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SPEAK & SPICE

RECIPES FOR CULTURAL CONNECTION

Methodological Toolkit for Trainers - Guidelines for Content Development



Purpose of the Toolkit

This toolkit is a practical guide that helps trainers plan and deliver culinary-based language workshops for adult learners, especially adult migrants, in community-based and non-formal education contexts.

The toolkit supports trainers to:

- design workshops that combine language learning and cooking
- create a safe environment where learners feel comfortable speaking
- build sessions around real communication, not formal testing
- support inclusion and intercultural exchange
- use simple, repeatable methods that work with mixed groups

The overall purpose is to help learners leave the session feeling that they have spoken, participated, and gained confidence to communicate in real-life situations.

PART 1: Introduction to Culinary-Based Language Learning

Overview

This section introduces the SPEAK & SPICE approach to culinary-based language learning and explains how cooking and shared food activities support language development, confidence, and social inclusion among adult migrants. It presents the key methodological principles grounded in adult learning, non-formal education, and intercultural practice.

By the end of this section, educators will understand why culinary-based learning is effective and how its core principles can be applied to support meaningful communication and participation in non-formal language workshops.



Introduction to Culinary-Based Language Learning

Culinary-based language learning is an approach where adult learners develop language skills through cooking and shared food activities, rather than through classroom-only instruction. In SPEAK & SPICE, the kitchen becomes a “real-life learning space” where language appears naturally because participants must collaborate, ask for help, follow steps, and communicate preferences while preparing food together.

Instead of focusing on correctness or grammar performance, the method supports functional communication, confidence, and participation. Learners practise language in short and meaningful moments, such as:

- “Where is the bowl?”
- “Can you pass me the salt?”
- “I cut, you mix.”
- “How much water?”
- “It’s ready.”
- “I like it / I don’t like it.”

This creates an environment that feels safe, practical, social, and motivating, which is especially valuable for adult migrants who may feel anxious or discouraged in traditional classroom settings.

Why culinary-based learning is effective

Culinary-based learning is effective because it naturally combines context, repetition, interaction, and emotion — key ingredients for adult learning and language development.

Food-based learning works well because it provides:

- Real communication needs: learners speak to complete tasks (*asking questions, requesting items, confirming steps, negotiating roles*).



- Immediate context: vocabulary is supported by real objects and actions (*ingredients, tools, movements, smells, textures*).
 - Natural repetition: learners repeat key verbs and phrases without it feeling artificial (*wash, cut, mix, add, taste, cook, serve*).
 - Motivation and emotional safety: the atmosphere is informal and supportive, and cooking shifts attention away from “being correct” towards doing something meaningful together.
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Who this toolkit is for

This toolkit is designed for professionals and community actors who work with adult learners in non-formal contexts, including:

- adult educators and language trainers
- integration and inclusion practitioners
- community organisations / NGOs
- volunteers or facilitators running learning groups
- community centres, libraries, women’s associations, local initiatives

It is particularly useful for trainers who:

- work with beginner learners (A1–A2) or mixed levels
 - support participants who lack confidence in speaking
 - facilitate intercultural or community-based learning activities
 - need methods that work without heavy materials or complex technology
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Overview of the Methodology for Culinary-Based Language Learning

The SPEAK & SPICE methodology is grounded in adult learning and non-formal education principles, as well as practice-based approaches to language learning and intercultural education.

The methodology reflects widely used adult learning principles:

- adults learn best when learning is relevant and practical
- active “learning-by-doing” increases engagement and retention



- emotional safety supports participation and risk-taking (speaking)
- social learning builds motivation and belonging
- multisensory learning improves memory (seeing, touching, smelling, tasting)

Culinary-based language learning uses cooking as a natural environment for language practice. Learners do not study language first and then try to apply it later. Instead, language emerges while participants prepare food together: they request tools, follow steps, negotiate roles, and share opinions. This creates a low-pressure setting where speaking feels useful and achievable.

Cooking naturally generates communication that mirrors daily life:

- requesting and sharing: "Can I have...?", "Pass me...", "Where is...?"
- confirming and clarifying: "Like this?", "Is it enough?", "What's next?"
- cooperating: "You cut, I mix."
- expressing opinion: "I like it." / "It's spicy."
- storytelling and exchange: "In my country we cook this with..."

The SPEAK&SPICE workshop design, therefore, prioritises these five key elements as core conditions for language development and social inclusion:

1) Learning through doing. Language is introduced through real actions using a simple pattern: *show* → *say* → *repeat* → *do*. For example, the trainer shows an onion, says "onion", demonstrates "cut the onion", then learners repeat and do it immediately.

2) Intercultural learning. Cooking creates natural opportunities for sharing traditions, memories, and personal experiences connected to food. Learners exchange knowledge about recipes and customs in a respectful way, which builds trust and curiosity.

3) Scaffolded language support. Trainers support speaking without pressure by modelling short phrases, using visual cues, repeating key language in context, and gently reformulating learner attempts. Instead of correcting mistakes directly, trainers provide natural examples learners can reuse, helping them expand from



simple words to more complete and confident expressions. For example, when a learner says *"I need salt"*, the trainer models *"Great — Can I have the salt, please?"*

4) Participation-based communication. Progress is measured through participation rather than accuracy. One-word answers, gestures, and partial phrases are accepted as meaningful communication. Learners gradually move from single words to phrases and simple sentences, building confidence and fluency at their own pace within a supportive group environment.

5) Social integration. Working together on a shared task encourages cooperation, peer support, and social bonding. By sharing roles and creating a meal together, learners experience a sense of belonging and collective achievement. These interactions strengthen social connections and support integration beyond the language-learning context.

For adult migrants, this approach supports both language development and well-being:

- increased confidence to speak in a safe setting
- functional vocabulary for everyday life
- reduced fear of mistakes
- inclusion of learners with low literacy (action-based entry points)
- stronger social connections and sense of belonging
- intercultural dialogue through food and storytelling

A successful session is one where learners leave feeling: *"I spoke, I participated, I belong."*

Reflection questions for educators

- *Which elements of culinary-based language learning align most closely with my current teaching or facilitation style?*
- *What might help learners in my context feel safe enough to speak and participate actively?*
- *How can I shift my focus from language accuracy to meaningful communication and participation?*



References and Additional Materials

The methodological approach presented in this chapter draws on established practice-oriented resources in adult education, inclusion, and language learning:

- [EPALE good practices in non-formal adult education for migrants](#)

PART 2: Workshop Structure & Step-by-Step Implementation Guide

Overview

This section provides a practical, step-by-step guide for planning and delivering SPEAK & SPICE workshops in real community and non-formal learning settings. It explains how to structure a session from start to finish and how to prepare the space, materials, and group dynamics so that cooking activities become meaningful opportunities for language practice and social inclusion.

By the end of this section, educators will know how to set up the workshop, choose suitable recipes, organise the space and materials, and guide learners through a session flow that combines cooking, speaking practice, and social inclusion.

Planning the Workshops

SPEAK & SPICE workshops are designed primarily for migrant women, but in practice, these groups are rarely homogeneous, so the **first step** in planning is to understand your target group and their learning needs and adapt the pace, structure, and support accordingly.

SPEAK & SPICE workshops are designed primarily for migrant women, who may face isolation, low confidence, cultural expectations, or limited opportunities to



practise the local language in public. For many participants, joining a workshop is already a big step. If the learning space feels too fast, too public, or too “school-like”, learners may withdraw and speak less, even if they understand.

Within the same group, there may be different language levels, literacy levels, and confidence levels (some learners may be advanced and outspoken, while others may be beginners or hesitant to speak). This is why workshop planning should include clear structure and inclusive participation strategies, such as predictable routines, shared roles, flexible language expectations, and visual support to ensure everyone can contribute meaningfully.

Migrant women groups often benefit from:

- a safe, supportive atmosphere where mistakes are normal
- a slower pace and a clear routine (predictable session flow)
- confidence-building tasks and peer encouragement
- culturally sensitive facilitation (dietary needs, personal boundaries, respectful dialogue)
- tasks are shared and roles are clearly assigned (so everyone participates)
- language expectations are flexible (word → phrase → sentence)
- communication is supported with visuals, objects, and repeated key phrases

Key planning questions:

1. What is the approximate language level (A1/A2 / mixed)?
2. Are literacy levels mixed?
3. Is the group shy or socially confident?
4. Are there cultural or dietary considerations?

The **second step** is choosing recipes that are culturally appropriate and feasible. Recipe choice strongly impacts participation and speaking. A good recipe should be:

- simple and achievable within the given timeframe
- safe and low-risk
- adaptable (dietary needs, preferences)
- teamwork-friendly (multiple parallel tasks)



Recommended recipe formats:

- salads and salad variations
- wraps/sandwiches
- pancakes/crepes
- simple pasta dishes
- dips and spreads

Avoid recipes with too many steps or long waiting times, as this can reduce speaking and increase stress.

The **third step** is organising space, tools, dietary considerations, and group size. Practical setup improves both safety and interaction.

Space and group work

- ideal: 2–4 learners per station
- learners should face each other (supports dialogue)
- keep a central space for tasting/conversation

Tools and ingredients

- keep tools visible and accessible
- organise ingredients to encourage requesting and sharing
- prepare safety/hygiene items (towels, gloves if needed)

Dietary considerations (check in advance)

- allergies (nuts, gluten, dairy)
- vegetarian/vegan needs
- religious restrictions
- sensitivities around tasting/ingredients

Group size

- recommended: 8–15 participants
- larger groups require additional facilitators and stations

Additionally, you can provide simple, yet effective language support by preparing one shorter learner support sheet (one page max):

- ingredients (10 max)



- tools (8 max)
 - verbs (6–8): wash, cut, mix, add, taste, cook
 - useful phrases (6–8):
 - “Can I have...?”
 - “Where is...?”
 - “How much...?”
 - “Can you help me?”
 - “Like this?”
 - “It’s ready.”
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Running the Workshops

SPEAK & SPICE sessions follow a predictable structure that supports safety, interaction, and speaking practice. Recommended flow:

Welcome → Ice-breaker → Cooking → Conversation → Tasting → Reflection

Session flow (step-by-step)

- **Welcome & safety (10')¹**
 - Set a friendly tone and clarify expectations:
 - “Small words are enough.”
 - “Mistakes are welcome here.”
 - Include hygiene/safety language as learning:
 - “Wash hands.” / “Be careful.” / “Hot!”
- **Introduction / Ice-breaker (10')**
 - Keep it light and food-related:
 - “I like / I don’t like...”
 - “My favourite food is...”
 - “In my country we eat...”
- **Cooking (30–60' - flexible)**
 - This is the core learning phase. The trainer divides learners into small groups, assigns roles (*cutter, mixer, cleaner, server*), and supports speaking using short prompts:
 - “What’s next?”
 - “How many?”



- “More or less?”
 - “Show me.”
 - Use gentle reformulation instead of correction.
- **Conversation + tasting (20-30')**
 - Use prompts that generate speaking:
 - “How does it taste?”
 - “Sweet/salty/spicy?”
 - “Do you like it?”
 - “Would you cook it at home?”
 - Tip: Use pair talk first, then group sharing.
- **Reflection & closing (10' min)**
- Keep reflection short and encouraging:
 - “One new word today is...”
 - “Today I liked...”
 - “Next time I want...”

The suggested timeline is based on a standard 2-hour workshop, but it can be adapted to different teaching scenarios and group needs. The main cooking phase can be extended depending on the recipe complexity, available facilities, and the pace of the group. In general, SPEAK & SPICE workshops work best within a 2–3 hour timeframe; a duration of more than 3 hours is not recommended, as participants may experience fatigue and reduced engagement.

Integrating language objectives into each stage

Language goals should be functional and realistic.

- Welcome: greetings + feelings
- Ice-breaker: likes/dislikes + simple personal sentences
- Cooking: action verbs + requests + quantities
- Tasting: descriptive words + opinions
- Reflection: simple self-expression and confidence building

Safety & hygiene procedures

- hand washing and clean surfaces
- knife handling and supervision
- clear rules for heat/hot tools



- safe food handling and cleaning routines

Inclusivity procedures

- accept different levels of speaking
- avoid putting learners on the spot
- ensure everyone has a role
- encourage peer support (mixed groups)
- model respect in intercultural dialogue

Suggested learning materials

Keep materials supportive and minimal:

- 1-page vocabulary sheet (ingredients/tools/verbs/phrases)
 - recipe cards (with images if possible)
 - visual labels in the space (salt, oil, bowl, spoon)
 - conversation prompt cards for tasting
 - optional role cards for teamwork
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Reflection questions for educators

- *Which parts of the workshop structure do I feel most confident facilitating, and which parts feel less familiar?*
 - *What are the most realistic language goals for this group (words, phrases, interaction moments)?*
 - *How can I create a welcoming and respectful atmosphere from the start of the workshop?*
 - *What might be challenging when working with culturally diverse participants, and how could I respond?*
 - *What do I want participants to feel by the end of the session (safe, confident, connected, proud)?*
 - *What intercultural sharing opportunities could naturally emerge, and how will I facilitate them respectfully?*
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References and Additional Materials

The methodological approach presented in this chapter draws on established practice-oriented resources in adult education, inclusion, and language learning:



- [SALTO Inclusion & Diversity guidance on experiential and inclusive facilitation](#)
 - [British Council – LearnEnglish \(Speaking Skills\)](#)
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PART 3: Language Learning Strategies & Best Practices

Overview

This section provides teachers with practical, EFL-grounded strategies for integrating language learning into SPEAK & SPICE culinary workshops. It focuses on functional vocabulary, everyday communication, confidence-building techniques, and the use of digital tools to support diverse learners.

The aim is to help educators create a natural, low-pressure language environment where participants learn through doing, talking, tasting, and sharing. By blending EFL methodology with hands-on cooking, teachers can support migrant learners in developing real-life communication skills that extend far beyond the kitchen.

Teaching Functional Vocabulary Through Cooking

Culinary-based workshops offer a rich, multisensory context for vocabulary learning. EFL methodology emphasises *meaningful input*, *repetition*, and *use in context* — all of which happen naturally during cooking. The approach here is to learn while doing.

Key vocabulary areas

- **Ingredients:** vegetables, spices, grains, proteins, meat, drinks
- **Tools & equipment:** knife, whisk, pan, chopping board, spoon, peeler
- **Cooking verbs:** chop, stir, boil, fry, mix, taste
- **Tastes & textures:** sweet, spicy, crunchy, soft



- **Quantities & measures:** a pinch, a handful, 200g, a cup

Strategies for teaching vocabulary

- **Pre-teach essential words** using pictures, real objects, or gestures. This is important, otherwise, students will stumble over new vocabulary which will interrupt the flow of the lesson. It's also an opportunity to work on phonology.
- **Use Total Physical Response (TPR):** learners *do* the action as they hear the verb. This is especially relevant to something as practical as cooking.
- **Label the environment:** tools, ingredients, stations. You can work with students to name items in the kitchen. This can extend to the use of prepositions. For example, 'The bowl is *behind* the food mixer.'
- **Use "See-Say-Do-Repeat":**
 - See the ingredient- Cream
 - Say the word- 'Cream' /kri:m/
 - Do the action- *Whisk* the cream'
 - Repeat during the cooking stage
- **Recycling vocabulary** throughout the session: during prep, cooking, tasting, and reflection. The teacher should be constantly *eliciting* vocabulary eg. 'So what is Cinzia adding to the mix?'
- **Encourage learners to teach each other** words from their own languages to build intercultural connection. However, conclude with the English version of vocabulary.

Why this works

As the document notes, "*food and cooking naturally support language acquisition, communication, and integration*" and vocabulary becomes memorable when tied to action and sensory experience.

Building Everyday Conversation Skills

Cooking creates a natural communicative environment which is ideal for the communicative approach in EFL. Actually, many people learn languages by enrolling on cooking courses.



Conversation opportunities during workshops

5. Asking for help: *Can you pass me the salt?*
6. Giving instructions: *Stir it slowly.*
7. Checking understanding: *Is this enough?*
8. Social talk: *What food reminds you of home?*
9. Sharing preferences: *I like spicy food.*

Scaffolding techniques

Bear in mind that scaffolding is a way to ease students into the use of new language. It's like a helping hand. Here are some ideas>

- Provide sentence starters on cards or posters.
- Model short dialogues before tasks. Perhaps with a strong student.
- Use guided pair work during prep stages.
- Encourage peer support rather than teacher-led correction. However, errors should be noted and recycled as a lesson-closer.
- Offer visual prompts (icons, photos, gestures) for low-literacy learners. Consider TikTok videos or Instagram shots.

Dialogue scaffolding example

Teacher: "Ask your partner: *Do you need help?*"

Learner A: "Do you need help?"

Learner B: "Yes, please. Can you cut the onions?"

This mirrors the document's emphasis on "*dialogue scaffolding during cooking*" and using the kitchen as a natural immersion environment.

Interactive Techniques That Build Confidence & Engagement



A welcoming, error-friendly environment is essential for migrant learners, especially those with limited formal education. At the same time learners must take risks in order to progress.

Confidence-building strategies

- **Normalise mistakes:** treat them as part of the process. You can joke ‘No mistakes, means no job for me’
- **Use praise strategically:** highlight effort, not perfection. Students need to grow and that means hard work and risk-taking are important and praiseworthy.
- **Pair stronger and weaker learners** for mutual support. However, this can have the opposite effect, so stay alert.
- **Use small-group tasks** to reduce pressure. This also enhances student-to-student interaction and supports student-centred learning.
- **Celebrate small wins:** pronouncing a new word, completing a step, sharing a story.

Interactive techniques

- **“Describe before you do” tasks:** learners explain a step before performing it.
- **Tasting & describing:** sensory language practice.
- **Group challenges:** “Prepare this salad using only English instructions.”
- **Role-play mini-tasks:** shopping dialogues, restaurant scenarios.

These align with the document’s focus on *“interactive techniques that build confidence and engagement”*.

Real-Life Language Use Beyond the Kitchen

Cooking vocabulary becomes a bridge to wider everyday communication.

Ways to extend learning

- Connect ingredients to shopping language: prices, quantities, packaging.
- Link cooking verbs to household tasks: wash, clean, prepare.



- Use food themes to discuss family, traditions, celebrations.
- Encourage learners to bring recipes from home and present them.
- Create mini-projects:
 - “Plan a meal for a friend.”
 - “Write a simple shopping list.”
 - “Record a voice message describing how to cook your favourite dish.” This may require pre-teaching phrasal verbs and linking words like *next, after that, finally*. You can also use the opportunity to recycle the use of the passive- *The rice is rinsed then left to cool*

This reflects the document’s emphasis on “*connecting cooking & food vocabulary to broader daily life.*”

Using Digital Tools to Enhance Learning

Digital tools support visual learning, pronunciation practice, and multilingual inclusion.

Recommended tools

- Google Images / recipe videos for visual vocabulary.
- Audacity for voice recording- for speaking practice.
- Digital flashcards (Quizlet, Wordwall) for vocabulary recycling.
- Shared Onedrive/Google Drive folders with recipe cards, visual aids, and templates.

Best practices

- Keep digital tasks **short and simple**.
- Use visuals to support low-literacy learners.
- Encourage learners to use their **own phones** where possible.
- Provide **QR codes** linking to vocabulary lists or videos.

This aligns with the document’s guidance on using digital tools to enhance learning and support multicultural groups.

Reflection Questions for Educators



- *Which vocabulary teaching techniques feel most natural for me to use during cooking?*
 - *How can I scaffold conversations so that all learners — including shy or low-literacy participants — can participate?*
 - *What strategies can I use to create an error-friendly environment?*
 - *How can I connect kitchen language to real-life communication needs outside the workshop?*
 - *Which digital tools am I comfortable integrating into my sessions?*
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References and Additional Materials

- Basic EFL methodology texts (e.g., Communicative Approach, TPR, Student-Centred Learning,)
 - Online tools: Quizlet, Wordwall, Google Translate
 - Non-formal adult learning principles
 - SPEAK & SPICE project documentation
 - Eurospeak Teacher Knowledge-Share
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PART 4: Intercultural Learning & Social Inclusion

Overview

Speak & Spice workshops go beyond cooking and practising the local language. They create a space where participants can feel they **belong**: arriving in a new place, meeting others in a safe environment, and experimenting with new words without worrying about making mistakes.

Food helps because it is familiar and practical. People can point, smell, taste, and demonstrate. Even when language is limited, participants can still take part and feel capable. At the same time, food is closely tied to identity. A single ingredient can touch on religion, health, class, family expectations, gender roles, or painful memories. A joke that feels harmless to one person can feel humiliating to another. A “simple” activity like sharing a dish can pressure someone to disclose personal information they would rather keep private.



That's why **intercultural learning and social inclusion must be built into the workshop design from the start** — not added as a “nice extra”. In a 3-hour session, inclusion shows up in dozens of small choices:

- who speaks first, and who gets interrupted
- whether instructions are repeated calmly or rushed
- whether people are corrected publicly
- whether dietary needs are handled discreetly
- whether shy participants have a clear role
- whether “culture talk” invites curiosity or stereotypes

Your role as trainer is not to be a cultural expert, but to create conditions where people can participate safely and practise the local language in a respectful group. You are setting the tone: curiosity, patience, and fairness.

What “success” looks like in this project

A successful session is one where:

- participants feel comfortable returning next time
- everyone has a practical way to take part (even with low language or literacy)
- people use the local language in small, real ways (requests, choices, simple opinions)
- differences are treated with respect, not as problems to fix
- the group leaves with a sense of connection, not embarrassment

Scope: *Part 4 gives good practice guidance; each partner must follow their organisation's safeguarding policy and national legal requirements. The workshops teach the local/host-country language; examples should be adapted to the local language and context.*

Ground rules that support inclusion

Keep rules short, visible, and consistent. Use icons where possible. Review them briefly at the start of each session.

Suggested ground rules (simple and clear)



- Respect first.
- One person speaks at a time.
- It's OK to ask again or say "I don't know yet".
- We don't laugh at mistakes.
- Food rules are respected (health, religion, personal choice).
- Sharing personal stories is optional.
- Photos only with consent.
- We help each other.

Say this (model it early)

- "Can you say that again, please?"
- "Show me, please."
- "How do you say this in the local language?"
- "No problem — let's try together."

Avoid this

- "It's easy." (It rarely feels easy to learners.)
 - "You should know this." (Even basic things can be new.)
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Inclusive workshop design

Inclusion is often decided *before* people arrive.

Before the workshop

- Check dietary needs privately. Use a short form or quiet check-in (allergies, religious restrictions, vegetarian/vegan).
- Plan an easy alternative for common barriers (pork/alcohol/shellfish/nuts). Have it ready without making announcements.
- Prepare visuals. Ingredient photos, tool icons, step pictures, and a short list of key phrases.
- Pre-prep where sensible (depending on language level): washed greens, measured spices, labelled bowls.
- Plan roles so nobody ends up watching:
 - Cook / Prep lead / Timekeeper / Cleaner / Language buddy / Presenter



During the workshop

- Work in small groups (2–4 people). Large groups make quiet participants disappear.
- Demonstrate first, then name it. Show the action, then say the words.
- Use predictable phrases and repeat them through the session.
- Offer “quiet participation” routes: pointing, matching pictures, choosing between two options, doing a task while listening.
- Rotate roles during the session (or between sessions).
- Correct gently and privately. In front of others, focus on meaning and participation.

Say this

- “First we... then we...”
- “Can you pass me...?”
- “Let’s do it together.”
- “Good — that works.”

Avoid this

- “No, that’s wrong.”
Try: “Almost — let’s say it like this...”

After the workshop

Keep reflection short and safe:

- “One word I used today...”
 - “One thing I enjoyed...”
 - “One thing I’ll try next time...”
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Intercultural learning without tokenism

Intercultural learning works best when it is woven into the cooking and language tasks, not treated as a “culture presentation”. In migrant groups, people are often tired of being asked to explain where they come from. Some may feel proud to share; others may feel exposed, judged, or pushed into speaking for an entire country, religion, or community.

Your aim is to create curiosity with boundaries:



- curiosity: noticing differences and asking respectful questions
- boundaries: no pressure to disclose, no stereotypes, no “represent your culture” moments

A simple rule to keep in mind: **Ask about personal experience, not “a whole culture”.**

Some participants will love sharing. Others will be tired, cautious, or dealing with difficult experiences. Both are completely valid. The safest approach is to offer invitations, not demands.

This section gives trainers practical ways to invite intercultural learning while protecting dignity.

What to avoid (tokenism signs)

Tokenism usually shows up when someone is treated like:

- a spokesperson (“So how do people in your country do this?”)
- a stereotype (“You’re Moroccan — you must know spices!”)
- a “teacher” on sensitive topics (religion, politics, migration)

Even when you mean well, this can make people feel exposed, judged, or responsible for “representing” others.

Trainer move: if you catch yourself about to say “In your country...”, switch to “In your home...” or “For you...”

Use the 3 safe lanes for cultural talk

When discussion comes up, guide it gently into one of these lanes:

Lane 1: Food & everyday life (safest)

Shopping, routines, simple habits, cooking tips.

- “How do you usually cook this at home?”
- “What do you buy when you’re in a hurry?”

Lane 2: Memories & meaning (optional)

Celebrations, family traditions, “this reminds me of...”

Always add an exit route: “Only if you feel like sharing.”

- “Is this linked to a celebration for you?”



- “Does this smell remind you of something?”

Lane 3: Identity/politics/religion (high-risk)

Don't plan activities that invite these topics. If they appear, keep boundaries calm:

- “That's a big topic. Today we'll keep our focus on cooking and language.”

“Say this / Avoid this” (easy swaps)

Avoid: “Tell us about your culture.”

Say: “If you feel like it, share one food habit you like — from anywhere you've lived.”

Avoid: “How do people in your country do it?”

Say: “How do you do it at home?”

Avoid: “Is it true that...?”

Say: “I've heard there are different ways — what ways have you seen?”

Avoid: “Why don't you eat that?” (puts someone on the spot)

Say: “No problem — we'll use the alternative option.”

Help people speak without feeling exposed

You can design sharing so it's safe by giving choice and short formats.

Trainer phrases that help

- “You can share one sentence — or you can pass.”
- “It's also fine to just listen.”
- “Different answers are welcome.”

Low-pressure sentence starters (post on the table)

- “In my home, we eat this with...”
- “For me, this tastes...”
- “I like it because...”
- “One tip is...”



Let tasks do the cultural work

A lot of intercultural learning happens quietly: different cutting styles, seasoning choices, serving habits. Make it normal.

Trainer language

- “Nice — that’s another way.”
- “Both ways work.”
- “Let’s try both and see what we prefer.”

Mini activity (10 minutes): “Two ways are valid”

Ask two groups to do the same step differently (e.g., chop vs slice; lemon vs paprika; bread served plain vs toasted).

Then taste and compare with simple language:

- “This one is... stronger / lighter / softer / crispier.”

When someone generalises (common in a second language)

People often say “In my country everyone...” because it’s the easiest structure. Don’t correct — just guide it gently.

Trainer reframe

- “Thanks — and for you personally, how is it in your family?”
- “Some people do it one way, others another way. How do you do it?”
- “Let’s keep it as ‘I’ statements: ‘In my home...’”

Micro-scripts for tricky moments

These are quick lines you can use without making a big scene.

- If someone is being pressured to explain food rules
 - “No need to explain. We respect food rules here.”
- If a comment turns into a stereotype
 - “Let’s pause. That could feel hurtful. Let’s speak from personal experience: ‘For me...’”
- If a sensitive topic appears
 - “That’s a big topic. For today, we’ll keep our focus on cooking and language.”



- If someone hesitates to share
 - “No pressure — you can pass.”

Your “do / don’t” summary

Do

- offer opt-in sharing (“only if you feel like it”)
- ask about personal experience (“in your home...”)
- normalise difference (“another way”)
- keep focus on practical tasks and language

Don’t

- single someone out to represent a group
 - invite stereotypes as “curiosity”
 - push for explanations about religion/politics/migration
 - correct cultural habits as “wrong”
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Handling sensitive moments

Misunderstandings happen. Our goal is to protect dignity.

- *If someone makes a sharp comment or stereotype:*
 - Pause calmly.
 - Name the issue without blaming:
 - “That could sound hurtful.”
 - Give a safer frame:
 - “Let’s speak from personal experience: ‘For me...’”
 - Move on, then check in privately if needed.
- *If someone becomes upset:*
 - Offer a break, water, a quieter task, or a short step away from the group.
 - Don’t ask for details in front of others.
 - Follow your organisation’s safeguarding steps if a serious risk is disclosed.
- *If there’s a disagreement about “the right way” to cook:*
 - “Different homes do it differently.”
 - “Today we’ll choose one method.”
 - “Next time we can try another version.”



Practical inclusion supports

Low language level

- Demonstration + gestures + real objects first.
- Use sentence frames:
 - "Can you pass me...?"
 - "First... then..."
 - "I think it needs..."

Low literacy

- Use pictures, icons, colour-coded bowls, numbered photos.
- Keep written text large, short, and repeated.

Confidence and anxiety

- Pair new participants with a "language buddy".
- Praise effort quietly.
- Give a "silent start" option: do the task first, speak later.

Diet/religion

- Don't ask for explanations.
- Offer alternatives quietly, without spotlighting.

Mobility/health needs

- Offer seated tasks (peeling, measuring, mixing, plating).
- Reduce unnecessary moving between stations.

Privacy

- Photos/videos only with consent.
- Don't ask for personal migration stories.
- Keep personal sharing optional.

Care responsibilities

- If children might attend, plan safe non-knife tasks and a clear boundary around hot areas.
-



Mini activities you can reuse

These work in any workshop and gently support intercultural learning.

1) Ingredient stories (10 minutes)

Place 6–10 ingredients on a table. Participants choose one and complete:

- “In my home, we use this for...”
- “I learned this from...”
- “This smell reminds me of...”

2) “Same, different, both” (10 minutes)

On a board: SAME / DIFFERENT / BOTH

Prompt: “Cooking fish / soup / bread”

Participants place sticky notes or pictures.

3) Compliment circle (5 minutes)

Sentence frames:

- “Thank you for...”
- “I liked how you...”
- “Next time we could...”

4) Local life link (10 minutes)

Bring a photo of the local market, a seasonal product, or a map.

Prompt:

- “Where can we buy this here?”
 - “What’s the word for this in the local language?”
 - “What’s similar where you’re from?”
-

Safeguarding and privacy (short, visible)

Migrant participants may be dealing with unstable housing, legal uncertainty, exploitation, family stress, or trauma. You do not need to “solve” these situations — but you do need to run a space that is safe, respectful, and does not increase risk.

A good safeguarding approach in these workshops has three layers:

1. **Prevention** (how you set up the session)
2. **Boundaries** (what you do and don’t ask for)



3. **Response** (what you do if something serious comes up)

A) Prevention: create a safe structure from the start

Make the session predictable

- Start every workshop with the same short routine: welcome, ground rules, roles, hygiene/safety.
- Use the same “you can pass” language every time.

Reduce situations that can lead to harm

- Avoid activities that push personal disclosure (“tell us your story”, “why did you move?”).
- Keep the focus on cooking and everyday language.

Agree consent rules early

- No photos/videos without consent.
- Explain what any photos are for (internal reporting, social media, dissemination).
- Offer a simple “no-photo” option (e.g., a sticker on name badge or a colour card).

Trainer micro-script

- “Some people are happy to be in photos, others aren’t. Both are fine. We will always ask first.”

B) Privacy: protect people without making it awkward

Some participants may have strong reasons for privacy (legal status, safety, family situation). Treat privacy as normal.

Do

- Collect dietary needs privately (a form, or a quiet check-in).
- Keep sign-in information minimal (only what your organisation truly needs).
- Use first names only if possible.
- If you share pictures publicly, avoid showing faces unless you have clear written consent.

Avoid

- Asking people to share where they are “really from”, their route, their status, or details about work/housing.



- “Let’s go around and say why you came here.” (high pressure and sometimes unsafe)
- Sharing participant information across partners without permission.

Trainer micro-scripts

- “You only share what you feel comfortable sharing.”
- “It’s fine to pass.”
- “We don’t need personal details — we’re here to cook and practise language.”

C) Boundaries: keep the workshop from turning into a support interview

Workshops often feel safe, so people may disclose personal issues. That can be a sign of trust — but you still need boundaries.

Set the boundary kindly

- You can listen and acknowledge, but don’t investigate, interrogate, or promise confidentiality you can’t keep.
- Don’t offer legal advice.
- Don’t turn the group into a “problem solving circle” unless you’re trained and it’s planned.

Trainer micro-script

- “Thank you for telling me. I’m not the right person to handle that in this group, but I can speak with you privately after and connect you to the right support.”

D) Managing photos, filming, and dissemination ethically

Project visibility matters — but participant safety matters more.

Good practice

- Ask consent twice: before taking photos and before publishing.
- Offer alternatives: hands-only photos, food-only photos, back-of-head shots, no names.
- Keep a simple consent record (your organisation’s standard form).
- If someone withdraws consent later, remove the image where possible.

Trainer micro-script



- “We can take pictures of the food and hands if that feels more comfortable.”

E) Safeguarding in the room: behaviour and power dynamics

Be alert to dominance, exclusion, or uncomfortable behaviour.

Watch for

- a participant controlling others’ tasks or language
- sexist/racist comments (even “jokes”)
- repeated interruptions of one person
- someone being isolated or ignored
- unwanted touching

Respond early, lightly, clearly

- “Let’s take turns.”
- “We keep this respectful.”
- “Please don’t touch people without asking.”

If behaviour continues, follow your organisation’s conduct procedure.

Clear “do / don’t” for trainers

Do

- keep the workshop predictable and practical
- normalise “passing” and privacy
- ask consent for photos every time
- move sensitive conversations to a private space
- follow safeguarding procedures when needed

Don’t

- request migration stories or legal status information
 - promise secrecy if there is risk of harm
 - give legal advice
 - share participant details casually (even with good intentions)
-



Trainer reflection (after each session)

Use 5 minutes to note:

- Who spoke comfortably? Who stayed quiet?
 - Did anyone get left out of a task?
 - Did we offer alternatives without spotlighting people?
 - What moment built connection?
 - What will I change next time?
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PART 5: Teacher's Resources & Practical Tools

Overview

This section provides teachers with a collection of practical, adaptable tools to support language learning within SPEAK & SPICE culinary workshops. The activities are designed for mixed-ability groups, including migrant women, low-literacy learners, and participants with varied levels of confidence.

Grounded in EFL methodology and non-formal adult education principles, these tools help teachers create engaging, inclusive, and communicative learning environments. Everything here is meant to be simple to prepare, easy to implement, and flexible enough to suit different recipes, cultures, and workshop formats.

Icebreakers & Warm-Up Activities

Warm-ups set the tone: relaxed, social, and participatory. They help learners feel safe, curious, and ready to speak. Students often start to bond with one another after a good warmer.

Food-Themed Icebreakers

1. "My Name & My Food"

Each participant says their name and a food they love.

- Teacher models: "I'm Sara, and I love lentil soup." This activity can be set up by eliciting the meaning of like, don't like, hate, love, don't mind.



2. "What's in the Bag?"

Place kitchen items or ingredients in a cloth bag. Learners feel one object and guess the word. This supports tactile learning and works well for lower-levels. Obviously, care must be taken to not include sharp knives or anything that caught cause an injury.

3. "Two Truths & a Food Lie"

Participants share two true food facts and one false one. Example of false one: *'Did you know that cucumbers turn blue in the sunlight?'* This encourages playful communication and is good for mixed-ability groups.

Multisensory Warm-Ups

- **Smell & Tell:** learners smell spices and describe them (sweet, strong, spicy). This can require some advanced vocabulary like *pungent, musty, aromatic*.
- **Touch & Guess:** learners touch covered ingredients (rice, pasta, beans).
- **Sound Warm-Up:** play short clips of chopping, frying, boiling; learners guess the action. For extra play students can try to mimic these sounds.

These activities align with the project's emphasis on "*multisensory warm-ups*" and help create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere.

Vocabulary Exercises

These tools help learners acquire and retain functional vocabulary through action, repetition, and meaningful use.

Matching Cards

Create sets of cards with:

- pictures of ingredients
- pictures of tools
- cooking verbs

Learners match picture-picture or picture-word depending on literacy level. These cards can be digitalised using apps like Genial.ly



Sorting & Sequencing Games

- **Sort by category:** vegetables / spices / tools / actions.
- **Sequence a recipe:** learners arrange picture cards into the correct order.
- **"Before or After?":** learners decide which step comes first.

Picture-Based Tasks

- Learners point to the correct picture when the teacher says the word.
- Learners choose the correct picture to complete a sentence:
 - "Cut the ____."
 - "Add the ____."

Mini Whiteboard Activities

- Learners draw ingredients or actions.
- Teacher calls out a word; learners sketch it quickly.
- Encourages participation without literacy pressure.

These exercises reflect the document's guidance on *"matching cards, sorting and sequencing games, picture-based tasks."*

Engaging Activities for Communication & Collaboration

These activities integrate language learning into the cooking process in a natural, enjoyable way.

"Describe Before You Do"

Before performing a step, learners describe it:

- "I am cutting the tomatoes."
- "We need to mix the flour and water."

This will support grammar, vocabulary, and confidence. It can also be done in pairs or given as a game where the most correct sentences win.

Tasting & Describing

Learners taste small samples and describe flavour, texture, or preference.



- “It’s sweet.”
- “I like it.”
- “It’s too salty for me.”

This encourages expressive language and cultural sharing which aligns well with the project vision, but also helps the student to prepare for real-world situations in restaurants.

Group Challenges

- “Prepare this salad using only English instructions.”
- “Explain your recipe to another group.”

“Create a simple menu together.”

Promotes teamwork and communicative competence.

Cultural Story Circles

Learners share short stories connected to food:

- “A food that reminds me of home...”
- “A dish my family makes for celebrations...”

These circles build intercultural understanding and trust. To maximise the learning, the teacher can prepare the students by modelling a story and reviewing narrative tenses with the class.

These activities align with the project’s emphasis on *“engaging activities”* and *“tools for fostering dialogue through cooking.”*

Assessment Tools to Track Participant Progress & Engagement

Assessment in SPEAK & SPICE is light, supportive, and non-formal. The goal is to track progress, not to test or evaluate in a formal sense.

Simple Learner Progress Checklists

Teachers can track:

- participation
- vocabulary use
- willingness to speak



- ability to follow simple instructions
- confidence in group tasks

Checklist items might include:

- “Learner uses 5–10 new words independently.”
- “Learner participates in pair or group tasks.”
- “Learner asks for help using simple phrases.”

Learner Self-Reflection Tools

Short, simple prompts:

- “Today I learned...”
- “I enjoyed...”
- “My goal is to practise...”
- “A new word I remember is...”

For low-literacy learners:

- smiley-face scales
- choosing pictures
- pointing to icons (happy / neutral / unsure)

Teacher Reflection Sheets

Teachers reflect on:

- what worked well
- challenges
- adaptations needed
- group dynamics
- cultural or linguistic insights

This aligns with the document’s emphasis on “*teacher reflection sheets*” and “*simple learner progress checklists*.”

Reflection Questions for Educators

- *Which warm-up activities help my group feel most relaxed and engaged?*
- *How can I adapt vocabulary tasks for learners with different literacy levels?*
- *Which communication activities feel most natural within the cooking process?*



- *How can I track progress without making learners feel tested?*
 - *What small adjustments could make my workshops more inclusive and culturally responsive?*
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References and Additional Materials

- EFL communicative methodology (pair work, task-based learning, TPR)
 - Non-formal adult education principles
 - Digital tools: Quizlet, Wordwall, Google Translate
 - SPEAK & SPICE project documentation (uploaded file)
 - Eurospeak Teachers' knowledge-share
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