociogram's value to a teacher is in its potential for developing greater understanding of group behaviour so that s/he may operate more wisely in group management and curriculum development.

Sociograms may be constructed in a variety of ways. The methods described here are ones which teachers have used and found not too difficult or time consuming.

The Data Base: The basic material from which a sociogram is constructed is collected from group members who answer questions such as these:

- Who are your three best friends in this group?
- Who are the three people in this group that you admire most?
- With which three people in this group would you most enjoy going to a picnic?

Asking questions is the key for obtaining more information, and without them interpersonal communication may fail. Questions are fundamental to successful communication - we all want to be asked questions when we are engaged in a conversation. Questions can be open-ended, closed-ended, alternative, rhetorical, suggestive, counter-questions, ping-pong questions, etc.

Although questions are usually verbal in nature, they can also be non-verbal. Raising of the eyebrows can, for example, can mean "Are you sure?" Facial expressions can substitute a number of subtle questions in different periods or contexts.

Although not exhaustive, the following list provides an overview of the main reasons for posing questions in group work with adults:

- To obtain information.
- To maintain control over the conversation.
- To express interest for the topic or for the other members.
- To clarify problems.
- To investigate the personalities of the participants and difficulties they may experience.
- To assess the knowledge.
- To encourage additional reflection.
- To involve all group members.
- To embolden participants to more intensive discussion.
- To keep the attention by posing questions without prior announcement.

Before asking a question, first ask yourself:

- Why - is this question in order?
- When - is the right time?
- Where - is the right place?
- Who - is the most appropriate person for that - is it me?
- How - can I make it most efficient?

Other models that can also be used for group work include:²⁰

- Brain-storming;
- Simulations;
- Charts;
- Meta-plan (cards);
- Tables, diagrams;
- Mind-mapping;
- SWOT analysis;
- Voting, election (e.g. using “stickers”);
- Visual presentations;
- Log-frame matrix;
- Warm-ups, “Ice-breakers”;
- “Projections of the future”;
- “Pro et contra” debates;
- “Water fantasy”;
- “Walk through the gallery”;
- Barometers;
- “Thinking styles”;
- Role play.

Basic Principles for Successful Group Work

- **Commitment! A group can only work effectively if every member wants it to work.**
- **Take the time needed to discuss basic approaches and ideas, to evaluate your group work and give to feedback to each other.**
- **Make a contract; everyone is in charge!**
- **Act on the basis of commonly established basic values and objectives.**
- **Accept yourself and the others.**
- **Self-responsibility: I am responsible for my own actions and behaviour.**
- **Trust in and support each other’s abilities and performance.**
- **Respect everyone’s limits.**
- **Be ready to take the risk to do something new, challenge yourself.**
- **Accept mistakes as a chance for learning.**
- **Process-oriented thinking: the objectives are important, but the process is important as well. The group is able to improve itself by examining its procedures and practices.**
- **Establish some procedures to analyse situations and solve problems.**
- **Be ready to accept emotions as part of the work process.**
- **Keep a balance between efficiency and social quality.**
- **Have pride in the accomplishments of the group.**
- **Group work is also fun! If it isn’t, something is wrong.**

²⁰ Šefika Alibabić; Katarina Popović; Emir Avdagić. *Andragogic Manual for Working with Adults, dvv international* – Skopje Office, 2013

8.2. The Teacher and Group Work

The role of the teacher in group work is multifaceted and, in addition to conveying knowledge and information, encompasses motivating and guiding participants, directing towards different ways of learning, activating and providing instructions for work. S/he provides the initial impulse and directs group members towards making first contacts, getting to know each other and socialising. On the other hand, s/he is the one who can, in a sense, “from the outside” observe relations that are developing between the group members, and intervene in certain situations, when possible.

The teacher is the facilitator of the learning process, one of the sources of information, someone who “facilitates” the path to new knowledge, skills and abilities, who provides an impetus to the education process and then leaves sufficient room for all to make a contribution to its development. The teacher must motivate learners to active involvement in the process of group work and in the process of upgrading their knowledge.

The teacher must base his work with adult learners on a number of established principles so that her/his work is successfully completed and the participants’ goals achieved, including the following ones:

- To pay attention to the participant’s needs, skills and goals. The involvement of the participants in the process of planning and design of the programme itself helps to integrate their needs and expectations, but even more importantly it is a way to demonstrate respect towards the adult participant.
- To evoke and build on the participants’ experiences. Their life experience can be used as example in the teaching and learning process.
- The learning environment should be based on mutual respect and trust as foundations for the learning process. Participants should feel comfortable during the learning process, and not have unpleasant experiences of failure.
- To nurture collaboration; each participant possesses important skills, experience and knowledge that s/he can share with the other participants and the teacher.
- To develop initiative, independence and sense of authority among group members.

Topic 9: Techniques for Guiding Group Dynamics

The following techniques for group work and problem solving are very effective:

- *Case studies* are scenarios that apply concepts learned in class to a “real-life” situation. They are usually presented in narrative form and often involve problem-solving, links to course readings or source materials, and discussions by groups of learners, or the entire class. Usually, case studies are most effective if they are presented sequentially, so that learners receive additional information as the case unfolds, and can continue to analyse or critique the situation/problem.
- ZIN obelisk, game which by solving a mathematical problem demonstrates the way how a group functions, how problems are resolved, how decisions are made, and how typical roles in a group are assumed;
- *Problem-based learning* activities are similar to case studies but usually focus on quantitative problems. In some cases the problems are designed to introduce the material as well as provide learners with a deeper learning opportunity. The advantages of problem-based learning activities and case studies include developing learners’ problem solving and decision making skills, develop learner’s critical thinking skills, encouraging critical reflection and enabling the appreciation of ambiguity in situations.
- NASA moon landing, which helps understand the impact of group agreement and group pressure, and compares the efficiency of the individual and the group;
- Interactive demonstrations can be used in lectures to demonstrate the application of a concept, a skill, or to act out a process. The exercise should not be passive; you should plan and structure your demonstration to incorporate opportunities for learners to reflect and analyse the process.
- **Debate** engaging in collaborative discourse and argumentation enhances learner’s conceptual understandings and refines their reasoning abilities. Stage a debate exploiting an arguable divide in the day’s materials. Give teams time to prepare, and then put them into argument with a team focused on representing an opposing viewpoint. Advantages include practice in using the language of the discipline and crafting evidence-based reasoning in their arguments.
- BAFA BAFA and other workshops with role play and simulation of meeting different cultures, where intercultural context leads the participants to face their own stereotypes and leads to increased tolerance and openness towards diversity;
- **Role Play.** Members of the class take the part or perspective of historical figures, authors, or other characters and must interact from their perspective. Breakdown the role play into specific tasks to keep learners organised and to structure them so that the content you want to cover is addressed. Preparation work can be assigned for outside of class, so clearly communicating your expectations is essential.
- De Bono’s Hats, workshop that can be applied very creatively and create a pleasant working atmosphere, and provides insight into the different thinking styles and ways they operate in the process of group agreement, negotiation and discussion.
- Entry & Exit tickets are short prompts that provide instructors with a quick learner diagnostic. These exercises can be collected on 3”x5” cards, small pieces of paper, or online through a survey or course management system. Advantages of entrance and exit tickets include: participation of each learner, prompt for learners to focus on key concepts and ideas, a high return of information for the amount of time invested, important feedback for the instructor that can be useful to guide teaching decisions (e.g., course pacing, quick clarification of small misunderstandings, identification of learner interests and questions).

Table 9.1: Guide: Preparing for group work

Think carefully about how learners will be physically arranged in groups	Will it be easy for groups to form and for all learners to be comfortable? Also think about how the layout of your classroom will impact volume – will learners really be able to hear one another clearly? How can you moderate the activity to control volume?
Insist on professional, civil conduct	between and among learners to respect people’s differences and create an inclusive environment.
Talk to learners about their past experiences with group work	Allow them to establish some ground rules for successful collaboration. This discussion can be successfully done anonymously through the use of note cards.
Designing the small group activity	
Identify the instructional objectives.	Determine what you want to achieve through the small group activities, both academically (e.g., knowledge of a topic) and socially (e.g., listening skills). The activity should relate closely to the course objectives and class content and must be designed to help learners learn, not simply to occupy their time
Make the task challenging.	Consider giving a relatively easy task early in the term to arouse learners’ interest in group work and encourage their progress. In most cases, however, collaborative exercises should be stimulating and challenging.
Assign group tasks that encourage involvement, interdependence, and a fair division of labour.	All group members should feel a sense of personal responsibility for the success of their team mates and realize that their individual success depends on the group’s success. Allocate essential resources across the group, so that group members are required to share information (e.g., “Jigsaw” method) or to come up with a consensus; randomly select one person to speak for the group; or assign different roles to the group members so that they are all involved in the process (e.g., recorder, spokesperson, summariser, checker, sceptic, organiser, observer, timekeeper, conflict resolver, liaison to other groups). Knowing that peers are relying on you is a powerful motivator for group work. Another strategy for promoting interdependence is specifying common rewards for the group, such as a group mark.
Decide on group size	The size you choose will depend on the number of learners, the size of the classroom, the variety of voices needed within a group, and the task assigned. Groups of 4-5 tend to balance well the needs for diversity, productivity, active participation, and cohesion.
Decide how you will divide learners into groups	Division based on proximity or learners’ choice is quickest, especially for large and cramped classes; however, it means that learners end up working together with friends or always with the same people. To vary group composition and increase diversity within groups, randomly assign learners to groups by counting off and grouping them according to number; or have them line up according to birthday, height, hair colour, etc., before dividing them; another idea is to distribute candy (e.g., Starburst or hard, coloured candies) and group learners according to the flavour they choose. For some group tasks, the diversity within a group (gender, ethnicity, level of preparation) is especially important, and you might want to assign learners to groups yourself before class. Collect a data card from each learner on the first day of class to glean important information about their backgrounds, knowledge, and interests. Alternately, ask learners to express a preference (e.g., list three learners with whom they would most like to work or two topics they would most like to study), and keep their preferences in mind as you assign groups.

Allow sufficient time for group work	Recognise that you will not be able to cover as much material as you could if you lectured for the whole class period. Cut back on the content you wish to present in order to give groups time to work. Estimate the amount of time that subgroups need to complete the activity. Also plan for a plenary session in which groups' results can be presented or general issues and questions can be discussed.
Try to predict learners' answers	You won't be able to do this perfectly—expect the unexpected—but by having some idea about what learners will come up with, you will be better prepared to answer their questions and tie together the group work during the plenary session.
Design collaborative work in multiple constellations and forms	Pairs, small groups, large groups, online synchronously, online asynchronously, etc. Some learners might be better at contributing after they have had time to digest material, while others might be better at thinking on the spot; other learners will defer to others in large groups but actively contribute in pairs; all roles should be valued and included.
Introducing the group activity	
Demonstrate you are prepared for the group session	Arrive punctually, have a hand-out prepared that relates specifically to the task, and carry through on tasks that you promised to do when you last used group work in the classroom (Race, 2000).
Share your rationale for using group work	Learners must understand the benefits of collaborative learning. Don't assume that learners know what the pedagogical purpose is. Explicitly connect these activities to larger class themes and learning outcomes whenever possible. If they do not see the value of the group activity, they might conclude that you are using group work merely to get out of course preparation or lecturing.
Have learners form groups before you give them instructions	If you try to give instructions first, learners may be too preoccupied with deciding on group membership to listen to you. Or, by the time they have determined their groups, they may have forgotten what they are supposed to do.
Facilitate some form of group cohesion	Learners work best together if they know or trust each other, at least to some extent. Even for brief group activities, have learners introduce themselves to their group members before attending to their task. For longer periods of group work, consider introducing an ice breaker or an activity designed specifically to build a sense of teamwork.
Explain the task clearly	This means both telling learners exactly what they have to do and describing what the final product of their group work will look like. Explaining the big picture or final goal is important, especially when the group work will take place in steps (such as in snowballing or jigsaw). Using visual structures like charts and sequential diagrams is often helpful, as is the use of sentence starters and specific questions. Remember to include time estimations for the activities. Estimate on the low side; learners will work most efficiently as the deadline approaches. If necessary, you can increase the time available.
Prepare written instructions for the learners	Either post the instructions on an overhead or PowerPoint slide or, if some of the groups will leave the room, distribute a hand-out.
Set ground rules for group interaction	Especially for extended periods of group work, establish how group members should interact with one another, mentioning principles such as respect, active listening, and methods for decision making.
Let learners ask questions	Give them time to ask questions before they get to work.

Monitoring the group task	
Monitor the groups but do not hover	As learners do their work, circulate among the groups and answer any questions raised. Also listen for trends that are emerging from the discussions, so that you can refer to them during the subsequent plenary discussion.
Expect a lot of your learners	Express your confidence in them as you circulate the room.
Be slow to share what you know	If you come upon a group that is experiencing uncertainty or disagreement, avoid the natural tendency to give the answers or resolve the disagreement.
Clarify your role as facilitator	If learners criticize you for not contributing enough to their work, consider whether you have communicated clearly enough your role as facilitator.
Ending the group task	
Provide closure to the group activities	Group work can succeed or fail based on how you incorporate it into the rest of the class and the course. Learners need to see how their work in small groups was useful to them and/or contributed to the development of the topic. Thus, end with a plenary session in which learners do group reporting:
Model how you want learners to participate	When responding to learners' answers, model the respect and sensitivity that you want the learners to display towards their classmates. Also readily acknowledge and value opinions different from your own; don't favour clones! Be willing to share your own stories, critique your work, and summarize what has been said.
Connect the ideas raised to course content and objectives	Recognise that groups might not come up with the ideas you intended them to, so be willing to make your lecture plans flexible. Wherever possible, look for a connection between group conclusions and the course topic.
Avoid impromptu lectures	They interrupt the flow of the conversation during the plenary session
Don't provide too much closure	Although the plenary session should wrap up the group work, feel free to leave some questions unanswered for further research or for the next class period.
Ask learners to reflect on the group work process	They may do so either orally or in writing. This reflection helps them discover what they learned and how they functioned in the group. It also gives you a sense of their response to group work.
Ending the activity	
	After a class of small group activities, reflect on the group work process and refer back to the notes you made before class. Add comments about what worked especially well and what you would change in the future to make the exercise run more smoothly.

According to: Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo, Canada

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