



EARTHE

Activity 2

Digital toolkit for innovative curriculum and methodological development

Module 2 – Communication enhancement

Method 2 – Improvisation Games

Case study

Module 2 – Communication Enhancement

Case study - Thinking on Your Feet: Building Confidence Through Improvisation

Related Method and Module - Improvisation Games

Context and Background

Organisation: A non-formal adult learning centre in Eastern Europe, offering re-skilling workshops for unemployed adults and migrants.

Target Group: Adults aged 25–50, mixed gender, diverse cultural and educational backgrounds.

Scope: The centre aimed to help participants strengthen their communication skills and confidence in order to improve employability, particularly for job interviews and group assessments.

Problem / Challenge Presented

Many participants struggled with spontaneous communication. They hesitated when asked unexpected questions, often gave very short answers, or froze under pressure. This was especially evident in job interview simulations and networking situations, where participants reported high levels of anxiety and fear of making mistakes. A method was needed to help them practise adaptability, non-verbal communication, and confidence in real-time interactions.

Actions Taken / Method Applied

The centre introduced Improvisation Games as part of a short skills-training course. The games included:

- Yes-And Story Building: learners collaboratively built stories one sentence at a time, practising acceptance and spontaneity.
- Emotion Translator: participants acted out non-verbal scenarios where others had to guess the context and emotion.

These activities were facilitated in a supportive, non-judgmental environment, emphasising creativity, humour, and peer encouragement.

Outcomes and Results

Participants became more comfortable responding to unexpected prompts and questions. Learners reported paying more attention to body language and tone, which improved their ability to connect with others.

Participants expressed feeling less afraid of “getting it wrong” and more willing to try speaking up in group settings.



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Participants successfully completed real job interviews shortly after the programme, noting that improvisation training helped them “stay calm and flexible.”

Lessons Learned

When learning feels like a game, adults are more open to practising and making mistakes. Improvisation builds both expression and listening. Learners not only became better at speaking, but also at observing and adapting to others.

Without fear of judgement, participants took more risks and grew faster.

Key Success Factors

Strong facilitation that balanced structure with freedom.

Clear, simple instructions that allowed even low-literacy participants to join.

Culturally relevant scenarios, making activities feel practical and relatable.

Group encouragement and laughter, which built trust and reduced anxiety.

Challenges Encountered and How They Were Addressed

Some participants felt embarrassed at first; facilitators addressed this with very simple warm-ups and emphasised that mistakes were part of the game.

Migrant learners sometimes struggled with verbal improvisation; this was managed by integrating more non-verbal skits and gestures to keep them engaged.

With large groups, not everyone could perform equally; smaller breakout groups were introduced to give each participant more practice.

Applicability / Recommendations for Educators

Use improvisation games as low-stakes training tools for confidence and adaptability.

Start with non-verbal activities for mixed-language or low-literacy groups, then progress to verbal skits.

Always frame activities as fun and stress-free—emphasise creativity, not correctness.

Link debrief discussions directly to real-life applications (job interviews, workplace communication, teamwork).

Educators should encourage peer support and highlight strengths observed in each learner’s performance.