



Language Support for Migrants *A Council of Europe Toolkit*

Tool 48 - Getting recently arrived migrants to talk about themselves

Aim: To suggest ways of giving newly arriving migrants opportunities to talk about themselves and their experiences.

It is very important that new arriving migrants should be able to say who they are and talk about or share what they have recently been through if they are willing to. In addition, other learners you might have in your group can be asked to introduce and talk a little about themselves.

- You can invite learners who have recently arrived to do this in their own language after a preparatory session with you. With your help, as preparation they could produce some accompanying PowerPoint slides in which what they wish to say in their own language is translated into the language of the host community. If available, a means of automated translation can also be used for this. You may also wish to help learners find relevant photos, images, and other kinds of documents to illustrate their brief talks.
- The learners' short talks can be about their family, their studies, their work situation, or their friends in their country of origin, the area of town or the village they live in and their journey to the new country, etc. Each presentation can be followed by questions and exchanges within the group, but, especially in the case of refugees and unaccompanied minors it is important to avoid topics that may be sensitive. It is also important not to put pressure on learners to give such a talk if they do not want to.
- An 'about me' wheel can also be a good way of getting learners to talk about themselves, their interests, likes and dislikes. An example is provided in Tool 47 - *Using an about me wheel with migrants*.
- A table like the one below can be used to help migrants to learn expressions in the language of the host country that they need for these kinds of exchanges.

1.1 Introducing oneself

Learners need to be able to state their names and to be aware that their names might cause certain reactions or be mispronounced.

		EXPRESSIONS	HOST COUNTRY LANGUAGE
1.1.1	Saying who you are. Introducing yourself. (Take account of the structure of names (here, the structure of English names is used).	<i>I am</i> first name. First name, family name. <i>My name</i> is first name, family name. <i>I am</i> first name, family name.	
1.1.2	Spelling, pronouncing (Offer an opportunity to learn how to say the letters used in the first and family names).	Spell. ... it is spelled ...	
1.1.3	Correcting a person's pronunciation (when the name is mispronounced).	..., no,, sorry, ...	

1.2 Talking about oneself

Learners need to explain who they are, what they did before they left their country; they need to be able to tell their story in a simple way.

		EXPRESSIONS	HOST COUNTRY LANGUAGE
1.2.1	Describing. (Requires mainly vocabulary.)	Verb phrase. The verb <i>to be</i> + [adjective].	
1.2.2	Telling a story. (Requires mainly vocabulary. At this level, using basic verb forms in statements like "me go through Greece" is acceptable.)	[Verbs (past tense)] + <i>and</i> , <i>and then</i> , <i>after that</i> .	

1.3 Expressing emotions and feelings

Due to the difficulties faced by some learners such as refugees, the personal feelings they wish to express, especially when talking about themselves, their loved ones, their country, etc., are more predictable than would normally be the case.

		EXPRESSIONS	HOST COUNTRY LANGUAGE
1.3.1	Expressing pleasure, joy.	<i>That's great/fantastic!</i> <i>Wonderful!</i>	
1.3.2	Expressing sadness.	<i>I am sad / unhappy.</i> <i>Things are bad/not good for me.</i>	
1.3.3	Expressing hope.	<i>I hope (that) ...</i>	
1.3.4	Expressing disappointment.	<i>What a pity!</i>	
1.3.5	Expressing fear, anxiety.	<i>I am scared.</i> <i>I'm worried about</i> + [noun].	
1.3.6	Expressing relief.	<i>Phew! I feel better!</i>	

1.3.7	Expressing physical pain.	<i>Ouch! My [part of the body] hurts.</i>	
1.3.8	Telling someone you like something.	<i>Ah! Oh! Wonderful! Great! Fantastic! Good! I like + [noun/verb]. What a great + [noun]!</i>	
1.3.9	Saying you do not like something or someone.	<i>What a great + [noun]! I hate + [noun/verb]. I don't like + [noun]. That is not + [adjective].</i>	
1.3.10	Expressing satisfaction. Expressing dissatisfaction, complaining.	<i>Perfect! Great! I'm so pleased! I don't like + [noun].</i>	
1.3.11	Expressing surprise.	<i>Ah? Oh! What? Really?</i>	
1.3.12	Expressing lack of surprise.	<i>(Yes) I know.</i>	
1.3.13	Expressing thanks, gratitude.	<i>Thank you (very much) for + [noun]. It's kind of you to + [verb].</i>	

1.4 Sharing emotions

Learners need to have the language skills to share emotions during their day-to-day social interaction but also to talk about themselves and to talk to other learners.

		EXPRESSIONS	UKUNTRHOST COUNTRY LANGUAGE NGUAGE
1.4.1	Asking about feelings.	<i>Are you OK/all right? What's the matter? What's going on?</i>	
1.4.2	Asking about satisfaction or dissatisfaction.	<i>What's the problem? Is everything OK/all right?</i>	
1.4.3	Consoling, encouraging, comforting.	<i>It/everything will be all right!</i>	
1.4.4	Expressing sympathy.	<i>I understand. You poor thing!</i>	
1.4.5	Reassuring.	<i>It's nothing. It's nothing to worry about.</i>	