



Multilingualism in Prison: Teaching Languages Behind Bars

A guidebook for teachers and trainers in prisons

Contents

1. Organisational Issues
2. Methodologies
3. Materials and Resources

Contributors: Jean-Marie Dubile, Joost de Jager, Elitsa Markova, Paul Talbot, Francine Democrate, Marcus Lemke

Editor: Paul Talbot

A project coordinated by:
 **dieBerater**[®]
Human Concern



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

1 Organisational Issues

Before using the LBB materials it is important that teachers and trainers reflect on some of the organisational issues involved. The experience of the LBB piloting presents the following issues for consideration when planning training with prison inmates and with staff. The points discussed below cannot possibly be seen as proscriptive or otherwise instructional. It is clear that different teachers and trainers will be faced with different teaching contexts, situations and restrictions which will largely define the way the training is conducted. However it is important to highlight some of the 'best practice' that was discovered during the LBB piloting, and we encourage you to try and consider the points discussed below, and reflect on how your working context can facilitate this best practice to the best possible extent. The points below may also serve as starting points for your own ideas, and may encourage creativity and further development. This is highly encouraged and we really welcome you to share your ideas with the LBB community.

Educational programme or practical communication?

LBB materials were designed to form part of an educational offer for foreign-national prison inmates and the staff working with them. Indeed, LBB materials can be used as part of an educational programme. For prisoners, LBB materials provide the gap between language learning and context which is so desperately needed in prison education. For staff, professional development courses and other in-house training are perfect opportunities to introduce language learning for communicating with specific language groups in the prison.

However, when it comes to organising the delivery of LBB-based courses, teachers and trainers might be faced with resistance.

"Why do I want to learn this language?"

"I'm not staying in this country after I leave prison so what does it help me?"

"It is my job to keep order, not to communicate with the inmates!"

These are some of the responses that LBB teachers and trainers were confronted with. However these need not necessarily present a problem if learning language through LBB can be 'sold' to the target group in a way that they can see the benefit it has for them.

For foreign-national prisoners, an LBB course offers them the benefit of being able to communicate on a day-to-day basis with those around them. This is particularly the case for those prisoners from minority groups who may have very few, if any, people with whom they can talk. During the piloting of the course, teachers and trainers were faced with resistance

initially, but once they started getting foreign national prisoners to experience being able to communicate and understand very basic things – whether it is words written in an unfamiliar alphabets or short phrases with practical meaning and purpose – they would soon start to realise the benefit of this. Backed up by positive reinforcement, learners could again experience the basic human social need to communicate. Make it your strategy to get each learner to experience the success of being able to communicate something small – and above all relevant - in the target language, and build upon this.

For staff, problems of resistance are also prevalent. There are differences between the types of staff in the prison and what their needs and expectations are. Whilst this is a gigantic generalisation, the LBB piloting showed that security staff may present a difficult target group to convince of the benefits of learning to communicate with foreign-national inmates, since their role is primarily to control order and not to ‘support’ or ‘be nice’ to the inmates. In contrast, social workers, healthcare workers and educational staff may more easily perceive the benefits – for them and for the inmates they are working with – and be more open to learning. As with the inmates, it is important to ‘sell’ the training in such a way that it meets the direct and immediate needs, and once the learners perceive these needs as being met, their interest in learning is reinforced. To give an example, during the LBB piloting in France, a group of security staff, social workers and healthcare workers took a course in Bulgarian. After a few sessions, one of the security staff reported that he had given an instruction in Bulgarian to one of the Bulgarian-speaking prisoners. Beyond this having the effect of the prisoner understanding the instruction and acting accordingly, the staff member reported that the general level of respect and cooperation from this prisoner and from his Bulgarian peers increased. This was direct result of the staff member being able to communicate with them, on their level, in their language. This improved the atmosphere on the wing, and had positive impact on this staff member’s work. At the end of the course almost all participants on the LBB staff training course wanted more hours, and more languages.

So the first issue that teachers and trainers need to deal with is how LBB can be offered, and how it can be sold to the participants – and also to the management. By demonstrating a positive practical effect on the day-to-day lives of those involved, rather than presenting it only as an educational offer, teachers and trainers may be able to set better foundations for running an effective programme.

Organising courses for foreign-national prisoners

The LBB materials can provide a very positive and engaging experience for learners in prison. They need only be used as part of existing educational activities, but can be used as a core communication programme for those who are new in the prison or those having practical communication difficulties. Indeed the experience of piloting the LBB materials in different European countries showed that by facilitating a feeling of being able to communicate, LBB can have a profound effect on an inmate’s engagement with the others, with the regime, and with other educational opportunities.

Positive learning environment

Learning and communication was most successful in a pleasant learning environment. Basic concerns such as the following should be considered when working with LBB materials:

- clean tables
- fresh flipchart paper
- new pens
- natural light
- fresh air

Positive training approach

To foster this positive environment, teachers and trainers need to maintain a positive attitude. Whilst this goes without saying for education and learning across all target groups, those trainers who piloted LBB found that having a positive attitude to the training and to the learners was particularly conducive to stimulating the communication processes which are key to using LBB materials. Successful teachers and trainers were able to do some of the following:

- Respond positively to every success – what might feel like ‘being patronised’ in your own native language actually serves our fundamental need for positive recognition within the context of foreign language learning.
- Be involved as a participant in the communication – this shows a positive attitude to the learning process, not just to the teaching process. Laugh with the participants, try to encourage humour – even with complete beginners – through body language, hands, feet and images – if they feel they can communicate and understand humour in a foreign language, they will feel positive about learning – and you will feel positive about teaching.

Timing and regularity

Best results were found during the piloting when learning was intensive. With the right approach and enough energy and creativity, teachers and trainers piloting LBB materials for a whole day – 4 hours in the morning and 4 hours in the afternoon, with regular breaks – gave the learners a sufficient amount of immersion in the target language. The learners had good retention of knowledge and enjoyed being able to use this knowledge in practice. Learning in shorter blocks, for example in 90 minute blocks once or twice a week, is seen as less effective for leaning communication skills through LBB. Using LBB as an intensive communication course (or as part of an intensive course) is preferable. This can, of course, be very tiring for both learners and teachers or trainers, and so appropriate methodologies need to be put in place to ensure that nobody completely loses interest.

Regularity is also an issue to consider. Learners were more engaged and participated better in LBB-based courses when they knew what to expect, and when to expect it.

Homework and 'own' materials

Giving the learner a copy of materials for them to keep, take back to their cell and take responsibility for gives learners a feeling of ownership over their learning. Whether it is a full printed copy of the LBB workbook and the flashcard picture dictionary, or pages of the book printed in-house, or photocopies of materials, it is important to collect the materials all together and present them as a package for the learners to keep. Additional blank notebooks may allow literate learners to create their own practical 'personal dictionaries'.

It also enables them to take ownership of the learning outside of the formal learning environment. Setting basic homework exercises such as the picture matching exercises frequently used in the LBB book, or – depending on the level of the learner – creating exercises based on the visual dialogue builders or the flashcard picture dictionary creates an extension of the classroom based learning.

Evaluation, Assessment and Certification

LBB is not yet a formally accredited course. However this does not stop the course from providing meaningful certification to those foreign-national prisoners taking part in it. It is useful to be able to demonstrate and validate the acquisition of learning. This can be beneficial to the prisoner learner in that it provides formalised positive recognition and thus having a strong psycho-social value. It is hard to say what kind of (if any) educational experiences that some foreign-national prisoners may have, and providing even unofficial certification at the end of a course, or even at the end of a module (templates can be found as an annex to this guide) can give the learner a sense of positive recognition and worth that they may not have previously experienced.

Given that each prison will have different needs and different working contexts it is inappropriate to develop any universal evaluation system for either prisoner learners or staff. Instead, the LBB project developed an adaptable evaluation system for both target groups. It gives teachers and trainers the possibility to set (in collaboration with prison staff and management) the specific functional competences required.

Using the Excel spreadsheet template (see figure 1.1) under each unit of the course, the teacher or trainer can use the following form to list the intended learning outcomes. From these learning outcomes, the teacher or trainer can identify which are relevant for each individual learner by putting an X into the corresponding cell in the blue column. In the grey columns, the teacher or trainer can type in an X in each line, according to the extent to which the skill has been fulfilled (see figure 1.2).

In addition to the unit-pages there is an assessment card, in which all data is collected from the unit pages, is calculated and presented in the form of an assessment overview and certificate, shown in figure 1.3.

Figure 1.1. Screenshot of the assessment spreadsheet

(C) NUMBER OF FUNCTIONS ASSESSED	10	(D) AVERAGE SCORE [(B) / (C)]	2	UNIT OUTCOME	FUNCTIONAL				
(A) SUB TOTALS					1	10	9		
(B) TOTAL SCORE FOR UNIT					20				
I CAN:					Important (X)	Not yet (X)	Basic (X)	Functional (X)	Independent (X)
Introduce myself appropriately					X			X	
Find out the detainee's name and basic personal information					X			X	
Find out where the detainee comes from					X			X	
Find out what language the detainee speaks					X			X	
Inform the detainee which personal items are (not) permitted in the facility					X		X		
Ask the detainee to complete a form					X			X	
Identify a range of professions in the facility					X	X			
Understand when a detainee expresses gratitude and respond appropriately					X				X
Use affirmative and negative statements: "yes" and "no"					X				X
Use terms of politeness such as "please" and "thank you"					X				X
...									
...									
...									
...									

Figure 1.2. – Assessment Key

ASSESSMENT KEY		
BASIC	FUNCTIONAL	INDEPENDENT
Attempts to accomplish the task, but struggles when using linguistic resources alone	Can accomplish the task and achieve the intended outcome using linguistic resources with additional support	Can accomplish the task and achieve the intended outcome based on independent linguistic resources.

The above method helps in setting and working towards formative evaluation criteria. This is particularly useful with prisoner learners, as you can set short-term, realistic goals and immediately show progress. Depending on the length of the course, the teacher or trainer can produce regular evaluation updates, enabling the learner to chart their progress. At the end of the course, all progress assessments can be combined and issued along with a certificate of attendance.

Figure 1.3. Certificate of Achievement

Languages Behind Bars
Communication Competence Assessment



NAME: Please insert name here

OVERVIEW OF UNITS	No. of Assessment Criteria	Average Score
People, Identity and Nationality	10	2,00
Your Space		
Health, Religion and Culture	15	2,67
Living Together	15	2,67
What Next?		

OVERALL OUTCOME:

**INDEPENDENT across
3 of 5 units**

DATE

SIGNED

POSITION



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Prisoner-learner involvement

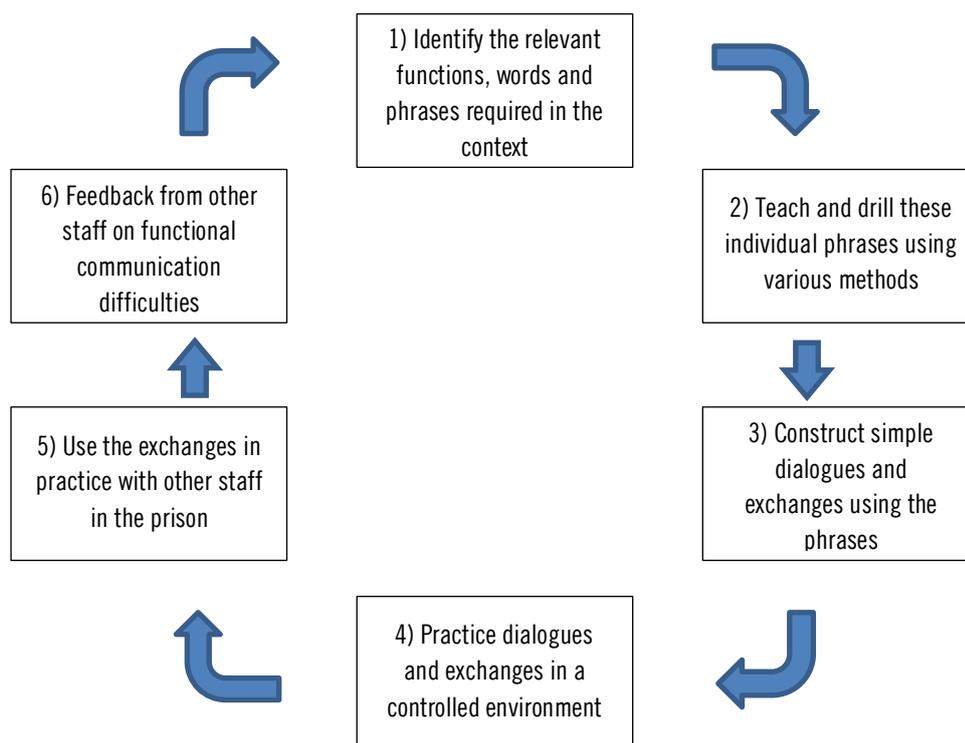
I, it is highly encouraged to involve prisoner learners in the teaching process. This could involve engaging cooperative and bi-, or multi-lingual prisoner learners as teaching assistants, or involving them in translating materials into new languages. Evidence from the piloting in Bulgaria indicated a significant potential for teachers and trainers to adapt parts of the teacher training course (*Multilingualism in Prison – Teaching Languages Behind Bars*) to actually train certain prisoner learners – those who match any given criteria that you may wish to set - as communication teachers.

Support from other staff

The 2011 Directorate General for Education and Culture commissioned review of Prison Education and Training in Europe stated that “prison officers should be viewed as key players in encouraging prison education” since “they have the potential to motivate prisoners to engage in education as they are the people that have most contact time with them” (p13). This could not be more relevant than it is with LBB. The goal of LBB is to promote communication between foreign-national prisoners and the staff who work with them. As a teacher or trainer who is trying to develop practical communication skills with learners in prison, what you are teaching is intended to be directly used on a day-to-day basis by your learners in their communication with prison staff. If the prison staff do not understand the purpose of this training, and are unable or unwilling to support and encourage this communication on the wing (i.e. by getting frustrated or even laughing at an inmate who is trying to communicate something they have learned) then the prisoner will feel unable to utilise their new skills, underlining any previous negative experiences in education and causing them to disengage with their learning. This is counterproductive, and it is imperative that staff be aware that they are learning to try and communicate in the prison, and that staff actively encourage this communication, providing positive reinforcement wherever possible.

In fact a way to encourage this support is to have prison staff actively contribute to defining the learning goals of LBB. The LBB materials cover a wide range of vocabulary, phrases and situations in prison. Since the needs of detainees vary considerably across institutions and individuals, there can be no one approach to conducting LBB training. Instead, what the LBB materials offer is a clear objective-driven toolkit that teachers and trainers can use to assist them with their own lesson planning and implementation. Teachers and trainers can use the objectives set out in the LBB framework (see figure 1.1, above), along with the dialogues and training materials, but are encouraged to identify language learning objectives based on the relevant local context, with the help of the staff who are working with foreign-national prisoners, and to use the materials to help detainees create their own dialogues. The process of setting criteria and teaching it may be reflected in figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4



Organising courses for prison staff

The LBB materials can provide the basis of a very useful training for prison staff of all ranks and departments, enabling them to communicate better with specific language groups in the prison. As with running the course with prison inmates, there are a number of organisational issues to contend with, and suggestions for optimising the positive impact of any such training.

Mixed staff groups

Cross-departmental communication is an issue in all organisations, and prisons are no exception. For prison staff to make the most out of any kind of communication training, it is ideal to use mixed professional groups – not only security staff, but also social workers, healthcare workers, educational staff and others who are involved in the overall support and management of foreign national prisoners. This has multiple benefits. Firstly the different staff groups get to learn the communication needs and difficulties of each other, and can help clarify the important communication skills needed in any given context. Secondly, different professional groups may have different attitudes to learning and professional development. Bringing groups together and forcing them to work together reduces some of the challenges caused by professional cultures. Thirdly it promotes better communication and understanding between these groups. They have often very different and conflicting mandates when it comes to the day-to-day operations of the prison. By using LBB training as a means to promote inter-departmental teamwork and cooperation, you can have a positive effect on the overall working environment and communication culture in the prison.

Native speaking trainers

Whilst this may be an obvious point when it comes to language training, the use of native speakers should be underlined. Unlike the training with the prisoners which focuses on the language around them – i.e. a second language, where they will be surrounded by native speakers, the training with the staff is likely to focus on the language as a foreign language, and there may be few other native speakers than the prisoners with whom they are communicating. However beyond the need to be able to practice communicating with a native speaker of the target language, having a trainer with cultural knowledge about the countries in which the target language is spoken may provide staff with the opportunity to learn more about the cultural behaviour of these specific groups of foreign-national inmates.

Training location

The prison is a very restrictive environment in which to conduct training, not only physically but also mentally. To gain the attention and motivation of staff to learn communication it might not be the best thing to organise a training seminar within the confines of the prison itself. Alternatively, as was successfully piloted during the LBB project, it may be possible to find an external venue for the training, perhaps somewhere with a complete change of scenery, with opportunities to work outside, either in a city or countryside setting. This is a common approach for teambuilding activities and can be successfully used to deliver either intensive or regular long-term training seminars for prison staff.

Support from top management

Absolute commitment for communication training by top management in the prison is essential to ensuring a regular, well-attended training seminar. It is as important to 'sell' the idea to top prison management as it is to 'sell' it to the target groups involved. Having a clear view of how an LBB language training seminar will meet the needs and demands of the prison management will be critical to acquiring this support and commitment.

Support from top-management can be enhanced by fully utilising the criteria setting, assessment and monitoring approaches outlined above in figures 1.1 to 1.3, and can follow a similar process to that outlined in figure 1.4.

2 Methodologies

Each teacher and trainer has their own approaches and methodologies to teaching languages. In fact, the LBB materials were designed to be used flexibly, and to be easily incorporated into existing didactic structures. Nonetheless, it is important to present some of the best practice that was experienced through the LBB pilot courses. This can be perhaps a source of inspiration for both new and seasoned language-teaching professionals.

Methods will be different between the different target groups – foreign-national prisoners may respond to different methods than prison staff. However differences within these groups will also be important to consider.

Focus on all four skills

Whatever methodologies used in an LBB communication course, there should be the opportunity to address all four language skills - reading, writing, speaking and listening. These skills don't only serve their own individual functions, but strengthen the overall retention of knowledge and skills. Where learners learn to say a certain word or phrase, this can be supported by encouraging them to write this down. The introduction of authentic texts for reading practice should be encouraged – examples can be found on the LBB community platform. If the teacher/trainer can locate or create authentic listening materials, this will also help to support the overall development of communication skills.

Using Multiple Intelligences

The LBB materials are designed to be used within a multiple intelligences framework. That is, teachers and trainers are encouraged to adapt them as much as possible to the various learning styles of their diverse learners. Multiple intelligences are a fascinating way of encourage the learning of language and communication, and work well with all target groups. This is because of the diversity of methods used and the way these methods interact with the individual learning styles. Not all methods work with all learners, but by providing a mix of methods across each of the learning aims, teachers and trainers will increase the chance that at least some of the learners will respond better to some of the methods. The LBB materials are flexible and adaptable. This means that you can find various approaches to using the materials in existing courses or as standalone communication programmes across all of the multiple intelligences.

Language learning tasks can be developed around different types of intelligences. For instance, an activity such as that of writing the lyrics of a song implies the use of linguistic and musical intelligences. In a role-play where learners may need to express their feelings while being

considerate of the feelings of others, linguistic, intrapersonal and interpersonal talents are needed. In a task where learners need to mime the title of a film for others to guess, the bodily-kinaesthetic and interpersonal abilities are brought into play. MIT is an excellent tool to enable teachers to plan attractive ways to provide learners with language learning practice. Within this cognitive model, language is not seen as limited to a linguistics perspective but encompasses all aspects of communication (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 117). The MIT instructional perspective proposes that language learning, that is to say, developing learners' verbal linguistic intelligence in a foreign/second language, can be favoured by using a variety of learning tasks which call upon diverse intelligences. The teacher offers a choice of tasks, not to teach to specific intelligences but to give learners the opportunity of apprehending information in their preferred way, as well as to promote the development of their other intelligences.

Morgan and Fonseca (2004):125-6

Here are ways in which the different intelligences might be used to enhance progress and engagement in an LBB communication course:

Musical-Rhythmic Intelligences

Some learners are highly perceptive of rhythm, pitch and melody. Uses of this intelligence may be passive, such as playing alpha-wave music in the background to stimulate creative processes, highlighting the pauses between thoughts and utterances, slowing down speech, or encouraging people to speak with better rhythm. It can create a better mood amongst learners, boosting concentration and cutting out distracting noises from outside. For prisoner learners it may promote a feeling of being away from the prison environment, and promote positive emotional connections to learning. It could also be used actively:

- **Musical production of language:** Prisoner learners might find it fun to turn a basic dialogue into a rhythmic rap – with a cliché ‘Chicago Bulls’ baseball cap or something similar as a prop. Any music style could be used, depending on the interests and tastes of the learners.
- **Rhythmic production of language:** The questions “can I make a phone call?” and “can I go to the library” have two completely different rhythms, the first having 4 short syllables followed by two long syllables” / - - - - --- --- / and the second having 5 short syllables, 1 long syllable, and finishing with 2 short syllables: / - - - - - --- - - /. The rhythm of the questions can be tapped out on the table. There are lots of possible ways a teacher or trainer can work with this. For instance the group could start tapping the whole sentence, then the teacher or trainer can write up one of the words of the sentence, and the group have to then replace the tapping with the word, i.e. with the question “can I make a phone call”, if the teacher or trainer gives the word “phone”, the learners should tap/speak out the sentence as: / - - - - phone --- /.

- **Choral Repetition:** The main focus of LBB is to promote verbal communication – although the other skills are important in strengthening the overall language and communication competence – and so accurate pronunciation should be highly regarded. In practice, if a prisoner or a staff member listens to someone speak with limited accuracy, they will understand what is being said, and will often unconsciously fill in the gaps in the meaning. If they are speaking to someone who cannot correctly pronounce or articulate what they are saying, they are less likely to pay attention or to even try to understand what this person is trying to communicate. Using native speaker teachers and trainers to drill sounds and words in a choral fashion with the groups and with individuals is an important way to encourage correct pronunciation and effective communication.

Visual-Spatial Intelligences

Some learners are highly perceptive of form, shape, line, space and colour, can create strong mental images, and make strong associations between images, meaning and language. Connecting words, phrases and dialogues with visual imagery is a core focus of the LBB tools. Here are some ideas for using the LBB materials in a visual-spatial way:

- **Picture Dialogues:** The teacher/trainer can write appropriate dialogues, based on the level of the learner and the aim of the lesson. The LBB visual dialogue builders can be cut up and learners can try to find an appropriate set of images to build the dialogue. Learners can then build their own dialogues, according to their level and ability.
- **Finding relevant images:** The LBB flashcards and picture dictionary can be used by learners to identify all of the relevant images (items, people, activities) related to particular dialogues, instructions, texts etc. Once selected by the learners, the teacher/trainer can work on the vocabulary based around these images.
- **Mixing and matching:** Matching words with pictures continue to be the staple of many language learning activities for many teachers and trainers. The LBB workbook provides a number of exercises based on picture-vocabulary matching, whilst the flashcards and picture dictionary as well as the visual dialogue builders offer extended opportunities for teachers and trainers to create their own visual activities.
- **Learners' visual input:** Encouraging learner input (identifying the words that they want to know), learners might be asked to draw or create visuals themselves, which can provide the basis for vocabulary work.
- **Using original images:** Whilst the LBB materials use exclusively the LBB artwork, teachers and trainers may consider – where feasible – to use original images based on the prison itself in which the learners are based. This could be photographs or other

images authorised by the prison management to help provide clear visual context for learning language and communication.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligences

Some learners are driven by numbers and causal structures, working with patterns and reasoning. This may be something that has not been fostered in an educational context, but which they use on a daily task basis. An approach to working with logical-mathematical intelligences may include providing a solution and then working backwards to identify the problem, or by creating a puzzle which needs to be solved. This could be integrated into an LBB communication course in the following ways:

- **Answers and Questions:** Using images, the teacher or trainer can illustrate a dialogue between two people in the prison with a question-answer format. The answer can be given, for example “No you cannot send an email” and the task of the learners would be to identify the question leading to this answer, which could be selected from a series of options. To make it more complicated, the learners may have to find the answer independently, without multiple choice selections, or the answer could be made more open to interpretation: providing the answer “No you cannot”, or simply “No”, the learners can generate large lists of questions which would result in a negative answer. The role of the teacher is then to ensure that these questions – driven by the meaning that the learner has attached to them – are correctly formulated, before going on to practice them in different ways
- **Gaining privileges:** Once learners have a good grounding in some of the structures and vocabulary concerning rules and regulations in the prison, the teacher or trainer could set up an exercise in which learners are shown 4 fictional characters (perhaps using the characters from the workbook) and told that 3 of them have earned privileges and 1 of them has received a punishment. The teacher or trainer could write a short text about each one, and the learners can then determine which one had received the punishment and which ones had earned the privileges. Any variation on this kind of exercise would work to stimulate logical-mathematical intelligences, but need to be very context driven – it is impossible to generate universal examples as each prison will have its own systems and sets of rules.

Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligences

Motor reactions are important in our interactions with the world around us, and all experiences have an effect on our “interconnected system of muscles, nerves, bones, tissues, organs and internal secretions” (Morgan and Fonseca, 2004:128), and these experiences can be harnessed

in learning languages and communication. In an LBB communication course, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligences might be used in some of the following ways:

- **Role play and drama:** Not all teachers and trainers like using role plays in language teaching settings. They can be artificial and forced. However the value in getting people moving should not be overlooked. Acting out different professional roles with question and answer dialogues can be fun and empowering.
- **Games:** To work on practicing question and answer formations, learners (if there are enough in the group) could be assigned a number of words each, written on individual pieces of card. The teacher or trainer writes or dictates a question (or an answer, statement or other utterance) and the learners have to rearrange themselves into the correct order, each selecting the most appropriate word from their collection, and standing in line to produce the correct answer (or the correct question to the answer that was given, or whichever other corresponding utterance the teacher or trainer is trying to practice). It is important not to see games in a childish way – particularly when working with prisoner learners – but to encourage and positively reward success, and to get involved yourself.
- **Surveys:** A simple way of getting people moving is to have them walk around and find out information from other learners. This could be basic personal information, information on likes or dislikes, or anything else that the teacher or trainer feels is appropriate to the learning aims and the learner group.
- **Breaking down everything into component sounds:** Since the focus of LBB communication courses are not explicitly on grammatical structures (although they can be fully integrated into full language learning courses if required) there should be a strong focus on the production of practical vocal communication. Producing correct sounds requires bodily-kinaesthetic intelligences – the lips, the tongue, the cheeks, the palate, the throat and the lungs are all important parts of language production. It is also a good way of encouraging a feeling of success early on. Learners may get very easily frustrated with failure to produce correct language, so tasks need to be success oriented. A way to achieve this could be by working from individual sounds. For example showing a picture of an officer, choral drilling the individual phonetic sounds /h - f I - s ə /, and bringing them together to create the word. This word can then be built into a short phrase such as “Hello Officer Smith” or “I am an officer”, which can gradually be built into dialogues.

Interpersonal Intelligences:

Central to communication is the necessity to understand others and to work cooperatively and effectively together as part of a dynamic social process. Given the huge social, cultural and status inequality between prison staff and foreign-national prisoners, and also within and

amongst these groups, the ability to “harmonize with others, to understand their perspectives and opinions, but also to convince others in order to achieve personal objectives” (Morgan and Fonseca, 2004:128) is an important aspect to underline in an LBB communication course, where it can “can help foster the development of social skills needed to interact and communicate equitably with diverse groups of people” (*ibid*)

- **Group mind-mapping:** Group activities can be used to identify what learners want to know in the target language. For example having an answer “Yes, you can” or “No, you can’t” in the middle, groups can collectively identify possible questions to these answers.
- **Peer teaching:** This was a very useful aspect identified in the LBB pilot courses. Leadership qualities can be positively utilised here. There may be some prisoner learners who may quickly grasp the target language, and who may have sufficient command of other languages spoken within the group. Giving additional responsibilities to these learners – if they wish – to support the learning processes through providing explanations or stepping in to assist individuals with their tasks – is a good way of encouraging their participation and engagement with the target language.
- **Mixed group and pair work:** Activities that can be completed and problems that can be solved in pairs and small groups helps to foster the interpersonal intelligence in language learning. It is good to encourage work between groups that would normally not have much contact – if there is no danger of provoking conflict in a gang-culture. It is perhaps most important when training staff, where individuals of different professional sectors within the prison can work together, encouraging understanding of each other’s role in the communication process within the prison, whilst promoting an enhanced cooperation and communication culture between and amongst prison staff. The activities could be based on those in the workbook, or on other materials or activities developed by the trainer.
- **Chain methods:** Chain methods are an effective way of promoting the quick learning of vocabulary and phrases. An example could be:

Person 1 to Person 2: What is your name?

Person 2 to Person 1: My name is Jonathan.

Person 1 to all: His name is Jonathan.

Person 2 to Person 3: What is your name?

Person 3 to Person 2: My name is Paolo.

Person 2 to all: His name is Paolo.

Person 3 to Person 4: What is your name? ... etc

If the teacher or trainer is building dialogues based on communication in the prison setting, either using the workbook or being creative with the visual dialogue builders, chain methods

can be a good way to encourage the practicing of these dialogues in a group setting. The teacher or trainer should always jump in with positive and enthusiastic feedback on correct production.

Intrapersonal Intelligences

The ability to connect with oneself, knowing personal capacities and limitations, moods, intentions, motivations and desires can help optimise learning and performance. In this way, LBB can be used to promote the 'learning to learn' competences, but it can also take advantage of learners' ability to work with their feelings, emotions, self-reflection and metacognitive skills. Focusing on personal goals and individual work helps to provide direction to their learning and improve their progress. This is quite an abstract intelligence, but somehow underlines the way in which the learning is 'sold' to the learners. It can be used to focus learners' attention on the personal reasons and benefits of learning to communicate in this setting. Ways to apply it concretely in an LBB course may include the following:

- **Finding emotional connections:** Connecting the places in the prison (canteen, cell, corridor, workshop, kitchen, exercise yard, etc.) or staff in the prison (officer, social worker, doctor, etc.) with personal feelings and emotions such as happy, sad, scared, calm or sick could be a way of facilitating an emotional connection with the relevant target language.
- **Setting individual homework:** As a rule, homework exercises are a great way of encouraging prisoner learners to engage with their learning outside of the classroom, particularly if courses are run along a regular schedule and with sufficient intensity to keep the themes present in their daily lives. As discussed above in terms of the organisation of courses, it is good to provide a set of personal materials for the prisoner learners for this purpose. Homework is less appropriate for training with prison staff, due to time restrictions.
- **Personal goal setting and learner input:** It is important that learners – both foreign-national prisoners and staff – indicate their own needs. This is perhaps easier with staff who will be able to articulate their needs in their native language – although a teacher/trainer should always insist on staying in the target language as much as possible. For prisoner learners this will be much harder, although some methods can be used to encourage this. With drawing, for example, learners can be presented with a theme (for example "I like" or "I don't like") purely through visual form. The teacher draws a heart or a smiley face saying "I like" and then draws objects around this, such as a cat, or an ice cream, or a book, and saying "I like ice cream", "I like cats" etc. Learners can then draw what they like, and the teacher can provide the word in spoken and written form. This approach can also be used for rules and regulations – once the

function associated with “you can / I can” and “you cannot / I cannot” is established by the trainer, the learners can draw the images associated with what they want to say.

- **Encouraging a learning diary:** The LBB workbook provides the opportunity to keep a record of key words and phrases in learners’ own native languages. However, where possible, each learner should also have the opportunity to write their own notes and reflect on what they have learned, identifying how they have been able to use their new communication competences in practice, and making notes of words or phrases that they still need. This can be entirely in their own native language – if indeed they are literate at all – and doesn’t need to be shared with others, but provides them something to record their own experiences, should they wish to do so.

Naturalist Intelligences

This typically concerns ones connection to the enjoyment of the natural world, but also encompasses the ability to identify and relate to artefacts in the immediate environment. It is perhaps the most difficult of the intelligences to focus on in a restrictive prison environment, and so may be best suited to prison staff on courses outside of the prison. However, creative teachers and trainers may be able to bring in natural or environmental elements into LBB communication courses also in the prison.

- **Natural components of items:** When working on the vocabulary relating to the prison, it may be possible with some learners to draw upon the natural components of the artefacts in question. Paper comes from trees, keys are made from metals, clothes may be made of cotton which is naturally produced.
- **Making comparisons with the natural world:** With enough creativity, objects and places in the prison may be compared with elements of the outside, natural world – trees, rocks, vegetables or pieces of fruit – in the same way that clouds sometimes remind us of faces. Whilst this approach was not tried in an LBB piloting, the right teacher, with enough time and confidence to present these ideas to their learners, may find something that works.
- **Learning outside:** More suited to out-of-house staff training seminars (and subject to good weather) learning activities can be conducted in the natural environment.

3 Following a course plan?

The LBB materials can be used to provide context to existing educational language programmes, or they can be used independently as the basis of a communication course. If teachers and trainers wish to run a prison communication course with foreign-national inmates or with prison staff, then the LBB workbook provides a good structure for addressing this. As with the methods above, teachers and trainers will wish to adapt the structure according to the needs and levels of the learners, but the following outline provides a basic overview of a course plan, with some possible approaches to the training. To begin with, it is important to cover points relating to the European Framework and to alphabetisation.

The European Reference Framework for Languages

LBB materials are designed to be used flexibly and adaptably across A1-B2 levels. A learner who is already proficient in the general language may lack the specific terminology required to get by in the prison environment, and so the materials can be used to support learners at higher levels. However, it is generally assumed that most learners taking part in LBB communication courses will be of lower levels, and so teachers and trainers should always bear in mind the A1 and A2 level descriptors under the European Reference Framework for Languages, adapted to the context of the prison environment:

	A1	A2
Listening	I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family, staff in the prison and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal information, items in the prison, rooms and locations in the prison, daily routines and activities). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.
Reading	I can understand familiar names, words, rules, instructions and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in booklets.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as rules, instructions and schedules and I can understand short simple personal letters. I can understand basic forms such as may be required to arrange visits, legal counsel etc.
Spoken Interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.

Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I sleep, other inmates and key staff in the prison, as well as my family.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms the people around me, including prison staff, as well as my family. I can describe in simple terms living conditions, and can ask basic questions to meet my immediate needs.
Writing	I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address.	I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example requesting something from the authorities.

A course plan should consider how to address the points raised above. In addition, more specific communication functions may be necessary, such as those listed in the LBB skills framework (Annex 2) which can be agreed upon – and further developed – in collaboration with prison staff and administration to ensure maximum coherence and compatibility to local communication conditions.

Alphabetisation

For some learners the target language will be in a different alphabetic script completely. Many others may be illiterate in their native language. Given this it may often be necessary to begin any language or communication course with basic alphabetisation. The LBB materials do not address alphabetisation since there are already many existing tools and materials available for working on this topic. Nonetheless, this can be done in combination with learning sounds and words, which can be supported by the visual elements of the LBB materials – for example using images of prison staff, learning their titles (officer, social worker, doctor, etc.) in combination with learning how these words are made up of individual sounds, and how these individual sounds relate to the alphabet.

An example course plan based on the LBB materials

The following plan enables a sequential and structured approach to teaching communication using the LBB materials, either to prisoners or to staff. The workbook complements this structure and provides a foundation for planning and delivering individual classes, and can provide inspiration for content.

Not all parts of the course will be relevant to the learner, and so the teacher or trainer should have the discretion to adapt the course accordingly. The fifth section on ‘what next’ covers material relevant to preparing for the outside world, some of which may be more suitable for higher levels, or will be more useful for some groups of prison staff, although there is nothing preventing the language being reduced down to the bare essentials when working with lower level groups.

1. People, Identity and Nationality

- 1.1. Introduction - key people in the prison – detainee, officer etc.
- 1.2. Introducing yourself
- 1.3. Saying where you are from and what language you speak
- 1.4. Filling out basic forms
- 1.5. Understanding basic phrases
- 1.6. Identifying basic personal items in the prison
- 1.7. Rules – knowing what is permitted and not-permitted
- 1.8. Expanding on key people in prison
- 1.9. Introduction to making and receiving spoken requests with “please” and “thank you”

2. Your Space

- 2.1. Introduction - the cell and items in the cell
- 2.2. Identifying other places in the prison
- 2.3. Everyday individual activities and routines
- 2.4. Describing the cell and basic living situation
- 2.5. Items and furniture in the cell
- 2.6. Rules – knowing what activities you can and cannot do in relation to ‘your space’.

3. Health, Religion and Culture

- 3.1. Introduction – the human body
- 3.2. Describing illnesses and ailments and being able to declare emergencies
- 3.3. Making requests - seeing a member of staff (i.e. a doctor)
- 3.4. Understanding basic medical phrases
- 3.5. Informing of your religion, talking about religion and culture
- 3.6. Making requests – receiving items (i.e. religious texts)
- 3.7. Expressing dietary requirements (i.e. for religious purposes, fasting etc.)

4 – Living Together

- 4.1. Introduction – review of activities in the prison
- 4.2. Rules - knowing what activities you can and cannot do in relation to general activities
- 4.3. Talking about jobs in the prison
- 4.4. Talking about vocational training and future job opportunities
- 4.5. Talking about general education and skills
- 4.6. Talking about earning money
- 4.7. Making requests – contacting the outside world
- 4.8. Rules – specific rules and regulations of the prison
- 4.9. Communicating information about sanctions and privileges

5 – What’s Next?

- 5.1. Introduction – the usage of the word ‘release’
- 5.2. Understanding information for preparing for release
- 5.3. Asking questions about release
- 5.4. Legal things to consider after release (deportation, extradition, electronic tags etc.)
- 5.5. Practical things to consider after release (accommodation, family, work, education etc.)
- 5.6. Discussing accommodation possibilities
- 5.7. Jobs and job interviews
- 5.8. Certificates and qualifications
- 5.9. Talking about deportation

3 Materials and Resources

LBB has been designed and developed in order to be flexible and adaptable and to be further developed in the future. In this final, short module you will be introduced to some complementary materials that you will be able to use in combination with the LBB materials, and see ways that have been built into the programme to help you move forward with communication training in prisons in Europe.

Identification of further resources

The first resource that you should be familiar with is the Prison Translator. The Prison Translator was one of the key inspiring concepts behind LBB. It is a co-production between the European Prison Education Association and the Prisons Canton Zurich (PCZ) that primarily intends to simplify communication between prison staff and arrested persons.

The Prison Translator provides direct translations between 21 different languages on a large number of topics, and in far more detail than could be included in the LBB materials. The LBB materials served to provide a didactic tool that could be used in collaboration with the Prison Translator, and teachers and trainers are encouraged to use the material in the Prison Translator to provide more depth and substance to their lessons. The Prison Translator can be accessed [here](#).

The second very relevant resource is The English Nexus Offender Learning Project, co-funded by the European Integration Fund via the Home Office and the Bell Foundation. It aims to address the communication needs of 'foreign nationals' and other people in prison with limited English proficiency, and facilitate their access to qualifications, support, and programmes inside prison designed to tackle mental health problems, addiction and other factors that lead to reoffending.

The project produced materials designed to meet the real-life needs of ESOL (English for Speakers of other Languages) prisoners, and providing specialised teacher training and networking opportunities. The materials combine the acquisition of English language skills with the skills and understanding required to survive in prison, access training and offender behaviour management programmes, and participate in society and the workplace upon release. The resources were intended to help to raise standards in teaching and learning across prisons in the UK for this under-represented cohort of learners, and in doing so, impact positively on social inclusion and cohesion (inside and outside prison) and make an important rehabilitative contribution. They comprise sets of teacher's notes and activity sheets for learners, audio and video resources, self-access workbooks and online continuing professional development modules for teachers. The project information and materials can be accessed [here](#).

Developing your own resources

Localised Resources

Once you have a framework for communication training in the prison context, you are at liberty to create your own materials based on the context that you work in. If you are able to use photographic material from the specific areas and activities that take place in your own working context, you can integrate these into your courses to provide added-value to course implementation at a local level.

Sharing Resources

In addition to this, you are encouraged to share any new material that you might create through your own teaching. This can be shared on the LBB Community Platform.

New languages using LBBx

The current workbook is available in English, French, German, Dutch and Bulgarian (Cyrillic Text). However, every word, sentence and exercise in the workbook is also coded in LBBx, with a translation system that enables teachers (or indeed multilingual prisoner learners) to translate the material into additional languages. These can be sent back to an international LBB representative (the original 6 partners or the EPEA) who can organise with you a way of reproducing the workbook, either in digital or in full printed form.

Whilst these future productions will need to be financed either through European, local or private funds, it will be necessary that all final language versions be made freely available in digital form for anybody to access.