



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## Case studies and success stories

Communities, Languages, and Activities App (ENACT)

23 June 2022

Key Action 2 Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education  
2019-1-UK01-KA203-061567



CULTURA ✧ SÄÄTIÖ



**UAB**  
Universitat Autònoma  
de Barcelona

We have produced 17 case studies and success stories of our co-production workshop participants in the UK, Finland, Spain, and Turkey.

Two case studies describe how we worked with NGOs in Finland and the UK. In Finland, you will read about how two project partners (University of Helsinki and Cultura Foundation) worked together. In the UK, our case study tells the story of the collaboration between Newcastle University, and N.E.S.T and Action Foundation.

One of the success stories from the UK is Charden's case study, which describes his journey as a participant in both ENACT and Linguacuisine projects. Another success story again from the UK, Hagos, describes their in-depth participation in the project in multiple roles: a facilitator training participant from an NGO, a workshop facilitator, and a workshop participant. Alessandra and Elana's case study illustrates the experiences of an intergenerational pair where the heritage language is Italian.

While most co-production workshops took place in-person, the following case studies tell stories of our participants' success in their online workshops: Alejandro and Marco (Spain), Camila and Ainhoa (Spain), FZ (Turkey), AY (Turkey), Freida and Catherine (UK).

#### Case studies and success stories from the UK

1. Hagos
2. Freida and Catherine
3. Alessandra and Elena
4. Charden
5. Working with NGOs (Newcastle University, N.E.S.T, and Action Foundation)

#### Case studies and success stories from Finland

1. Aleksandra
2. Lena
3. Olga
4. Working with NGOs (University of Helsinki and Cultura Foundation)

#### Case studies and success stories from Spain

1. Alejandro and Marco
2. Anna and Amina
3. Marietta and Rosa
4. Camila and Ainhoa
5. Juan and Sofia

#### Case studies and success stories from Turkey

1. FZ
2. AY
3. CA and SK

Permission was obtained from the participants whose images are used.

**Disclaimer:** This project is funded with support from the European Commission. The European Commission's support for the production of the project outputs and publications does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



## Case study: Hagos

Hagos came to Newcastle as an asylum seeker from Eritrea. He initially took part in the ENACT project facilitator training in March 2020. He then facilitated a co-production workshop before returning once more as a workshop participant.

Hagos speaks Tigrigna and English, and his knowledge of the English language spurred him on to help other asylum seekers by volunteering as a language assistant and interpreter for those with more limited English. He explained: “From the date I came to [the] UK, I saw the challenge my friend asylum seekers face to adapt the environment and to learn language, and so I decided to help as much as I can and applied to action foundation [to] volunteer [as an] assistant teacher for language class. They gave me the chance and I realize that there is no little help and every little thing matters, so I decide to continue my assistance whenever I get a chance”.

### Facilitator training

As part of the facilitator training, Hagos worked with participants from the partner universities in a series of online workshops and discussions, as well as completing individual activities about his perceptions of culture and language. When asked about his definition of culture, Hagos said: “Culture is [a] way of expressing belief and way of life of societies. and so saying that culture come up from beliefs, lifestyles and other factors of the society that entertain that particular culture and while those factors evolve, their corresponding culture also changes.”

Throughout the whole process, Hagos regularly related back to his own experiences growing up in a community in Eritrea. At times, his cultural experiences differed from those in his new country, and he was keen to explain this in his feedback and to the other participants: “For example in my community where I [was] raised, [a] woman used to walk some steps behind her husband or any other married man as a way of expressing respect for a married man. And this culture changes to new culture of using the back seat of a car if a married man is in the car to take the front seat after long distance walking replaced by driving.”

As part of the facilitator training, Hagos worked with a partner from a different university to produce an activity. He was keen to work on a cultural activity as he felt that “cultural objects and artefact are objects prepared by individuals or communities to express their culture and their emotions to it. It includes artistic works to convey their ideas and beliefs.” All participants completed the survey *Here is Where I Draw the Line*, examining their perceptions on how culture and language are connected, at the beginning and the end of the training process. Although Hagos’s responses on his perceptions of his own language learning skills and cultural beliefs barely changed between the two surveys, his responses on his familiarity and similarity with his partner improved, showing an increased awareness of his partner’s culture and language, and an increased willingness to meet others from that culture.

### Facilitating a co-production workshop

Hagos offered to facilitate one of the first co-production workshops that we held. The participants were an English speaker from the UK, who created an activity about [the traditional North East story of the Lambton Worm](#), and a native French speaker who had lived and worked in the UK for many years, whose activity involved [making a French Mardi Gras mask](#). He enjoyed engaging in discussions about the differences between cultures and life in the North East of England, and was an efficient and supportive facilitator. Having completed his facilitator training, he was also well versed on how to use the app technology and video editing software and was able to support the participants as they created their activities, helping to record audio and video footage and edit it for inclusion.

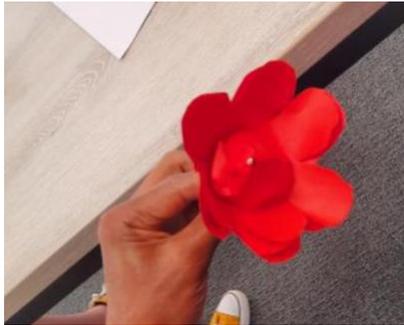
### Co-production workshop

Although Hagos had trained as a facilitator and facilitated the workshop with two participants, he decided to then join our co-production workshops as a participant, working with a partner from the UK. As he already had a good level of English, which he said he had partly learnt “using TV shows”. His responses on the Here is Where I Draw the Line survey were therefore slightly different than when working with a partner from Finland in the facilitator training, and he registered increased agreement in the questions regarding a familiarity with his partner’s culture, an understanding of his partner’s language, and similarities between their two cultures. He commented in his survey that “Culture is a way of living and adaptation to the life you have. Cultural activities are activities that can be done to elaborate your way of life and your beliefs and norms.” This phrase about adapting to the life you have speaks volumes about Hagos’s ability and his proactive outlook in adapting to his life in the UK.



*Hagos’s flower showing the languages he speaks, understands and has heard/seen.*

Hagos completed a flower where he added the names of the languages that he spoke and understood (centre petals), or had heard or seen but did not understand (outer petals). As English was the lingua franca in use in the ENACT project, Hagos had demonstrated his confidence in speaking in English in both his facilitator training workshops and when facilitating the co-production workshop with two participants who spoke English either as a first language or as a strong second language.



*Hagos's St Jordi rose. He added this photo as a comment on the web app activity with the caption "it was really fun".*

As part of the co-production workshop, Hagos looked at several activities on the web app with his partner, including the UK Christingle activity. Like the other participants, he completed the [St Jordi activity](#), learning some Catalan and producing a rose (below).

As he had already facilitated this activity with another pair, this was in fact the second time he had seen the six Catalan vocabulary items. His pre-test scores reflected this, as the table shows, with his able to partially produce three of the vocabulary items. His post-test illustrated a good retention of the lexical items, and there was only slight loss of retention in the delayed post-test.

Pre-test						Post-test						Delayed post-test					
0.5	0.25	0.5	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.75	0.75	1	0	1	0

*Hagos's vocabulary test scores, which range from a score of 1 indicating an ability to say the lexical item in an understandable manner, through to 0 which indicates no ability to say the lexical item.*

Hagos connected the vocabulary items to the cultural activity through the YouTube video about the St Jordi celebrations on the web app. His main memories from the video included seeing people "buy some books" and that "the knight gave the princess the rose and married her" but "we didn't see much to describe the people." He also recalled the markets, commenting that "street markets are available in other countries". The scores help us to demonstrate that producing the rose and engaging with the app with another person as a workshop participant may potentially improve retention of vocabulary.

In his feedback on the workshop, Hagos felt that the main goal of engaging in the St Jordi activity was to increase his motivation about the language learning and cultural process. He commented that the vocabulary section before the activity had been very useful and he had learned all the words, which his vocabulary scores supported. Thinking about the interactivity, he preferred the non-interactive option of watching a how-to presentation, but that the vocabulary test at the end of the process helped him to reflect on his learning.

Like many of the non-UK participants, Hagos drew on his personal experience and chose a [local Eritrean custom](#) from where he grew up. His activity celebrated St John's Day or Kudos Yohanns. This is Eritrean New Year, celebrated on 11<sup>th</sup> September, when people ask God to bless the New Year by lighting a fire at sunset and saying prayers as the fire burns. Hagos gathered sticks which he then tied together with several pieces of cord. It was important to create the right shape for the stock bundle, and he snapped off unnecessary twigs.



*Hagos's activity in his co-production workshop*

The bundle was then lit and Hagos sang [“ሆሆ ሆሆ!”](#) (“Hoye Hoye”), the traditional chant to ward off bad luck. This chant is sung by Orthodox Christians belonging to the Tigrinya ethno-linguistic group in the highlands of Eritrea, where Hagos is from.

Hagos was keen to explain the meaning behind the activity to his partner but preferred not to add English subtitles to his video, instead providing a commentary in Tigrinya and relying on the visuals to guide the learner.

This may have been because Tigrinya is predominantly a spoken rather than a written language, highlighting to us the importance of the ENACT web app in preserving spoken languages and related cultural activities as an Open Educational Resource.

### **Digital competences**

Participants completed the digital competences survey at the beginning and end the ENACT participation, and as a result, Hagos completed this four times, first in his facilitator training, and later in his co-production workshop. Though there was slight variation in his responses, overall his results showed that both experiences had improved his digital knowledge and skills, and he demonstrated these improved skills when creating his activity on the web app.

### **Impact**

Hagos enjoyed his participation in the ENACT project and was a great success as a facilitator and a participant. We were grateful for his enthusiasm and willingness to involve himself in the process. He recently moved to London and is now studying for an MSc in Business Analytics.

## Case study: Frieda and Catherine

The pandemic played a part in the planning and implementation of the intercultural and intergenerational workshops, and some participants were reluctant or unable to attend in person sessions at Newcastle University. Frieda and Catherine became our only fully online pair, completing the two main workshops over extra sessions using the Zoom online meeting platform.

Catherine was born and raised in the North-East of England, though she spent time living in Edinburgh in Scotland before moving back to County Durham. She felt an affinity with Scotland and Edinburgh in particular: “anybody had said to me where are you going to live, I said I was going to live in Edinburgh not Scotland, because I tend to think of it all as one, but it certainly isn't.” She worked predominantly from home so says she is “quite used to the computer” but is now retired. However, she takes part in a range of voluntary activities, some based at Beamish Museum, which is close to her home, and some online.

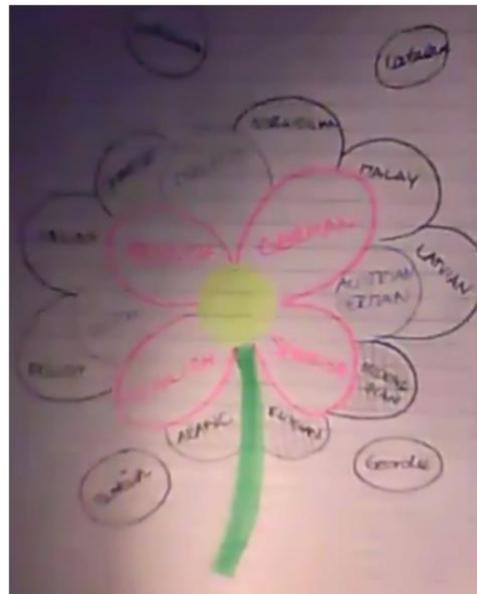
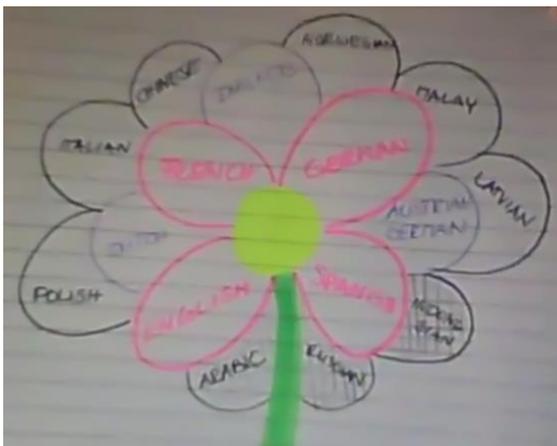
Frieda was born in Frankfurt, Germany, but spent a lot of her childhood in Berlin, where her mother is from and where she has many relatives. Her family was separated when the Berlin Wall was built, so she also spent time in East Germany with relatives. She has strong connections to the UK, as she explains: “My auntie, just after the Second World War, fell in love with a British soldier and moved to the UK when nobody wanted, nobody liked any German. And she persevered and lived here for 60 years, but she still spoke German like the day she left the country with a Berlin accent. There’s always been a bit of a connection for me out here to her and I suppose, I didn’t really benefit from that growing up.” Though Frieda travelled to the UK with her father to London sometimes as a child, she didn’t really experience the country until she spent her final year at Durham university in the UK: “Durham feels very much like home, I have a very strong attachment to Durham as a city and the cathedral, everything that comes with it.” She has now been here for over 10 years, working for the Red Cross and later with international university students. “I feel I’m a bit of a cultural hybrid now because I’ve obviously been here for such a long time and I’ve spent kind of more than a third of my adult life in the UK now.”

In terms of language, Frieda speaks English confidently and explained: “when I started living here, I tried to avoid German people, there was a lot of German students because people just stick together and speak their own language so it's like, I'm not interested in that, I'm here to speak English so I purposely tried to get away from it all and try to like immerse myself in everything out as much as I could really.”

She is aware of this cultural hybrid phenomenon: “the interesting thing is that about it becomes a fusion everything becomes a bit of a fusion and I sometimes now feel out of my depth when I go to Germany, like, I still really strongly identify with a lot of it but then other things, the day to day stuff, I'm not used to anymore.” She said she has purposely tried not to lose the connection to the culture and the language despite living in the UK for so long, after worrying that she “had left it completely behind and I thought I'm losing something really valuable if I don't keep in touch with it.”

### Flower garden activity

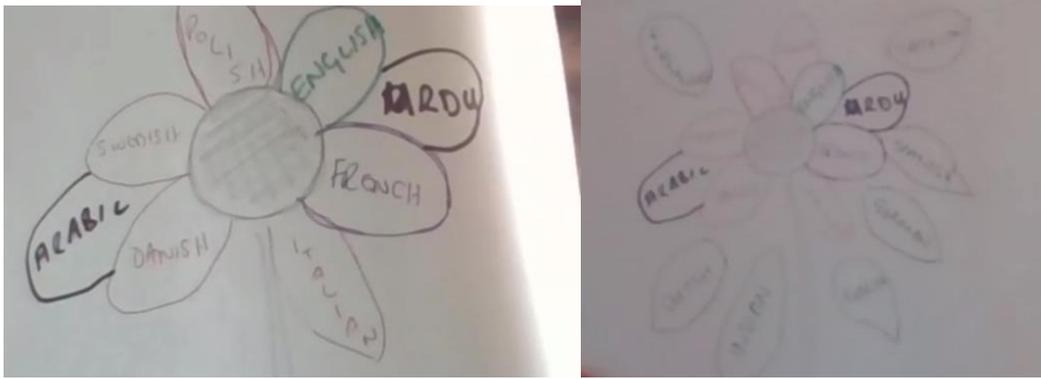
Both participants were asked to draw a flower with the petals representing languages they spoke, understood, or had heard or seen but didn't understand. They repeated this activity after engaging in the workshop sessions to see if their language knowledge had expanded. Frieda included a number of variations of German, her first language, such as Austrian German, and local dialects.



*Frieda's flowers*

Catherine included Polish as a language that she had seen and heard but didn't understand, as she explained: "We had a bit a big influx of Polish people into the Northeast a few years ago and we have a Polish shop selling Polish food, and I do like to go into the Polish shops and see the food." Likewise, she included Chinese as "it was fantastic for the Northeast when Chinese restaurants opened around here, but obviously when they were showing the orders through to the back, and what have you, we didn't have a clue what they were saying." Catherine also included French, which she learnt at school, and "I've put Italian on because we've had quite a few Italian holidays and we love Italy, but really I haven't got away with the language very well, one incident was we went out of the city to get out the way of all the chaos and then we asked for a coffee in a little coffee place and they gave us one of those little tiny strong coffees and I don't know what we were supposed to have asked for, but we'd asked for the wrong thing, I got cake though, I managed to get cake so I was happy!"

The rise of international TV programmes becoming more popular on streaming platforms was evident in Catherine's addition of "Swedish and Danish because we do watch a lot of these Swedish and Danish programmes on TV". Also interestingly, Catherine added Arabic as she commented that "whenever you get a letter from the hospital to let you know when you want to visit the hospital they usually have it in a few different languages."



*Catherine's flowers*

Both participants have had had enjoyable experiences learning languages, though Frieda related an occasion which was not positive: "I think it can be fun, it can be really hard and frustrating as well, but it can be fun too, depends how it's done, I've experienced both of it. When I was studying French the lady had this attitude, she always told us it was never good enough, and some people just gave up you know. I just felt so disheartened, I persevered but I had a negative connotation to it."

### **Here is where I draw the line**

Participants completed a survey about their perceptions of language and culture, and Frieda and Catherine gave remarkably similar responses. Frieda was more positive about language learning being easy, knowing many languages and being a good language learner, but both agreed that language learning is fun. However, on the statement "My language is the same as my culture", Catherine strongly agreed while Frieda disagreed. Frieda commented that "Culture can happen at national or local level or just within a certain group. It often includes certain habits, routines and at times certain viewpoints that a group of people share and they can even feel that these are part of their identity." Catherine, on the other hand, felt that culture is "trying to hold on to traditions, but keeping up with the modern world at the same time."

### **Digital competences**

Catherine worked from home using computers long before the pandemic, and still feels confident in many aspects of technology. For instance, in compiling the online newsletter for the U3A she is part of, she talked about being aware of copyright licences. Frieda also demonstrated confidence in using digital tools.

Participants completed the digital competency survey at the beginning (1) and the end (2) of the process, and Catherine demonstrated clear improvements in her confidence and perception of her technological skills:

<b>1</b>	b	b	d	c	b	b	b	b	c
<b>2</b>	b	c	d	d	d	c	c	b	d

Frieda on the other hand, felt more confident at the beginning of the process (1), and by the end (2), after learning and experiencing the web app and the associated digital tools, she had reduced her confidence level in several aspects. These included evaluating data and digital content, and the three statements on digital content creation.

<b>1</b>	d	d	c	c	c	c	b	b	a
<b>2</b>	d	c	c	d	c	c	a	a	a

As all of these sessions were completed over zoom, both participants had to have a basic knowledge of this digital platform, and this increased when they began to create their activity entirely online. In each session, Müge acted as facilitator and technical support.



### St Jordi rose activity

The participants all took part in the [St Jordi rose activity](#) in Catalan, watching videos including an immersive video which required them to wear a VR headset, and working together to create a paper rose by following the instructions in Catalan. At three stages in the process, before the activity began (pre-test), immediately after the activity (post-test), and in a later workshop session (delayed post-test), participants took a short vocabulary test on six of the key words which were presented during the activity.

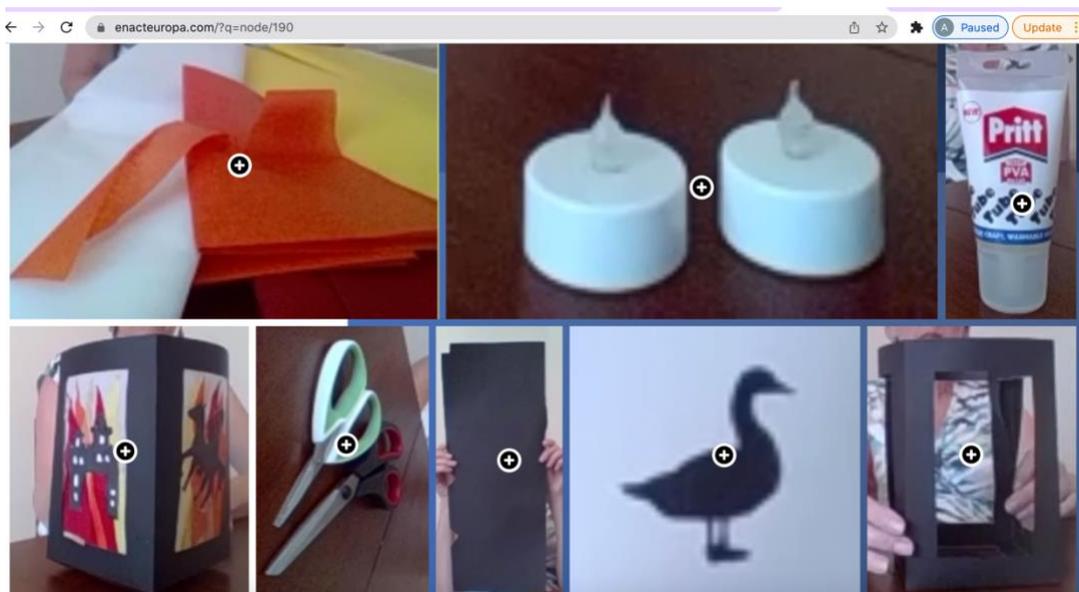
	Pre-test						Post-test						Delayed post-test					
<b>C</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.75	0.25	1	0	0.75	0.25	0.5	0.5	1	0	1	0
	Pre-test						Post-test						Delayed post-test					
<b>F</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.25	0.5	0	1	0	0.75	1	1	1	1	1

As with many of the participants, both Catherine and Frieda knew none of the vocabulary items in Catalan prior to the activity. Their post and delayed post-tests are quite different to each other, with Catherine retaining and producing the words with good partial success in the post-test, but with less success in the delayed post-test, whereas Frieda performed substantially better in the delayed post-test. Frieda commented after the post-test, "I don't remember anything else to be honest, because I was so focused on the actual process".

Catherine had a similar comment about focusing on the process more than listening to the language, saying “I probably wouldn't listen to what they were saying anyway, I was just keep stopping and starting and looking at the process”. They agreed with Frieda’s comment that “I don't think you can possibly remember [the new words] seeing them once so it was useful for those but because of sounds and everything's different I didn't think I could take in more than those words they were actually mentioning”.

### Creating an activity

The participants decided to create a German activity, and were able to make a [St Martin's Day lantern](#) at home, with a lot of discussion and collaboration in each online session.



Frieda began by telling Catherine the background story of St Martin and how it is celebrated in Germany (as well as several other countries in Europe). She described the generic celebrations and events which take place each year in November, but also how her family celebrates and the food they eat. This gave the activity a personal element as well as being a national celebration.

As this activity was being created virtually over zoom, the facilitator supported and guided the participants through the creation process, directing them to where they might find video content, how to upload it to YouTube, and how to add subtitles, popups and links into videos. Both participants were creating a lantern, discussing the process as they went, and uploading photos to the web app. The creation process was surprisingly easy as the participants worked well together and listened to each other, and the facilitator acting as technical support meant that they could upload their content quickly and easily.

The creation of the activity took a whole zoom session, and when they returned for session 4, almost a week later, they looked through the whole activity and made alterations where necessary, with Frieda adding German audio clips and subtitles. They then discussed how much they had learnt, in Catherine’s case about both the story of St Martin and the process of creating a digital activity, and in Frieda’s case focusing mainly on the process. Telling

Catherine the story and creating the activity had helped Frieda to consider the cultural importance of the event, and she said that “it made me realize like it's quite powerful for other people as well, like, not just for me personally.” Catherine had already passed the details of the activity to her daughter, a school teacher, and recommended that she share it with her pupils. In the final session, Catherine recounted the story and explained why it had resonated with her and how much she had enjoyed working on it with Frieda.

### **Reflections on the co-production process**

Frieda summed up her perceptions of the activity creation process: “It showed that things like that can be universal I suppose once you've explained what it's about and how other people can enjoy it as well, there's no national limits at all if it's you know, a story that reaches people and an activity that people enjoy doing.”

She explained how sharing the activity with Catherine had impacted her: “Seeing Catherine doing [the lantern] gave me, I don't know, a really big sense of joy when the lantern was coming together, because I wasn't sure what it was going to look like because I kind of had to mix two styles and then yeah, it gave me a great sense of happiness, in a sense of like yeah sharing that, really I think it was much nicer than me just having done it just by myself. I guess it gave you a different level of experience, Catherine, than if I had just talked about it, and then you said you had spoken to other people about it and shared it with other people, so I think it's going to have a lasting impact.”

Catherine had equally positive feedback about working with Frieda and said she planned to share the activity with her family: “when my grandchildren come over if I've got enough material to do it with them, I'm going to get them to do them.” She commented that “learning a new activity on the app felt more intimate than just reading about it, you actually felt part of it, it was it was a more intimate experience, and I think you got more out of it.”

Overall, the five zoom sessions were a great success and the two participants and facilitator not only exchanged cultural and language experiences but also developed positive relationships. As Catherine said, “from the very first moment that we met on zoom I felt very comfortable with both of you and we shared things in our life and things in our culture and things about our family, I think it's been lovely to do that”.

## Case Study: Alessandra and Elena

Alessandra and Elena are a mother and daughter pair who took part in an intergenerational workshop. Alessandra is Italian, and was brought up in the Arpino municipality, in the region of Lazio in central Italy, about 60 miles south-east of Rome. She works as an Italian language teacher. Alessandra displayed pride in being from her local region and referenced it frequently, making clear that certain words that she used or cultural events that she discussed whilst creating the activity were specific to her region rather than generically “Italian”. Elena was, at the time of the workshop, in her final year of secondary education, and has always lived in the UK, though her father is French, so she has been brought up in a multilingual household. Despite this, her knowledge of both Italian and French is limited, and English is dominantly used at home.

As with the intercultural pairs, Alessandra and Elena spent the first workshop discussing culture and language, and they took part in several activities to explore their perceptions and opinions, as well as engaging in the St Jordi activity on the web app, where they learnt six Catalan lexical items and created a paper rose.

### Here is where I draw/drew the line / Flower garden activities

At the start of the workshop, the participants completed a questionnaire called “Here is where I draw the line”, which asked them about their perceptions of culture and language, and the connections they made between those. They revisited this questionnaire in session 4, at the end of the process, to see if their responses had changed.

Alessandra’s answers become less confidently positive across many of the statements regarding language learning ability and enjoyment. This trait was in fact much more noticeable in the adult partners than in the young peoples’ answers, and is particularly surprising in Alessandra’s case, given her role as a language teacher.

			1. My language is the same as my culture.	2. I can tell a person's culture by the way they dress.	3. I like learning about other cultures.	4. I know many languages.	5. Language learning is easy for me.	6. I am a good language learner.	7. I like learning languages.	8. Language learning can be fun.	9. I am familiar with my partner's culture(s).	10. I know at least one of my partner's cultural activities.	11. I can understand my partner's first language.	12. I know a few words in my partner's first language.	like to meet other people from my partner's	partner and I have similarities in our culture or cultural	15. My partner and I have similarities in our languages.	
Session 1	tonella - pare	Unew2121	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	A collection of shared traditions, norms, history, languages including dialects and minority languages, food, style, Community celebration food sharing
Session 4	tonella - pare	unew2121	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	A set of traditions, knowledge, costumes, festivities, food, beliefs, behaviours shared by a community
			0	0	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	-1	0	3	-1	0	0	
						Confidence decreases	Confidence decreases	Confidence decreases	Confidence decreases	Confidence decreases		Confidence decreases		Language gains due to working with E7	Confidence decreases			

Alessandra’s responses to “Here is where I draw the line” questionnaire

Session 1	Eloise - child	unew2122	Disagree		Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Culture is the collective history of a group of people and how that relates to their daily life, be it in terms of fashion, music, stories or food.
Session 4	Eloise - child	unew2122	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Culture is the collective historical use of food, clothing, music and art to identify oneself with a group of people. Culture can be connected to a specific geographical location or be traditions carried on by a group of people, irrespective of geographical location.
			0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	
							Confidence increase from app?		Enjoyment from app use?		Increase in familiarity from working with A?	Increase in familiarity from working with A?	Language gains from working with A?	Language gains from working with A?	Motivation from working with A?	Recognition through discussion with A?			

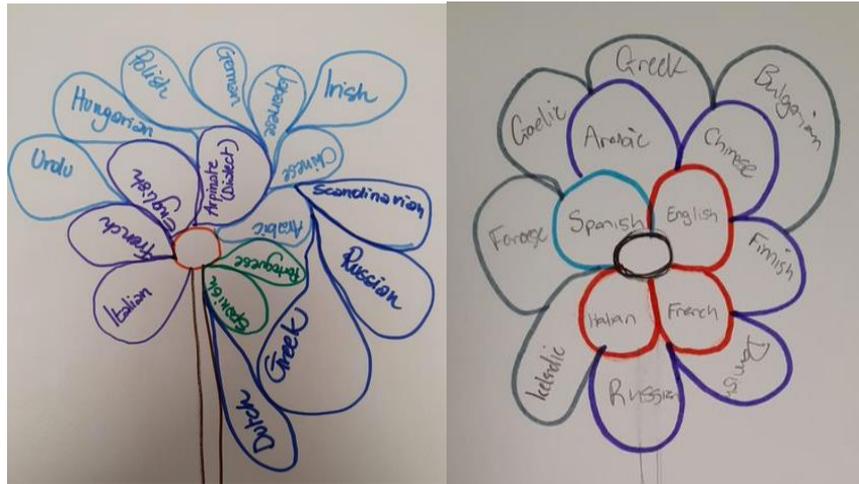
### Elena's responses to "Here is where I draw the line" questionnaire

Elena's answers remain stable for most of the first section, but she shows clear gains in cultural understanding and language learning in second part, and it is evident that she has enjoyed working with Alessandra.

Across the questionnaire responses as a whole, the most prominent themes which arose from the intergenerational pairs were those of language, people or groups of people, shared values and beliefs, and daily life or routine. Also strongly represented in the intergenerational participants' comments were the themes of (shared) tradition, geographical location and family. These themes link with comments made by Alessandra and Elena in particular when discussing their cultural activity which is very local and focuses on passing down traditions through generations of family.

The six intergenerational participants mentioned the strong sense of identity that they felt regarding their heritage and the activity they created. This is perhaps connected to the fact that the adult participant (in this case Alessandra) has spent a long period of time living and working in the UK, with the younger participant (Elena in this case) being born in the UK, and they have therefore had to balance being part of their UK community and/or assimilating into UK culture, with retaining their inherited or previous cultural identity.

During the first session, the participants were also asked to draw a flower including the languages they spoke, understood or had seen or heard but did not understand.



*Flowers by Alessandra (left) and Elena (right)*

In keeping with her identifying with her local area as much as with the country as a whole, Alessandra has also included her local dialect; Elena, on the other hand, has not, although she could have included it as a language she had heard but did not understand.

### Activity creation

Il Gonfalone di Arpino - Manifestazione folcloristica in costume

Submitted by unew2122 on Wed, 06/23/2021 - 12:50

First, we need to give you an idea of what this activity is all about.



The pair had already given thought to their activity prior to attending the workshop, as they had visited Alessandra's home region several times in the past and attended an annual festival, il Gonfalone di Arpino, which involves traditional costume, sporting events and dancing. Alessandra had photographs of Elena as a child with her cousin, and used these as starting points for their activity. The pair decided to focus on the special leather shoes worn as part of the traditional costume and used a video they found online to present the activity, with Alessandra recording a voiceover while Elena took charge of the editing.



Their final activity is available on the web app at <https://enacteuropa.com/?q=node/200>.

### **Summary session (zoom)**

In the final session, Alessandra commented on how she found engaging in the whole experience, saying “the actual physicality of the experience, the fact that we created, I created it independently and I could think, I knew what I was doing, that was really good”.

She also showed an awareness of the fact that her cultural heritage is removed from her now that she lives in the UK, and that the various factors including the pandemic and the changing generation of people keeping the heritage alive may mean that some of her cultural activities and reference points are lost in the future: “These kind of things require a lot of organization and add work on top of your normal work. And people are very committed, these are really deeply seated, it’s almost the need that is deeply seated in you, for you to take part in organising, carry on something that doesn't really have relevance in everyday life, but you handed it down, it takes a lot of energy to do it and I, I hope that that is what people get, how important you know the ritual of me even making the shoe. Shoes that [...] have no functional space in everyday life, but there are people that learn to make it in a certain way, and you have to learn how to put it on, and you have to learn to take care of it, so that the, and this is what the re-enactment does, it carries those skills forward because it's not just about the shoe, it’s about the knowledge of how, how do you actually make it, for instance.”

Alessandra was conscious that she hadn’t been able to visit her hometown for a long time due to the pandemic, and both commented that they were concerned that the festival may no longer take place if there weren’t enough locals with the knowledge and enthusiasm to run it. Alessandra commented that “I think it's quite the crucial point, because if you lose the drive to do something, it's out of the routine now and in a way that is a dangerous thing for many of these things in many countries, I think. I know already of a couple of the well-established carnivals, for instance, which now I'm not, they told me we don't know whether we're going to do it again. To carry the memory of it, I mean, knowing that this existed [...] I think it's important.”

She also made a point about shared cultural references being important: “It gives that sense of unity, of belonging, I know because I belong to this group, because I come from this particular place or because I eat this particular dish because, and these are very, very important concepts so much because, otherwise, why would you go to such an extent, to bring it forward.”

Elena did not have such strong connections to the area, but talked about how much she enjoyed talking about the cultural activity with her mother: “[I felt] nostalgic, very nostalgic... It was very pleasant to talk about it because I'm very proud of my cultural heritage. It's always been something that I've heavily kind of identified with, I'm like I'm yeah, yeah, I'm Italian, that kind of thing and, but it was just a nice thing and really interesting.”

However she also mentions her “weakened cultural identity” as a result of being a second generation immigrant: “Although I may know the basic stuff, I don't know, I’m removed from

my culture, because I'm a second generation immigrant which means that I, I wasn't raised with the culture and I have a weakened sense of the culture, I don't really have first-hand appreciation of it, I only know from like what my mum has told me now, I only know from a very weak watered down version of my culture, and I feel like if I'd been raised in Italy, I could have, could have had a stronger cultural identity.”

Both Alessandra and Elena are keen to stress that their activity was from their locality and was not representative of Italy as a country, with Alessandra commenting: “I'm grateful that we focused on [our local] heritage, because we don't say, Oh, this is Italian culture, we see this is Italian folk culture represented through the people of our particular town”. Elena agreed, adding that “Italy really isn't a homogenous culture. It's got so much historical background and cultural heritage that it's unfair to boil it down to the ideas of the canals in Venice or the Colosseum in Rome because if you focus on one aspect of Italian heritage and culture, you lose the rest of them.”

### Digital Competence Survey

The results of the digital competence survey show the perceived improvements in digital skills by each of the intergenerational participants. Alessandra was an anomaly across the adult participants, as she reported a decrease in ability for three of the statements, though she had graded herself as the highest level for each statement in the original survey. Elena, on the other hand, graded herself as the highest level in all statements in both pre and post surveys, with no variation.

Antonella	Pre	19-Jun	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
	Post	28-Jun	d	d	d	d	d	c	d	c	c
			0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	-1	-1
Eloise	Pre	19-Jun	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
	Post	28-Jun	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Alessandra has experience with language teaching and learning and gave feedback on the app, both positive and constructive. She commented on the saving mechanisms: “I wanted to say about the saving because you said that it seemed to be, it's not intuitive how to save, I don't think, it's a little bit too restrictive in that sense, because If you upload, if you are like, loading material, the first time, maybe the first few times you use it, because we are so used to not having to save anymore, I think that's a big thing.

She also discussed with Elena the format and layout of the web app, with Elena commenting that “It's great for learning, like the layout is really, really, it's quite engaging. The only criticisms that have a bit is that it can be a little bit like the, I don't know how to describe it, but it looks a bit old if you get what I mean. The website format looks a bit like the kind of old fashioned, yeah, like early 2000s kind of websites. That's the only criticism I have about it, other than that, it's really good, it's really easy to interact with, it's easy to create things on it and it's more or less intuitive to learn and create.”

Alessandra, having experience with a variety of language learning software over the years, added: "I agree with Elena is that it does look a little bit old fashioned, it's as if it's a more modern version of "hot potato" it was called wasn't it, it was a software to create language activities. I think the layout for the creation is the same, the outcome is better, but the selection of activities is more restrictive and is reduced somehow because we talked today, you could do more in terms of variety, you could do wordsearch and crosswords and things like that. And I understand why this is, I understand I actually understand why it is designed that way, because it is a standardized structure where you present information and you assess it."

There was discussion from several of the participants about the assessment activities on the app, and there was disagreement as to whether the assessment could be more complex and allow for more variation. Alessandra gave her opinion as a language teacher: "But the most obvious way of assessing it is also the downfall because everybody comes up with a basic vocabulary exercise which is only then appealing if you don't know the language at all, but if you know the language, then that may be a little bit of a problem, I'm not sure. If you know the language already, you watch the video but it's not, in terms of what you can do, then, with the interaction it's not, if it's just the matching of the word it's not really challenging or satisfactory is it."

The pair agreed that that creating an authentic activity gave a real-world factor to language learning, but that the web app perhaps worked best as a taster of the language, and an inspiration to go and learn more of the language and culture. Alessandra summarised her experience with the web app, and the difficulties of reducing a language to a limited number of vocabulary items: "There is a duality between culture and language and authenticity of the language [...] but this is the problem isn't it, how do you merge both aspects of it [...] I like that idea of finding a way of teaching a language that is a, I don't want to say real language, but at least alive, rather than out of a textbook".



## Case study: Charden



Charden moved to Newcastle in 2016 and took part in two research projects at Newcastle University – Linguacuisine and ENACT Europa.

### The Linguacuisine Project

Charden was part of the Linguacuisine project from the beginning and contributed to the co-design of the app. He explains how through the project: *'I got to meet new people but, more importantly I have learnt so much'*. He defines Linguacuisine as *'an adventure where I am learning so much'*.

Charden joined the project without particular expectations *'I was thinking that it was just easy job'*. However, as he became more involved with the weekly sessions he realised the benefits of the project as *'it turned out to be a bit more than what I thought about the project in itself.'* He credits Linguacuisine for pushing him beyond his comfort zone as he learnt *'how to shoot a movie, you know all the camera angles, how to get things, the script, and how you like it to be done on the camera'*.

Charden particularly enjoyed the social aspect of the project, working with teachers and making new friends and *'meeting new people and local people'*. At the same time, Linguacuisine has been a unique opportunity for him. In his words: *'I meet many people anyway as I do a lot of volunteering but this was special because you meet people and you learn languages and how to be more confident'*.

Linguacuisine also gave Charden the chance to learn new digital skills, including video shooting editing. He now feels confident in using the computer and in developing apps: *'we learnt about the media pallets, we learnt about loads of things but it was so much fun'*.

Charden defines 'refreshing' the atmosphere the project sessions: *'We had a lot of fun at the same time we are learning so much but it was just special, the atmosphere was great, it was brilliant'*. He values how the variety of the participants' backgrounds and the mix of cultures *'was just amazing'*.

Through Linguacuisine, Charden developed a number of friendships with people from different parts of the world: *'It's just kind of mind-blowing the way that people come together'*

*and, just how fun you know, and you don't even speak English well but each one understands each other. There is so much going on in terms of what you are learning. It's beyond belief really'.*

As a native French-speaker, Charden also values how engaging with local British participants helped him to improve his English language skills and particularly how he *'developed hearing skills and got used to the local accent'*. He also had the opportunity to *'learn some new languages with other people'*, for example, a number of words in Chinese.

Above all, Charden enjoyed working in a team to create the app and to *'collaborate with people that come from different background'*. Half-way through the project, he commented: *'I am loving this, seeing people from all the places and all coming together and starting things together'*.

Charden is an experienced legal advisor and he hopes to rebuild his career: *'My experience with Linguacuisine will be useful to re-enter my career, as I am now confident to use the computer. I am more aware about data protection, privacy, and confidentiality'*.

If given the opportunity, Charden would be happy to join a follow-up project: *'I would join the project again at a different level. It was a pleasure to see people on the last session to be able to follow my recipe. [...] From where I started, I made enormous progress. I improved a lot in terms of skills and I improved myself as a person'*

You can see the French recipe which Charden produced on the app: 'Wakanda's Cuisine'  
<https://linguacuisine.com>



*The photo shows Charden preparing food in the Digital Kitchen during the Linguacuisine project.*

### **ENACT Europa**

In the 2 years between the Linguacuisine and ENACT Europa projects, Charden studied for a BA Politics and International Relations degree at Northumbria University.

In August 2021, Charden came back to Newcastle University to take part in a workshop to learn how to use all features of the ENACT app. He said:

*"I had a fantastic experience there; the personnel was amazing, and the activities were quite engaging."*

*"The fact that I could experience some activities using Virtual Reality. It made look so real and fun at the same time."*

*"I particularly enjoyed weaving the tartans. I really had fun learning how to make these. I guess I feel closer to Scotland now than I ever felt before."*

*"I still think that culture is what we do remember when we have forgotten everything else. But I have also learned that culture is so much more than that. It entails various aspects of life such as religion, and social groups."*

Charden has also published a book chapter: 'Talking heads: The non-existence of meaningful service user consultation in Congo Brazzaville' in the 2020 book: 'The Routledge Handbook of Service User Involvement in Human Services Research and Education'.

In July 2022, Charden graduated with a first-class BA degree and received a place at Oxford University to take a MSc degree in African Studies.

To watch an interview at the end of his stay in Newcastle between Charden and Paul Seedhouse, click [here](#).







The photos show Charden working on materials during the ENACT Europa workshop.



## Case study – working with Non-Government Organisations

As part of the ENACT project, it was important for us to work closely with the local NGOs who help and support migrants, asylum seekers and refugees around the North-East. The Principal Investigator on the project, Muge Satar, had been aware of the work going on by two local NGOs through the School of Education's research seminar series, and so contacted them in the initial stages of the project. They have worked alongside us throughout each output and their collaboration has been invaluable.

### N.E.S.T.

North-East Solidarity and Teaching (N.E.S.T) is a multi-award winning and internationally-recognised student-led project at Newcastle University Students Union (NUSU) that is managed by Go Volunteer. N.E.S.T empowers the refugee and asylum-seeking community in the region through a variety of formats such as one-to-one English teaching, group English classes, sports, creative arts and trips into the local area.

Through N.E.S.T, learners (refugees and asylum seekers) gain confidence in their language skills, find new friends and family, and become better integrated into the community. N.E.S.T runs every day, providing up to 13 sessions each week for people of all ages.

### Action Foundation

Action Foundation is an award-winning charity based in Newcastle upon Tyne. Through our free InterAction Drop In, Digital Inclusion project, English language school, and supported housing projects, they support refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants to integrate successfully into the community and lead more independent and resilient lives.

Many of the facilitators we trained to support our project were volunteer English language teachers from Action Language, which provides free English lessons to people seeking asylum, refugees, and other migrants unable to access mainstream classes.

### **Output 1**

Muge knew of the work of Bridget Stratford, co-founder and manager of N.E.S.T., and contacted her to discuss the project with her and how her learners could be involved. Bridget invited her into the Saturday language classes. Muge talked to the learners after their English lessons, about their linguistic and cultural requirements and needs as migrants in the UK. This helped to inform the report for the Output 1 user requirements for the web app and co-production workshops. She then visited N.E.S.T. to discuss the project plans with their learners. On the back of this, volunteers from both Action Foundation and N.E.S.T. were invited to the launch meeting of ENACT.

### **Output 3**

Output 3, focussing on the development of certification, recognition, and evaluation systems, involved training a range of participants from the five partner institutions to be facilitators,

so they would be able to effectively work with the migrants and their host country partners in co-producing intercultural activities for the web app. In the case of Newcastle University (UNEW), the participants consisted of HE staff, HE students and volunteers who were invited from Action Foundation and N.E.S.T. Several of the Action Foundation volunteers assisted on the Action Language course, supporting migrants in their English language lessons. One UNEW participant was a recent migrant himself, who had been supported by Action Foundation on his arrival in Newcastle.

The participants engaged in a two-week training course with those from the partner institutions. The course was set up on Canvas, a free online platform for teachers, which enabled all the participants to access the materials online. A mixture of both live workshops via Zoom and pre-recorded presentations with activities and discussion boards allowed the participants to interact with each other despite all the countries being under COVID-19 restrictions.

Four of the UK facilitators completed a survey asking their opinions on culture and language. UK Facilitator 1 and 4 were both volunteers with Action Foundation, while UK Facilitator 2 was a recent migrant. Their opinions were generally incredibly positive, as the table below shows:

	My language is the same as my culture.	I can tell a person's culture by the way they dress.	I like learning about other cultures.	I know many languages.	Language learning is easy for me.	I am a good language learner.	I like learning languages.	Language learning can be fun.	I am familiar with my partner's culture(s).	I know at least one of my partner's cultural activities.	I can understand my partner's first language.	I know a few words in my partner's first language.	I would like to meet other people from my partner's culture(s).	My partner and I have similarities in our culture or cultural activities.	My partner and I have similarities in our languages.
UK Facilitator 1	Agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree
UK Facilitator 2	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral		Strongly agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
UK Facilitator 3	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral
UK Facilitator 4	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree

UK Facilitator 1, an Action Foundation volunteer, included extra comments about their perception of culture and cultural artefacts: "Culture is life - it is a huge part of what makes us who we are. A cultural object/ artefact is a thing that relates to a person's culture. An item of clothing, some food, an ornament - anything with links to culture."

During the training, the participants were able to try some of the activities on the web app, which at that early point in the project were more limited in scope. UK Facilitator 5, an Action Foundation volunteer and teacher with Action Language, noted on the Vietnamese To He activity that the app was "great in learning about the history of the toy, and what materials you use to make it, a really interesting video!" UK Facilitator 2 tried UK pumpkin carving and Turkish shadow puppets, and commented on the narrative aspect of both, noting "nice story telling" on the UK activity and "the story telling is nice and the instructions are clear" on the Turkish activity.

In their e-portfolios, which all facilitators were asked to keep as part of the process, two of the Action Foundation volunteers commented on how working with others had developed their cultural awareness, a vital skill in their role supporting migrants:

"The best aspect of the training for me was finding out about different cultures, from the picture upload activity as well as watching videos on the ENACT app of other cultures."

“I expanded my knowledge of cultural studies by hearing about other people’s cultures, or simply just speaking to and observing a group with such a variety of cultures, languages and ages has expanded what I knew before, and has taught me a lot about how best to work together with such a group.”

## Output 5

We held fourteen co-production workshops, both intercultural and intergenerational, and eight of the participants were either migrants or volunteers with Action Foundation or N.E.S.T. The participants worked together to complete activities on the web app and then created an activity. In several of these workshops, the UK participant (an Action Foundation volunteer) opted to assist their migrant partner in creating a cultural activity based on the non-UK culture or language, which enabled cross-cultural discussion and knowledge exchange. Comments received from the migrant participants included:

“I enjoyed this experience of making a language learning resource and I hope that the activities I made are useful to help someone learn a few words in my mother's beautiful language.”

“I really enjoyed talking to people from different countries with different cultures.”

“I really enjoyed the experience, the thinking behind it, the interaction - thank you for the opportunity!”

The photo below shows a UK participant who had also completed the facilitator training (UK Facilitator 5) but had decided to take part in the project as a participant, working with a migrant who had been supported and directed to us by Action Foundation. Together they created an [Iranian activity](#) and commented how much they had enjoyed the experience.



One partner sent feedback to say that “it was an honour for me to participate in your course and I gained a unique experience with your help and grace”, while her UK partner gave equally

positive feedback when asked what she had gained from taking part in the workshops, saying that she had “learnt that I really enjoy being part of a learning environment and finding out about different cultures is a very enjoyable experience especially when it is so interactive.”

When asked further questions about her participation with both Action Foundation and ENACT, she emailed her responses:

*What inspired or persuaded you to volunteer with AF?*

“I read an article in a magazine about how you could help refugees, and it gave some good tips about reaching out to local charities, so I wanted to help.”

*What benefits and positive experiences have you had by doing so?*

“The benefits of volunteering with AF were meeting new people, and meeting refugees, finding out their interests and likes, it was also a positive experience teaching English as it felt rewarding after every lesson.”

*What was your motivation to participate in the ENACT project?*

“I like trying new things and I'd never taken part in anything like this, I liked the thought of people part of a project related to Newcastle University.”

*What did you gain by participating in the project?*

“I gained a lot of knowledge about Iran, and the cultural practices such as the celebration Noruz, anytime I see a post about this I feel like I can relate.”

For the final two workshops, N.E.S.T. provided us with details of two volunteers and two recent migrants. The four participants worked in intercultural pairs to trial and create activities, but had breaks and refreshments together, leading to further cultural exchange and lively discussion. They created two activities, [a typical Iraqi dance](#) and [an English scarecrow](#).





### **Co-production workshop – August 2021**

Due to a huge amount of interest from migrants to participate in the co-production workshops but limited time and places available, we decided to hold two half-day workshops on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2021. These sessions were less formally structured and brought together a small group of migrants who shared their cultural and linguistic stories with each other, completed a variety of cultural activities together, and were given information to enable them to create their own activities on the web app at a later time if they wished.

During the workshop, we learnt about Bonfire Night, Hallowe'en and other aspects of UK culture, and worked together on some tartan weaving. Participants enjoyed getting to know one another and discussing their own cultural heritage as well as learning more about the UK.

Feedback included:

“There was a lot of fun atmosphere. It's like we've known each other before. It's a good time, and we've learned new things.”

“Meeting with the group was absolutely great. It was so beautiful and pleasant. The staff was very nice and helpful. They are "the salt of the earth". I enjoyed it and I have learned something new.”

“We learned in an easy and relaxing way the British culture, learning new words and doing a fun activity.”



**Collaboration between School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences, Newcastle University and N.E.S.T. / Action Foundation**

The project's Principal Investigator, Müge Satar, said:

*"It was a real pleasure to work together with AF and NEST as part of our project. I had met NEST lead, Bridget Stratford, before and have been amazed with the work they do to support migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in our city and beyond. Our partnership enabled me to learn more about their activities, and meet and work closely with the people they/we support."*

*The same can be said about our links with Action Foundation. I am really pleased with the relationships we have developed with AF, their volunteers, and learners. At Newcastle University, we had collaborated with AF in other EU-funded projects (e.g. [www.cslw.eu](http://www.cslw.eu)) and ENACT has further cemented and extended our partnership.*

*All our participants from AF and NEST were proud to showcase their culture and language to the world and find a space to have a voice. One of our participants from AF who created an ENACT activity in May 2021 as part of our co-production workshops recently got in touch with us (March 2022) to share that they were going to use their Nowruz-related ENACT activity as part of a presentation for their classmates in college because it was again the time of the year to celebrate Nowruz. It is a real sense of achievement to facilitate production of digital resources that community members remember and want to use in the long term as a way to express themselves. This is how, we believe, we can increase our engagement with the society and contribute to triggering real change.*

*We are keen to continue to collaborate with both NEST and AF and explore synergies to identify further ways in which we can make an impact on the lives of newcomers to our city. Linguistic and cultural challenges can be daunting and two-way exchanges are key for all of us to learn from each other. We hope our ENACT co-production workshops organised in collaboration with AF and NEST have contributed to this and we look forward to future activity to continue to do so.”*

### **Multiplier Event**

We are inviting many of the migrant participants and volunteers from the two NGOs to talk about and demonstrate their activities at our local multiplier event in June. This will be a fantastic opportunity for them to discuss the benefits and gains they experienced through being part of the project.

### **University of Sanctuary**

Our community engagement activities in collaboration with NEST and AF were part of the Newcastle University's [University of Sanctuary](#) application in spring 2021 and we are thrilled that the application was successful.

## **Aleksandra**

### **Background**

Aleksandra is a student at a university of applied sciences and a former language teacher. She migrated from Russia to Finland several years ago and already knows the Finnish language quite well. Finnish is the primary language of her university studies. However, at home, Aleksandra speaks Russian primarily, so she estimates that her everyday Finnish vocabulary is not as advanced. Generally speaking, Aleksandra's competence in languages is broad – she speaks four different languages.

### **Language learning**

Aleksandra has always enjoyed learning new languages. Her journey with Finnish has been long, although inconsistent: She started studying Finnish 11 years ago but went on with it for only about 8–9 months. After that, she was employed and therefore did not have time to study Finnish, and her working language was always either English or Russian. Quite recently, Aleksandra concluded that studying for a new career in Finnish might be more helpful for her language goals than working in Finnish. Pursuing a degree has indeed given her language learning a further boost: “At the moment, Finnish has a huge impact on my life because I'm studying in Finnish. It is a big challenge for me because a year ago I could barely speak Finnish, but now I'm doing much better”. According to Aleksandra, studying a new career in Finnish has helped her language learning, as has the constant support from her friends.

### **Participating in the workshop**

At the start of the ENACT workshops in which she participated, Aleksandra did not have a clear idea of what was supposed to happen but was interested to find out. The activity she and her partner created was in Aleksandra's first language and from her country of origin, Russia. Aleksandra is very used to making the kind of activity they did with her pair. The activity was quite close to the Finnish culture as well, so the planning of doing the activity

was enjoyable for both participants since they got to reflect on the similarities and differences in the cultures.

During the workshops, Aleksandra learned some new words in Finnish, mainly around the activity the participants created. She also brings up how the workshops helped her reflect on the origins of Russian culture: "It was a little challenging to figure out what kind of traditions are actually connected to the Russian culture because many traditions are borrowed from other cultures". Regarding digital skills, she feels she learned about recording and creating the instructions but wishes she would have been able to participate even more in editing the video. Finally, she expresses having learnt to be more precise with instructions when teaching a cultural activity to others. "I've learned many things", Aleksandra concluded at the end of the workshops.

### **Using the app**

After completing the workshops, Aleksandra said that she could use the ENACT app in the future as well. She thinks that the videos are "really good" for learning languages but points out that in some of the ENACT activities you need much more base competence on the language than in others.

## **LENA**

### **Background**

Lena migrated from Russia to Finland when she was 36 years old. Before moving to Finland, Lena studied theoretical physics and started learning English at university. At the time of the workshops, she was doing an internship for Cultura Foundation, where the workshops were held.

Lena speaks a total of four languages. She thinks that the Finnish language and culture are important in her life but describes being somewhat uncertain about her Finnish skills and using the language. She also mentioned that she finds the Russian and Finnish cultures quite similar.

### **Working on the activity**

The activity Lena and her pair designed has its origins in Finnish culture and was a completely new cultural activity for her. Lena did a large part of the technical things regarding making the final activity in the ENACT app. During the workshops, she acquired vocabulary related to the Finnish activity and some words in Japanese since they did the Japanese origami activity as a warmup exercise. The words and expressions she learnt included, for example, materials needed for the activities. Lena found it slightly challenging to follow the Finnish conversation, saying that it was hard at times to understand what was going on since her Finnish is “not so strong”. Nonetheless, the participant’s cooperation in the project went smoothly. Even though most of the communication was done in Finnish, other languages were at play. English was used a lot as a support language, but the pair also used some Russian since they both spoke Russian.

### **About the app**

When asked if she liked using the app, she answered that she liked it and that she found it different from other apps like this and that there was a feeling of novelty. “It was pleasant to work with the app”, she added, but also said that she isn’t sure if she’ll use the ENACT app in the future.

## **OLGA**

### **Background**

Olga has lived in Finland for several years and raised her children in Finland. She moved to Finland from Russia and speaks Russian as her native language. In addition to Russian, she speaks three languages: French, English, and Finnish. Before moving to Finland, Olga completed an academic degree at a Russian university.

### **Participating in the workshop**

Olga was very interested in using the ENACT app. She and her pair decided to do a Russian activity since Olga is already familiar with Finnish traditions. For example, she said that she always celebrates Christmas in the Finnish way and New Year in the Russian way. She and her pair created a Russian tea ceremony activity, during which Olga got to teach the Russian language and culture to her Finnish pair.

Olga's knowledge of the Finnish language is vast as she has already been quite absorbed in Finnish culture and language. Nevertheless, she still learned some new words about the activity's theme during the workshops.

At the end of the workshops, Olga said that she had liked working with the ENACT app and would be happy to do more workshops related to the ENACT project in the future. Olga was glad that she "got opportunities to talk with people and spend time in a very nice way". She was excited about meeting new people and wished to meet with her pair again in the future, proposing cooking for them and get-togethers.

### **Using the ENACT app**

As a second language user and learner, Olga finds the ENACT app to be an excellent and exciting idea. "ENACT is like TikTok, but for people who want to study languages," she describes. She also refers to the app as "a kind of direct democracy" because it allows everyone to produce their cultural artefacts and, therefore, choose how they want their culture to be perceived. Finally, Olga expresses hope that there will be even more material in the app in the future so that she can continue using it for learning about new cultures and languages.

## **Case study - Working with Cultura Foundation**

Collaboration with local organisations has been an essential part of the ENACT project. In Finland, the University of Helsinki has worked closely together with Cultura Foundation throughout the project. Both parties view the collaboration as invaluable.

### **Cultura Foundation**

[Cultura Foundation](#) is a Helsinki-based non-profit organisation that promotes the social integration of Russian-speaking minorities in Finland. Russian is the most spoken foreign language in Finland, making Russian speakers the second largest linguistic minority after Swedish speakers. Due to their long history in Finland with many waves of migration, the contemporary Russian speaking community is very heterogeneous. Cultura works with people whose families have lived in Finland for generations as well as with those who have migrated within a couple of weeks. The Russian speakers in Finland come from many countries, such as the Russian Federation, Estonia, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Latvia and Lithuania. On the other hand, the Russian Federation has many linguistic and ethnic minorities for whom Russian is only one of the languages they use. The community is also quite diverse regarding Finnish and Russian language skills.

Cultura promotes the two-way integration of Russian-speaking minorities through culture, dialogue, and inclusion. The foundation's basic operations include giving consultations to private and public agents as well as various projects revolving around art and language learning. In addition, to ENACT, their current projects include, for example, CulturaFest, an annual art festival centred around new Finnish identities and minority inclusion, and an EU-funded art mediation project called Agents of Change: Mediating Minorities.

### **How the collaboration started**

The cooperation between Cultura and the University of Helsinki dates back to 2017, when researchers Lari Kotilainen and Salla Kurhila reached out to Cultura's Anna Sidorova to collect data at the foundation's premises. Their research interests were in second language learning and interaction in multilingual work environments, and Cultura seemed an interesting setting to investigate.

This initial contact prompted the idea of expanding the collaboration: The first recordings made at Cultura were followed by several experiments designed to encourage language learning. When the University of Helsinki was invited to join the ENACT project, Cultura seemed a natural partner, as promoting intercultural exchange is a central interest for both the ENACT project and Cultura. In fact, without Cultura's participation in the ENACT project, and the research interests of Kotilainen and Kurhila, intercultural exchanges might not have been as central to the project as they are.

### **Workshops and feedback**

The face-to-face workshops in Helsinki took place at Cultura Foundation's premises. Most of the participants were also contacted by Cultura: Where the workshop facilitators were all students at the University of Helsinki, most participants were recruited by Cultura. Among these were four Cultura employees (three from the host country, one with an immigrant background) and eight immigrant participants.

Employees at Cultura Foundation were excited to participate in the hands-on activities during the workshops. According to Sidorova, many of Cultura's employees enjoyed getting insight into the practical side of language learning as opposed to the everyday administrative work at Cultura.

Feedback from the other participants was also positive. Several participants reported not having many real-life Finnish-speaking contacts, which limits their opportunities to practice their language skills in informal settings. The participants valued the opportunity to speak Finnish casually, without the focus being on their language proficiency and its development. For many, getting to use the language in a setting where language learning is not central is rare. When the main focus is on the activity, language skills develop inconspicuously.

### **Benefits of collaboration**

For Cultura, it is essential to stay on top of current research and gather knowledge of how language learners, second language learning, and their relation to integration are seen and talked about in the academic world. *"We want to have access to current knowledge and research. Cultura is very proud to be working together with four European universities. Working with the UH team during the ENACT project has allowed us to network with the wider academic community, which helps us get insight to questions that interest us,"* Sidorova states.

Working with ENACT also gave Cultura invaluable experience working with the European Union. ENACT was the first EU-funded project Cultura participated in. According to Sidorova, even though Cultura's role in ENACT was relatively small, it gave the foundation confidence and practical knowledge on working with EU-level operations. Now Cultura has its own EU project called Agents of Change: Mediating Minorities. The coordinator of the new project also coordinated ENACT and was thus able to transfer the expertise gained with ENACT to the new project. Read more about the MeM project at <https://memagents.eu/about>.

As for the researchers studying multilingual interaction and second language learning at the University of Helsinki, close ties with the field have been essential. The ethnographic approach requires knowing the studied environment thoroughly, so the close collaboration with Cultura benefits the research immensely. Via Cultura, the researchers were also able to contact migrant communities with which they usually have no contact.

The Russian speaking migrants are a central group in studying second language use in knowledge work environments as they are relatively highly educated compared to many other migrant groups in Finland. Cultura also has the contacts and means of informing the stakeholders about the research. Working with Cultura enhances information flow between the university and the field, increasing the potential for the social influence of the research.

## **In the Future**

Cultura and the University of Helsinki plan further collaboration within and beyond the ENACT project. In addition to the multiplier events, the plans include presenting research on language acquisition carried out by the university in seminars organised with Cultura and roundtable discussions with the stakeholders. Cultura's online publication Culturalist is also a potential channel to inform non-academic audiences about the research on language acquisition.

*"I believe that we will continue working together with the university as the language question is one of the key elements in our work. We are constantly finding new ways to navigate the linguistic challenges the local migrant communities face. Language shouldn't be an obstacle to participating and understanding, and we already have positive experiences with UH on projects that help work around that. ENACT has been an important bridge between the foundation and the academic world, and undoubtedly our collaboration will expand beyond the project."*

### Getting to know Alejandro and Marco

Intrigued by many aspects of the Catalan culture, Alejandro, who is originally from Colombia, joined the “*Castellers of Sagrada familia*” seven years ago. This is a relatively well-known Catalan activity which consists of forming a 'human tower'. For Catalans, this activity represents solidarity and team spirit and brings together a diverse group of people of all ages, including small children, known as 'aixedors' (literally 'elevators') who scramble to the top of the human towers which can be as tall as several stories in a building.



Since joining the *Castellers* group, Alejandro has even worked as a secretary for the group and has helped organize young learners' activities peripheral to the human tower building when they cannot be part of the human tower. Alejandro was born in Colombia, but his mum and grandmother are from San Sebastián, a located town in the western Pyrenees of Spain, in the Basque Country. He identifies as both Spanish and Colombian. He moved to Catalonia to study his master's degree and PhD at the Autonomous University of Barcelona in the field of computer vision engineering, semantic maps,

mapping and facial applications. Since moving to Barcelona, he has been keen on finding activities in which he can make friends while he also exercising and experiencing the culture first-hand. Thanks to his enthusiasm to know about the culture, he has not only become proficient in the Catalan language, but he also adopted its culture as his own.

Likewise, Marco, who moved to Spain at the end of 2019 and was his cultural pair, wanted to know more about the Catalan culture. Unfortunately, Covid-19 changed his plans to travel around Spain and he had to do his Erasmus course online in a country far from his family, since at the time he was living in a town situated northeast of Barcelona. Marco is from Italy and has also lived in Argentina when he was a child and he describes himself as a multicultural person. *“I know I am Italian, but in my house, we do lots of things the way they do it in Argentina. Barbecues for example, this is something we do completely different in the Italian Culture [...] we are a big family and we all live in different places around Europe, that’s why I say I’m multicultural, when we meet, we all talk about how different things are depending on the place you live.”*

When Marco mentioned that he felt that he not only had the Italian culture in his veins, but also the Argentinian, Alejandro completely agreed with the sentiment of embodying many cultures. As he explained, *“I was born in Colombia, but I have spent more than half my life in Spain and half my family is Spanish [...]. In my house we all live the Paella and Sevillana stereotypical Spanish lifestyle [...]. My mum and grandma have never lost their accents.”*

### **Workshop 1: Checking their digital competences**

Alejandro and Marco’s workshops were done completely online due to their timetables. Alejandro works as a researcher at the University and Marco, apart from his studies, works in a furniture shop. Nevertheless, from the very first meeting their companionship and connections were visible.

On their very first online meeting, they had to test their digital competences before starting their activity creation or even deciding on the activity they wanted to create for the ENACT web app. On Alejandro’s side it was crystal clear he had the necessary competences to manage search and filter information, as well as the competence area two, described in our digital survey tool specially adapted from Digicomp 2.1. could

clearly interact with a variety of digital technologies. Regardless of his expertise, upon replying to the questions related to the creation of digital content, Alejandro stated that he wasn't sure if he was an independent user when it comes to communication strategies and how to adapt material for language learners from different cultures. In this regard he mentions *"It shouldn't be complicated, but I have never experienced it, I know very little about creating content for language learners [...]. I know about maths and statistics, I'd better choose the foundation level."*

Regarding Marco's point of view, he knew he had the abilities to search and filter information and all the described competences related to accessibility and copyright, but as an artist he, too, felt he had little knowledge about creating online content for language learners. *"I'm going to choose the foundation level too; I have never created contents for language learners"*. At the end of the survey, he compared his digital abilities with Alejandro, and very frankly declared *"I know I am not as good as Alejandro, but I'm sure I will learn."*

## **Workshop 2. Deciding the content**

At the beginning of this online meeting both participants presented the different activities they thought would be ideal to create on the web app. Some of them were related to food, however, even though the project developers understand that food is part of their culture, the participants were encouraged to think about other activities that differentiate in each of their cultures, and that were meaningful for others to be informed about if they wanted to know more about their countries of origin and, if visiting or moving there, could help them integrate more easily with the community.

When Alejandro presented his idea about the "Castellers", he started speaking with passion and authority about the topic. *"For me, it is a feeling [...]. I started going because I wanted to make friends but soon, I realized that this activity in Catalonia it's not only about that, it's about working together for an objective, everyone in the (Colla) group has an important role, no matter where in the tower you are, your strength is needed [...]. This is about companionship, about all of us being equally important, even the musicians."* Marco was impressed by the way his partner spoke about the *castellers*, and

how much he loved to be part of it. Thus, after a brief discussion, the two of them decided this was the activity they wanted to present and create.

Before the activity creation, the two partners explored the app and tried the different activities that were already created and available online. This gave them an idea of how to draw a script for their themselves and the videos presented on the user guide section on the website were also of help. In particular, the video providing some guidelines on what to do and what not to do, so the learners can understand the instructions, follow the cultural activity and learn some of their language and culture was useful for them to cover their own identified lack of experience in this area.

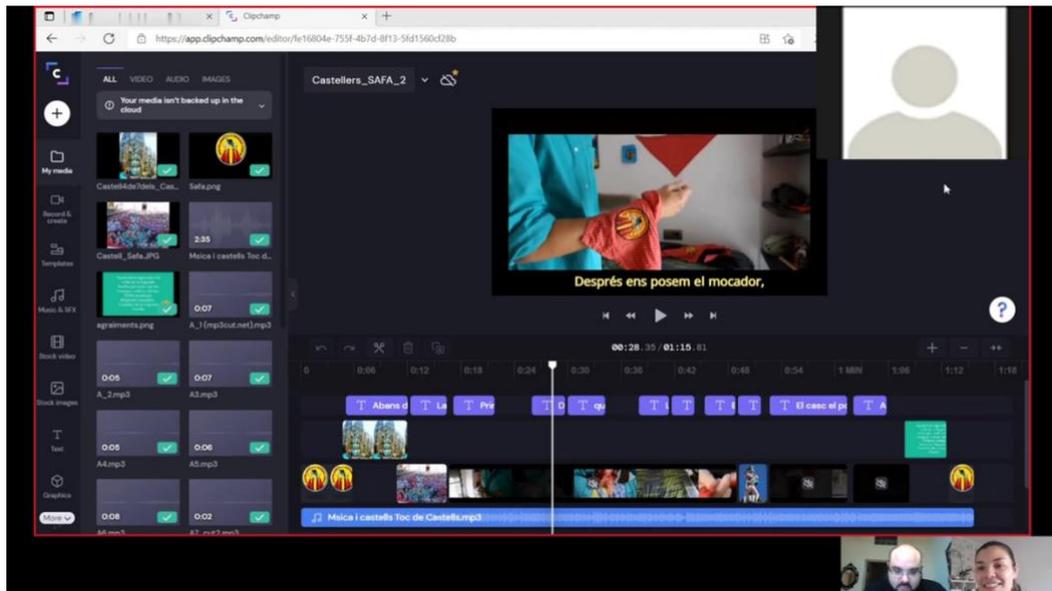
### **Workshops 3 and 4: Creating app content**

After exploring and reading the guidelines, together with the ENACT Facilitator, Alejandro and Marco recognized how the activity creation on the Web App organizes the content for the learner to be involved with the cultural activity first. In this early step the content creator must decide on a video or presentation in which he shows the user what the activity is about, for example an introductory video that gives the viewer a sense of the activity. In this session Alejandro and Marco went to YouTube and tried to find a video they could use to help people conceptualize the *castellers*. After finding one, Marco took responsibility for contacting the video's owner and, meanwhile, Alejandro was going to speak with the content creator at the "Castellers of Sagrada Família" to let them use some of their videos as well, along with pictures for their activity.

Deciding on the vocabulary and topics they wanted to teach took quite long. They were undecided as to whether they would highlight the types of human towers that can be built or the traditional clothes a "Casteller" wears when taking part in the human tower. In the end they decided to go with the simplest language target, clothes. *"It's just easier for me to know this vocabulary, then I can learn the name of each tower you guys build [...] we can leave that for another video."*

In the following meetings, the two put the content together. This required a lot of individual time dedicated selecting the photos and videos and then they were together for two sessions to write down the Catalan subtitles on the video they had chosen to show people the activity. On his own, Alejandro found a website in which they could add

the subtitles to the video, which he then shared with Marco. *"This website is very easy to work with, you can merge videos, add subtitles and it's very intuitive."* This whole subtitling was done online, sharing Alejandro's screen. The process was very interesting from a linguistic perspective, as Alejandro continually asked his partner what he could understand and what the person was really saying. According to the both participants, they had a blast during this activity.



### Summary of the experience

Alejandro and Marco were really happy once they had finished updating the material on the website and tested their activity. They even found a 360° video in which people can see how a human tower is built ([Els castellers | ENACT \(enacteuropa.com\)](https://enacteuropa.com)) and can have a sense of what a *casteller* experiences when taking part in the activity. Alejandro remarked that he really liked *"the way the activity ended up, I wish I could show more."*

Once this part was finish, it was time to rate the app and give the ENACT project feedback about the platform and its use in the future. In this regard Marco said, *"I think it is very interesting, because it has a cultural side other websites or apps don't. It's like you're immersed into the culture, so you learn some vocabulary as well. I like that."* On the other hand Alejandro pointed out that he was not so sure it was a sustainable to full learn a language. *"I think you can learn words, like in the Origami activity we did at the beginning, I think this part of the app is very interesting [...]. But when it comes to learning a language, I think I will need to watch much more videos in which those words*

*are used, so intuitively I can guess the grammar, or catch the way they say and use that word in context, how to conjugate the verbs and all these exceptionalities that make a language more complicate it”*

The participants pointed out how they had discovered that they had many things in common. Marco commented that he would like to go to one of the *Castellers* trainings in Sagrada Família. *“I hope I can go, I’m sure once the restrictions finish, I will have the chance, I would like to join them as well.”* To which Alejandro replied, *“Everyone is welcome in the (Colla) group, as I said all this time, you guys can come any time.”*

They both thanked us for the experience and for the opportunity to show people this activity that makes Catalonia so special.







## Case Study: Anna and Amina



### Getting to know Anna and Amina

Amina was born in Luton on the southeast of England, her dad is French, and her mum is British. Her dad met her mother on a trip to the south coast forty years ago, and shortly after that, he decided to leave behind his life in France to move with Amina's mother and start a family. Due to her dad's job, Amina has lived in different places around Europe: Italy, Norway, France and Catalonia. A few years ago, they decided to settle in Mallorca, an island situated off the coast of Barcelona. Even though Amina has lived in different parts of the world, she has never lost contact with her roots. Her first language (L1) is English and although she speaks more languages, she usually prefers to use English when discussing important decisions in her life.

Amina was paired up with Anna in the ENACT workshop. Anna was born in Catalonia, Spain and has lived abroad for a year in a town called Hildesheim, a municipality near Hannover. Her mother is Catalan as well and her father is from Andalucía, a southern region of Spain. In her house they have always used both languages, Spanish and Catalan, but recently, according to Anna, *"We all speak Catalan with some Spanish word interference."* During her stay in Germany a few years ago, where she was studying at Uni, Anna had a chance to experience German culture and language from a more insider perspective or in her words *"It is not the same studying a language in a classroom, with the grammar and particularities it can have, as being there twenty-four seven listening to them [...] I've learned things I could've never learnt in a classroom."* Anna described the experience as very exciting and beneficial.

Amina and Anna first met in a face-to-face workshop, and immediately found it interesting that they share the same passion for dogs and nature. Amina is a biologist and she studied her undergraduate degree at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Anna also studied there, learning to become an English-German translator. During the

years they both studied there they never met, although during their time together in the workshop and through the conversations they had in the sessions they discovered that they used to visit the same places at Uni and had even studied in the same buildings.

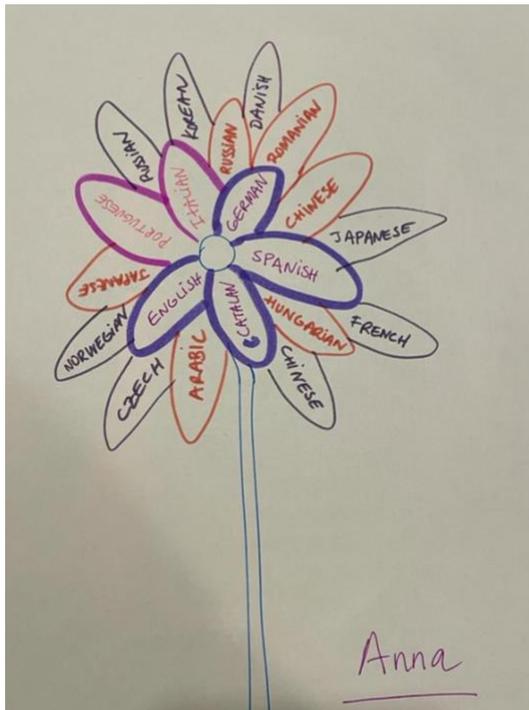
### **Workshop 1: Discussing cultures and languages**

One of the main tasks our participants had, in the first workshop meeting, was to check their digital skills and some items related to the notion they had about culture and their correlation to language.

Of the items related to culture and language, they had to reply if they agreed, strongly agreed or completely disagreed with the statements. Regarding this statement “I’m a good language learner” Amina answered quite briskly *“I don’t know, how would I know?”* When she was prompted to explain why she said that, she replied that she had learned all the languages she speaks because she had had to move to different countries *“for me, it was a way I could survive, I had to learn the language if I wanted to have fun and friends.”* She mentioned as well that she was able to learn all those languages at a very young age, *“I didn’t have to go to classes to get the grammar explained, do you know what I mean? [...] I have never done any test!”* Anna had a different point of view on this topic. She felt that Amina must be a very good language learner because she was able to learn all those languages from a very early age. As Anna put it, *“She knows how the language works and she learnt them because she was living in those countries [...] Of course she is a good language learner.”*

Another statement that was discussed was related to the languages they speak. Anna speaks four languages, as can be seen in her language flower drawn in this first workshop

Figure 1. Anna's flower 1



For her this implies she does not know as many languages as compared to Amina, who is fluent in four and very competent in another three.

Figure 2. Amina's flower 1



In their discussion, it emerged that they both define the statement of “I speak many languages” in very different ways. Amina thinks she doesn’t speak many languages because speaking is equivalent to full fluency. *“For me speaking a language means you are fluent and that you don't need to hesitate when it comes to interacting with a native or if you go to the bank and want to get a loan [...] they need to understand you.”* Anna, on the other hand, thinks that the fluency can be relative to different communicative competences and that these will be relative to different levels. *“You can have the proficiency level in some languages, but you might have others with a B1 level [...] it doesn't mean you don't speak them, of course you do!”* In the end, the two participants agreed to disagree on this matter, deciding that even if their perceptions of 'knowing' a language were different, each was equally valid.

Amina and Anna also had the opportunity to speak about the culture differences they perceived as existing between Barcelona province and Mallorca (the Catalan language and culture are prevalent in both areas). This discussion was initiated by a question of whether could tell a person’s culture by the way they dress. According to Amina, *“It is very difficult to tell, you will need to be from a region in which they wear traditional clothing [...] for example, I cannot tell if someone is from Mallorca or Barcelona by the way they dress, but culturally speaking they are very different, even though they both belong to Catalonia.”*

When asked for further explanations on this matter, Amina explained that *“Islanders are very narrow-minded, some of them have never left the island, they don't know many cultures and most people have never travelled [...] that is very different in the Catalanian society, I can say in Barcelona people are open-minded.”*

Regarding the Mallorquin traditions, Amina said that they give a lot of importance to tilling the land and to pig slaughtering *“It represents the harvest and abundance of each year. It depends on whether your pigs are healthy, whether they are fat and will bring food to your farmhouse all year round [...] it is a social activity because it brings together all the family and close friends.”*

All this information came as a surprise to Anna, who defines herself as an expert in Catalan culture *“I would've never thought they gave that importance to the land and*

*harvest, I'm very surprised!"* although she was even more amazed when she realized that even in the same culture, there are evident differences.

### **Workshops 2, 3 and 4: Creating app content**

In the second meeting, Amina and Anna discussed some activities each of them would like to produce for the ENACT web app. They finally narrowed down their decision down to a tradition that Anna really appreciates in Catalonia and that in England is not well known: mushroom picking.

During the activity design they tested their digital skills, which they had tested at stage 3 regarding digital content creation during their first meeting when they completed the digital competency survey. According to the survey, at this stage they are able to choose the platforms and apps they want to use to find videos, crop and add sound, upload already created material to explain their activity and solve straightforward problems.

The digital skills were not as much a challenge for them as the timing of creating their content. A key issue that arose was that the time of the year in which people go to the forest in Catalonia to pick mushrooms is October, and their workshop meeting was at the end of November. So, despite having intended to meet again in person and record themselves in the mountain, it was likely they would not find any mushrooms to pick. To resolve this issue, Amina and Anna used social media to contact a Youtuber named "Natàlia Möller", who had a few videos about mushroom picking on her platform. This youtuber had a video from the beginning of November 2021 that was exactly what they needed to show on the ENACT web app in order to explain what their activity was about.

They knew they had to get permission from her if they wanted to use that video, and as they both understood the concept of legal responsibility for online actions including copyright issues, they contacted Natàlia through Instagram, and after a few messages explaining why they needed the video, the youtube author agreed. Interestingly, Natàlia decided that she wanted to use the platform as well, to learn how to create an activity.

Once this issue was solved Anna contacted a friend who lives near a forest and is a biologist to help them record a few rules they had come up with together regarding how to pick mushrooms. Once they had all the material ready, they met again online and

started the activity creation. During the whole process they were guided by a facilitator who had experience on the ENACT platform, ensuring that the process ran smoothly.

### **Summary of the experience**

In the end Anna summed it up thusly, *“Catalonia is a mycophilous country, mushrooms have a deep cultural root in our customs [...] I’m glad I can share this part of our culture with Amina and with the other users of the app.”* For Amina experiencing this part of Catalonian culture made her feel she wanted to head to the mountains and experience mushroom picking herself. *“I can’t wait for spring to come; I want to go to the forest and pick the mushrooms myself [...] I will obviously take Anna’s advice when I’m there”*

At the end, Amina and Anna were very satisfied with the result. They liked the videos and the process of recording the voices for the vocabulary was effortless. Once they finished the activity creation and submitted it on the platform, they did the second part of our digital skills competence, and this time in most of the items they both marked the higher level of 'independent user', as they could see they were able to create the activity on their own, taking into account all the abilities described in our digital resource repository.

All in all, the experience left Anna and Amina feeling quite gratified. Not only did they become friends after the workshops, currently meeting to go trekking in the forest with their dogs, but they also discovered, thanks to Amina’s experience, that even inside someone’s culture there are always differences. Amina felt she could identify herself with more than one culture and she began to notice the differences regarding the Catalan language she learnt with Anna’s. *“I’m glad I said yes to your invitation, meeting Anna and doing all these sessions have been a great discovery.”*

For Anna this experience has made her think seriously about travelling abroad again. *“Amina knows about so many cultures, that I feel I should pack my bag and visit places I have never been before [...] I can even use the app to check some words first, learn about the culture and then hop on the flight.”*



## Case Study: Marietta and Rosa

### Getting to know Marietta and Rosa

Keen to let the Catalan culture get into her veins, Marietta, who is originally from Hungary, joined the ENACT UAB project eager to get a chance to practice the language and learn more about the Catalan culture. Marietta had moved to Spain after finishing her studies in childhood education in Budapest and started working as an *au pair* for a Catalan family. After some time, she decided to work as an English teacher in an Academy in Barcelona and left behind her life as an *au pair*. As an *au pair*, and despite living with a Catalan family, Marietta had not really practiced the Catalan language in her first year in Spain, because she mostly spoke English or Spanish. At the beginning of the workshops, she mentioned that she didn't feel confident when trying to speak Catalan. As she explained it, *"I know they are similar, but I need to study more."*

Marietta's host partner, Rosa, was born in Catalonia but her parents migrated from Granada, a city in the south of Spain, in the seventies due to the economic crisis that coincided with the end of one political regime (a dictatorship) and the transition towards another very different one in Spain (democratically elected government). Rosa identifies her culture as Catalan because she was born and raised in a small town on the outskirts of Barcelona. Rosa lived in London for a few years when she was in her twenties. At the time she was torn between staying there or getting married to a Catalan man who she had remained in contact with her when she was abroad. It seems that romance won the day as she explained in the first meeting, *"I couldn't say no. He had everything I liked at the moment, he was Catalan, athletic and he was finishing his studies in Biochemistry. [...] he didn't speak English, but I knew I could teach him."* In the end Rosa returned to her hometown and got married. Since then, she hasn't lived abroad again, she uses the Catalan language daily, for her job and at home. Above all, she endeavours to engage her parents in Catalan activities, because, as she points out, her mum and dad do not speak the language as well as she does.

## **Workshop 1: Discussion of cultures and languages**

During the workshop sessions we asked the participants to draw a flower that included all the languages they spoke, understood or had seen or heard but did not understand. On Marietta's flower we can see that the Catalan language was on the petal that belongs to the languages she understood but did not speak, even though when meeting her cultural partner, Rosa, she tried to practice what she knew and was a somewhat fluent. When she was asked about this she explained, *"Speaking a language doesn't mean for me that you know some words or sentences like "Bon dia" (Good morning) [...] for me it means you're capable of letting the other person understand what you want, that you can tell stories and can use their slang."*

For Rosa, however, language learning is just a matter of practice and confidence. *"When I entered the room the first thing she said was "Bon dia" (Good morning) and I replied in Catalan. I know she understood because she followed the conversation afterwards."* Rosa added, *"I know what it takes to practice a language you don't feel confident with, I am a philologist, but once you feel comfortable with someone or the situation you just let yourself go."*

## **Workshop 2. Deciding the content**

When it came to the moment of choosing a cultural activity, a couple of Catalan ones were on the table, but when Marietta had to think about activities that they do differently in Hungary it was difficult for her to choose. *"I don't really know what to choose, we think we are completely different, but I cannot think about something different that we do in Hungary that I haven't seen here in Spain. Nowadays we even share the same customs. That's globalization: we dress the same, we go to the same stores, we celebrate birthdays with a cake, we meet our friends. Where is the difference?"*

However, following some discussion around the topic of celebrations, Marietta mentioned that she was going to a wedding during the summer in Hungary, and that in her home country they normally take wedding celebrations very seriously. *"We do have our bridesmaids dress, that we have been using during the last weddings in our group of*

*friends -it's our agreement-, we get ready to dance and stay with the couple all night long until we all have breakfast. That's what you normally do."*

When she started talking about it, her host partner proposed selecting that activity for the web app, since, in comparison to the Catalan weddings, they were no real similarities, apart from joining the bride and the groom in the celebration. The discussion took them to the rituals they have in each country, how the meals are divided into different moments during the whole celebration in Hungary. For instance, depending on the moment of the night, one kind of food is served or another. There are other changes as well. For the first dance as a married couple, the bride changes her white dress into a red one. There is also an envelope with money that is given to the couple as a present which is not done in weddings in Catalonia. Through their discussion, several aspects that are not the same in Catalonia emerged, confirming for the Marietta and Rosa that this would be a good activity to produce.

It was decided then, that Marietta was going to record parts of her best friend's wedding in Hungary and that they were going to meet back again mid-summer to create the activity on the ENACT web app. *"I have the flights bought, the envelope is ready, and my green dress is waiting for me at my mum's house"*

### **Workshops 3 and 4. Creating the content**

As discussed by these couple they met a month and a half later and Marietta was eager to show Rosa the videos and the experiences she had lived at the event. *"I can't believe we have chosen my activity; it is very special for me and it's a lot of responsibility as well, people will be learning Hungarian through the activity we will create."* This session was very joyous and fun. As Rosa expressed it, *"I would've like to have gone to this! In Catalonia you hear the godfather say a few words about the just married couple, sometimes they read a poem and that's it, the party starts!"*

The first step before creating the activity on the Enact web app was showing the couple some of the apps and tools, they would need to use to trim the videos, add music, record their voices and to see how all the content would be configured in their activity on the website. Marietta, who is 27 years old, did not know how to use many of these tools on the android system. She asked the Rosa and the ENACT facilitator, *"Be patient because*

*I'm a IOS user not android, so I don't know how things work here.*" Interestingly, her host partner was in the same situation, although she had a better idea of how to work with Android systems. Thus, both collaboratively learned about how android systems work and they even downloaded other apps to trim videos and record voices. They also found a free online website in which they could put together all the short videos Marietta had and create the video presentation now available on the website. [[Magyar esküvői hagyományok](#) (Hungarian Wedding traditions)]

The creation process of the activity did not stop there. Once Marietta and Rosa knew how to use the tools, the second step was deciding what to include in the activity that could help someone learn Hungarian, in terms of images, and vocabulary. During this process, Rosa got to practice a lot of Hungarian slang and vocabulary that at the same moment she could translate into Catalan. Not only they were learning how to use the technology for their project, but also their interaction led them to teach each other some words and phrases in their respective languages.

The process of creating the video from scratch gave both participants the possibility to learn new digital competences. By using the *Statement of Digital Skills* available on the website, it was found that s Marietta and Rosa were situated on the foundation level which means that at basic level and with autonomy they were able to identify which programs they needed to create digital materials, take images, and record videos and audio clips for individual use. With this prior information, the workshops were adapted for Marietta and Rosa's level. Significantly, after the activity creation they both assessed themselves on the Intermediate level, in which on their own and by solving straightforward problems they could explain ways to adapt existing knowledge to use it in a digital form, such as the different formats that can be used to create a cultural artefact (e.g., a dance) for language learners.

When asked if they thought they could move into the stage 4, in which they work independently, both participants said that it was too soon to say, based only on the creation of one activity and that they needed to practice more. In Marietta's words *"I feel more confident now when creating videos or uploading things in the app, but I'm not an expert. [...] I will need to create more videos or do a course that teaches me how*

*to be a content developer, for example! Then I can say I'm independent when it comes to create content for a website."*

### **Summary of the experience**

These experience of working together allowed Marietta and her host partner, Rosa, to integrate more with both of their cultures. For Rosa, it raised her interest in going to Budapest and to find out more about the Hungarian culture. She even offered to accompany Marietta if she had to go to a wedding again. *"I can be your perfect partner [...] now I know what I have to do, when to help to kidnap the groom, when to help the master of ceremony with the pot. [...] I will understand what they are doing as I know the keywords in Hungarian."*

On Marietta's end, she highlighted the feeling that she had gained a friend. *"I think now it's the moment to let myself practice Catalan. Working with Rosa has helped me understand that it is a way of knowing more about her culture. [...] This has been a win-win situation, I have learned about some Catalan traditions, I have practiced some of the Catalan words I knew with her, and I could see she was very interested in my language too."*

A few months after Marietta finished the workshop, she enrolled in one of the Catalan courses Barcelona Townhall offers to immigrants. According to her, Marietta decided to join the course thanks to the activity she had created. Having the opportunity to participate in the ENACT project helped her realize that it was the moment to take a step forward in learning Catalan. *"I like the activities that are on the web app, but they left me with this feeling of wanting more [...] I want to know more than vocabulary, I want to learn the language."*





## Case study: Camila and Ainhoa

Camila is a university student from Colombia who migrated to Spain with all her family, including her dogs. She joined the ENACT UAB project because she wanted to find more ways of integrating with the Catalan culture. Even though she's been living in Spain for three years, in Camila's words, *"there are cultural aspects I didn't know were important to Catalan people, such poetry."*

Ainhoa was born and raised in Catalonia. She speaks Catalan, Spanish and English. She is in her fourth year at university, studying to become a primary education teacher. She identifies as Catalan and Spanish because she was born in Catalonia but her parents and many of her relatives are from other parts of Spain.

### **Workshop 1: Talking about languages and culture**

Regarding language learning, Camila defines herself as an independent learner, even though she's not very keen on learning grammar. *"I'm good at learning languages, but I'm very lazy about going through the grammar. I like to learn in context."* Camila has taken some courses in the past, but she does not consider them to have very successful. *"What I missed during the courses, was the fact that I was not in touch with the language, I wasn't in contact with it daily. [...] When I learned to speak English, it was pretty easy, I was living in the States."* What Camila values the most about learning a language is the possibility to communicate with others and learn about different cultures. *"I like learning languages because it means I can communicate with other people and learn about their culture."*

When Camila Joined the first workshop on the ENACT project, she was very nervous. Even though she is a university student, she didn't know how to create content for a website, or how to structure and produce an activity to show people her culture. She found the training given about how to record voices and integrate them into a video very beneficial, as well as using apps and tools she had not had the opportunity to try before. *"This session has been very eye opening, I can even use this at Uni, for my own presentations."*

### **Workshops 2 and 3: Developing digital competences**

The ENACT workshops helped Camila to develop new IT skills. The first time she accessed the Web App, she was quite anxious because she did not want to mess up the activity creation. However, by trying out other people's activities, not only the Catalan ones, but also activities from Turkey, England and China, she became more confident. *"I've seen that the content creation it's not as difficult as I thought. [...] The activities seem easy to develop [...] I can find a video on YouTube for example and enclose the link to upload it on the app, easy as a pie."*

Playing with the app even woke up her spirit to learn other languages and was even willing to give more memory type activities a go. *"I didn't know Turkish would be an interesting language for me to learn. This is the first time I heard someone speaking this language and the activity was easy. [...] I don't remember all the vocabulary, but I will try again."* She was very enthusiastic as well about discovering other cultures, or as she put it, *"It changes the way of seeing the world, not all people think the same way, we all see life differently and have other tools to solve problems."*

During the workshop her and her partner, Ainhoa, had the chance to speak about cultural aspects and language learning. They both agree on the fact that speaking a language does not mean you represent that culture, it is just one part of it. As Camila explains, *"I think the way I speak is part of my culture, but my language is not my whole culture, I don't think your language would be something that encompasses everything that being from a country represents. Ainhoa supported this idea: "I agree with Camila, although I speak Catalan, I have a lot from the Spanish culture."*

Another aspect that arose during their conversation was the fact that the clothes someone wears do not define one's culture nowadays. Camila was very specific about it, stating; *"In the past I would think so, when the traditional clothing of the cultures was used, but now everybody dresses the same even if they are from different cultures."*

The ENACT project has given Camila the opportunity to try out new ways of language and cultural learning while motivating her to explore more deeply 'grammar' of languages that interest her. *"Experiencing the language through the culture, gives me more meaning and willingness to learn it. [...] It's just another fun way of experience the*

*Catalan language, [...] I'm not only learning the language, I'm also learning about their culture, that's what I value. [...] That's why I like the App, it gives you very basic vocabulary, a taste of the culture and if I want to go further, then I can give the grammar a go."*

### **Summary of the experience**

At the end of the workshops Camila was very happy with the results obtained with her cultural partner, saying, *"Working with Ainhoa has been a great experience. [...] She has this passion about her culture, and eagerness to show me how her culture is, that it made me feel embraced. [...] I will definitely try to learn and speak in Catalan."*

Camila also praised the way the app is created and the intentionality behind learning a language by showing people's culture. *"I would've liked to have access to this web app before when I first moved to Spain. I didn't know anything about Catalan culture nor their language. [...] I can't say I know everything now, but I have learnt a lot with Ainhoa. [...] I like the underlying purpose to welcome people from any part of the world regardless of their country of origin."*

At the end of the workshop Ainhoa that she had been apprehensive at first to join the workshop because she was worried that she didn't *"speak English well enough to participate."* She soon came to realize that *"knowing a language doesn't mean perfect grammar and vocabulary. [...] When you work together to share your ideas and talk about things that are important to you, like your own culture [...] and listen to others talk about theirs, you are really learning."*

Now that the workshops have finished, Camila hopes this app will be known to everyone that would like to move to another country. *"I will definitely tell my relatives and friends about this web app. [...] I have already sent the link from our activity to my mum for her to try it."* She is also very excited to see what other people think about the activity she created with Ainhoa. *"I want our activity to be the one with the most likes. I feel the same as when posting something on social media, waiting for people to comment!"*





## Case Study: Juan and Sofia

### Getting to know Juan and Sofia

Having been moved to Spain with a scholarship as a child, Juan has been living in this country for almost 18 years. He has lived in different parts of Spain and has experienced the Spanish culture from different personal situations, not only as a student but now as a worker and an independent adult. Originally from the Dominican Republic, he feels that the ENACT project has given him the opportunity to introduce other people to his culture and way of living. *“Being part of this project, as an immigrant it’s very special for me, I want people to know about my culture, we are not only Bachata”,* which is a genre of Latin American music that was born as a fusion between Merengue, Bolero and Son Cubano and is well known in Dominica, even at times, known as a national rhythm.

Sofia, his host partner is a journalist. Her family is from Catalonia, and she volunteered to join the ENACT project on the grounds that she normally helps foundations and NGO’s welcoming immigrants. In her early years as a student at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, she helped The Fundació Autònoma Solidària (FAS) a university-based social organisation that collaborates in applying social, solidarity-based and cooperative policies for the development and sustainability of equal opportunities at the University as well as in other communities such as lower-economic neighbourhoods in the university vicinity. Through her work with this foundation Sofia realized that she wanted to help people feel welcome, respected, and integrated. Since then, she dedicates some of her weekends to meet immigrants and show them the city. When Sofia was first approached about taking part in the project, she answered affirmatively right away. *“Of course I would love to join. I think the project is very interesting and it’s not far away from what I do when I meet foreign people. [...] I normally go for a coffee with them and we spend a few hours talking about our cultures.”*

### Workshop 1: Discussing languages and cultures and digital competences

In the first session when they both met, Juan explained to Sofia the reasons he had to stay in Spain and how important it was for him to be connected to his roots. Even though he has spent almost half his life as a resident of another country, he has always gone

back to visit his family and friends in the Dominican Republic. *“This is my opportunity to show people my country [...] I’ve been living in Spain for years [...] now is when I invite them to know me more and better, to have a piece of the Dominican Republic in their lives.”*

Picking up on what her partner said, Sofia indicated that she also appreciates the courage it takes to keep your culture alive when you move abroad. *“I know from the conversations I have had with other people that it’s difficult to maintain your roots. [...] you can easily end up doing and acting the same way people behave around you.”*

Another task the participants had to do at the beginning of the workshops was focused on the participants' digital competences. They were asked to self-assess their digital competences, using a survey specially designed for the ENACT project. In Juan's answers one can see that he feels most confident when it comes to browsing, searching and filtering data, information and digital content, placing him at the intermediate level. However, when it comes to creating and editing digital content in different formats and to expressing himself through digital means, he had the foundation level. Regarding this part of the survey, Juan remarked *“I know how to interact with the internet, find information and all of that, post something on Instagram, but I have never created a video, or had a tablet to try apps to do that. [...] That’s something new for me.”*

### **Workshops 2, 3 and 4: Creating content and learning digital skills together**

In the second meeting in which Juan and his host cultural pair had to decide on the activity they wanted to create, a decision was not easily reached. Nonetheless Sofia encouraged Juan to show her what would be useful to know if she wanted to migrate to his country and what she would need to understand or recognize in order to integrate into his community. This helped initiate a fruitful exchange of ideas.

While creating their activity Sofia explained that she had learned the huge difference that exists between her Spanish and Juan's. For instance, what stood out for her were some words that had different meanings in the two contexts. *“My gosh I would never thought we had a different meaning for that word [...] look at everything you have thought about me” [The word in question had a 'bad' connotation in Juan's context but is quite common in Sofia's].*

During the creation of the activity, Juan also learned from his host cultural partner, in this case digital skills. Sofia taught him how to merge videos, add audio and music, to which Juan said; *“Cropping a video was easy, but then adding the subtitles at the exact point I needed them was more complex. [...] I didn’t know creating a video would take a such a lot of time.”* Sofia showed him shortcuts to make the video creation easier and presented him with websites where he could record his voice, get a link and add it to the activity. *“This website to record the voice it’s the easiest, I was thinking we were going to use a complex one, don’t’ ask me which one! I just thought it was real complex [...] I had another idea in my head, things seem easier when you have guidance.”*

### **Summary of the experience**

One of the core goals of the ENACT project is giving people the opportunity to increase their digital competence and we could see how much Juan learned during the process and how much he valued that opportunity for learning. Once the activity was created and ready to submit on the ENACT web app Juan thanked us for everything he had learned. *“I thought I was good with technology, but I realized I just knew the basics. [...] Now I’m familiar with different platforms and apps that can help me create online content, even for my social media. [...] I thank you guys for the opportunity to be part of this project, I had fun and I learnt; What else can I ask for?”*

Not only did Juan get better at using apps to create content but he could also reflect together with his cultural partner about the meaning of culture. During their discussions, he mused about what it meant for him to move to Spain as a child, not knowing what to expect or how people communicate, even though, at first glance, he shared the same language. *“When I moved to Spain, I found it very difficult to integrate with people. [...] Sometimes they seemed to not understand what I wanted to say or needed. [...] Soon I realized that my language, even though it was Spanish didn’t always have the same meaning here. [...] Once I learned the differences, I could teach people around me how to say things in my language and I felt integrated within the community.”*

He also reiterated how much he valued having the chance to share aspects of his own culture to others, including other Spanish speakers.

*“You can’t imagine how much I appreciate this opportunity, this is Spain alright! But here and everywhere there are immigrants, and we would like people to know about our culture as well.”*

Even though the ENACT web app is meant to merge culture and language, through the creation of an activity in which people teach others their language and cultural inheritance to those who do their activity, for Juan the app served as a window to show that the stereotype people may have about the Dominican Republic being a country that just dances bachata is not real. *“We have lots of rhythms and showing one of them, first to my host partner and then through the app is a way to stop this stereotype.”*

Juan also reflected on the responsibility he feels regarding teaching people his language. *“Teaching people Spanish through my activity makes me want to do things the best way possible; it’s a lot of responsibility. [...] Creating content in context is the easiest way to learn, I would say [...] I hope people find it interesting and try to dance with me.”*

At the end of the workshop Juan gained many skills he had not anticipated before starting and got the chance to let people know about his culture, his passion for music and his eagerness to integrate people, no matter their background.





kullanılan bir malzeme değildi. İnternette bir şey görüp anneme danıştığında, annemin annesinin annesinin kullandığı bir yöntemi öğrenmiş oldum.... İnsanların günlük hayatlarından bir şeylerle yarattıkları şeylere hayran kalmıştım açıkçası. ... Hoşuma gitmişti, onu bilmiş olmak, ninemin ninesinin yaptığı bir şeyi bilmiş olmak hoştu benim için.” [Many different techniques are used in the dyeing part of the egg, and we are always talking about the materials we have now, for example adhesive, which was not a material that was used very much in the past. When I saw something on the Internet and consulted with my mother, I learned about a method my mother's mother used.... Frankly, I was fascinated by the things people created with things from their daily lives. ... I liked it, it was nice to know about it, to know something that my grandmother did.]

Gölen novruz bayramında çartlayan mæğlub sayılır. Uğurlar!

On the upcoming Novruz holiday, give one of the best wishes to your friend and do egg tapping.

Whose eggshell is cracked is considered to be the loser.

Step 6: Test how much vocabulary users learned from your activity. Create sets of cards with each card featuring an image and the associated word as text and an audio recording. Users will have to try and match the images and words together.

0:44:13 Resources: You might find this online voice recorder useful for creating the audio files <https://online-voice-recorder.com>

1:07:32

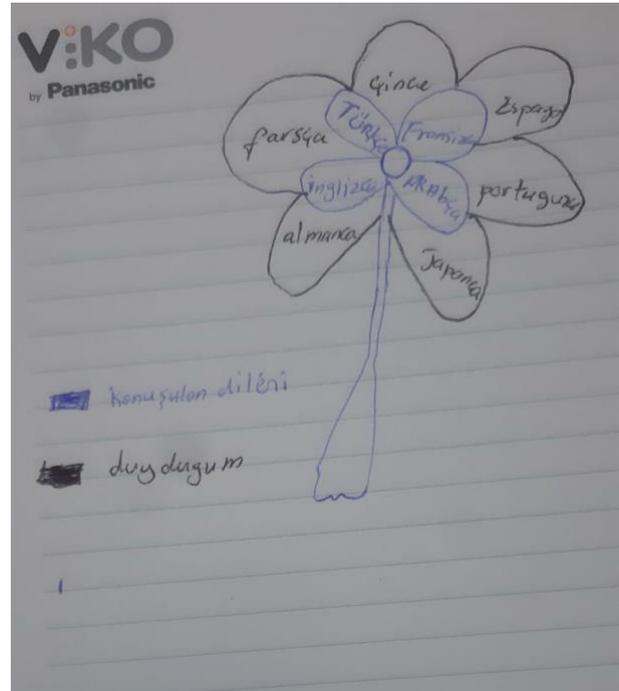
25°C Güneşli 5.07.2021 14:48

## Case Study 2 - AY

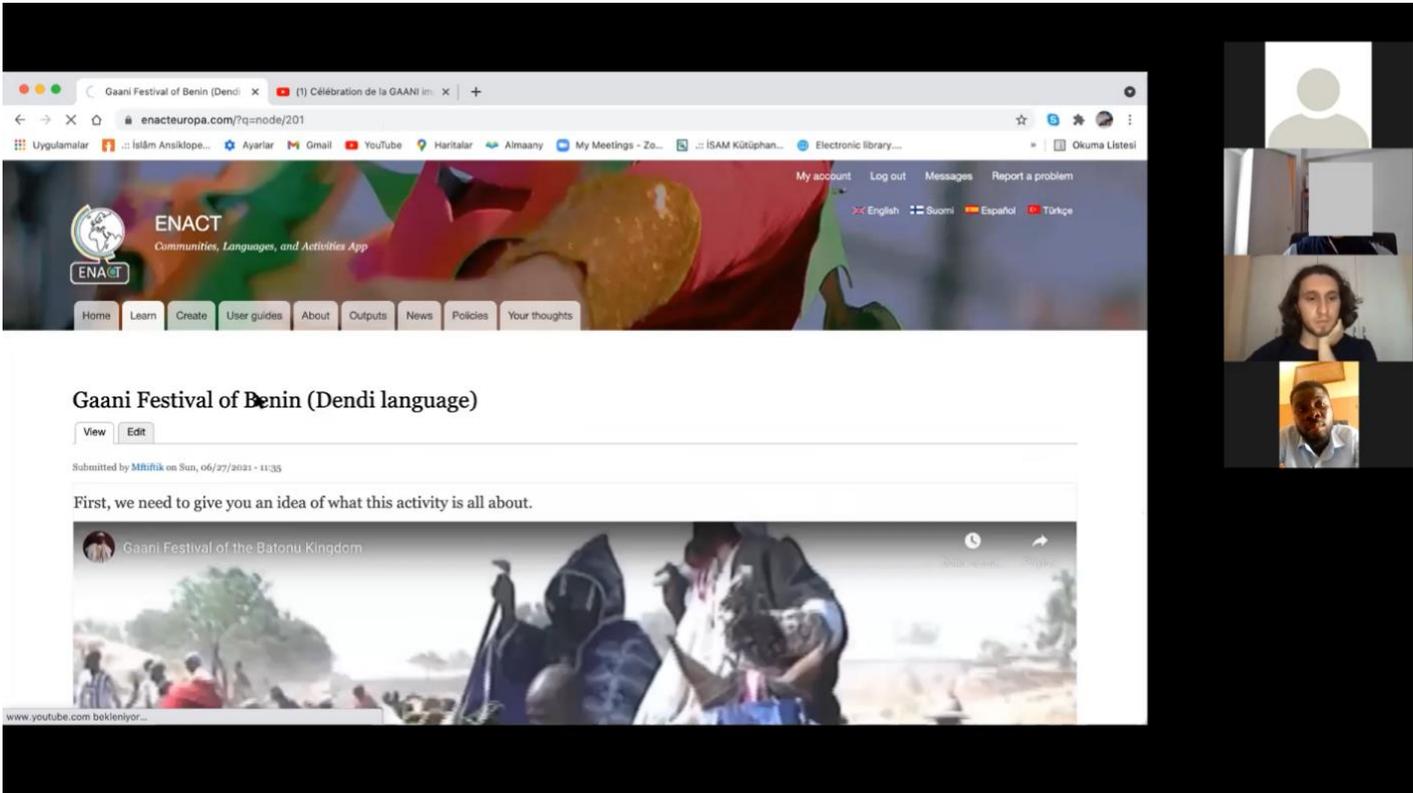
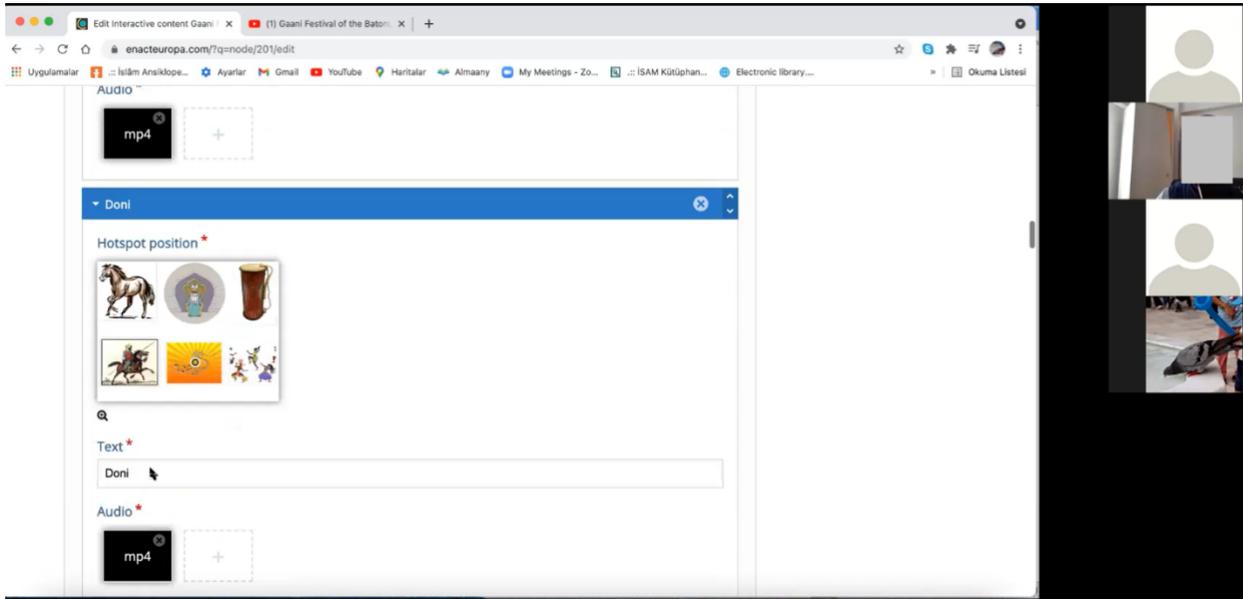
AY participated in ENACT online workshops in Turkey and he is a university student studying theology in İstanbul. He is from Benin and he worked with his Turkish peer to create an ENACT activity showing a local festival from Benin, named Gaani in the original language.

Reflecting on his experience in the online ENACT workshops, AY says “Bence ekip olarak çok faydalı. Bir de bu proje çok güzel. Gerçekten insanın ufkunu daha açıyor. Ben de bu kültürü tabi burada Benin’deyim, ama o kadar yeni şeyler öğrendim ki, anlatamam gerçekten. Çok güzel oldu yani.” [I think it's very useful (to work) as a team. And this project is beautiful. It really opens one's horizons. Of course, I am here in Benin, but I learned so many new things (about this culture) that I can't really explain it. It was so nice.]

AY draws his flower power with the languages he speaks and hears around in his life. He speaks Turkish, English, Arabic, and French. He is familiar with Persian, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and Chinese.



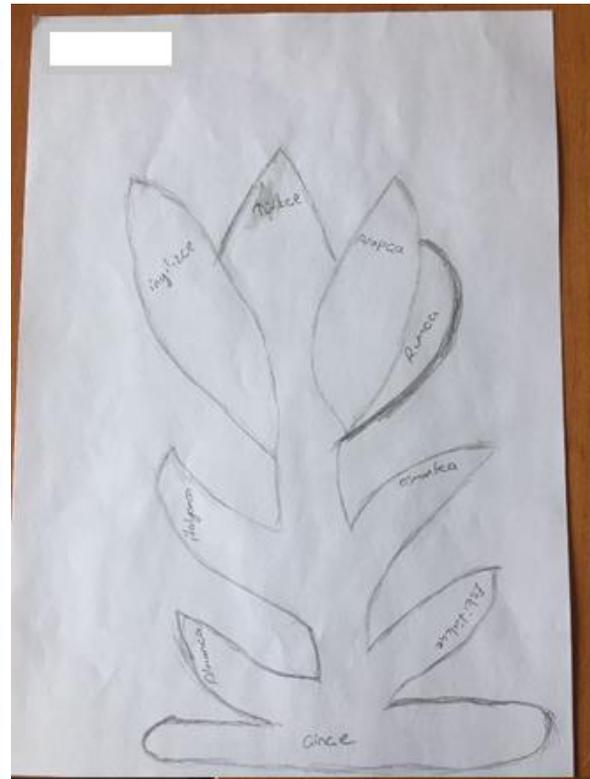
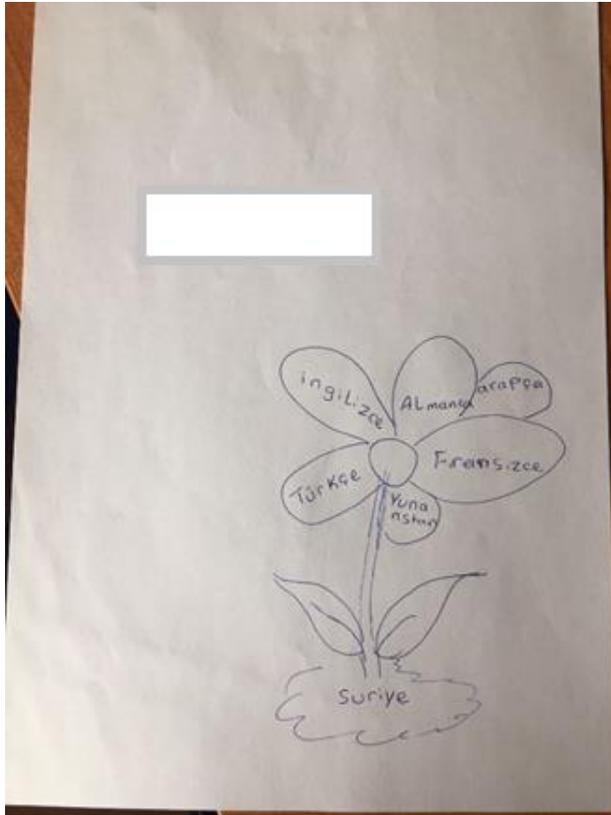
AY and his peer working on their ENACT activity



AY also states that his awareness about the structures of his different languages has raised as he translated items between his languages in his ENACT experience: “Ben mesela, çeviri anlamında bayağı şey öğrendim. ... Çünkü şöyle oluyor, Türkçe ve benim Dendice, mesela ters gidiyor. Türkçe konuştuğum zaman bize ters oluyor mesela, o zorlaşıyor. Ama şimdi bayağı çok şey öğrendim.” [For example, I learned a lot in terms of translation. ... Because Turkish and my Dendi language (work in reverse ways), for example, go wrong. For example, when I speak Turkish, Dendi language works in the other way, it gets harder. But now I've learned a lot.]

### Case Study 3 – CA and SK

CA and SK participated in face to face ENACT workshops held in Turkey. They are two parents whose kids attend the same school in İstanbul. CA is originally from Syria and has been living in Turkey for more than five years. SK is from Turkey and lives in İstanbul.



CA (on the left) and SK (on the right) visualise the languages they speak, they recognise, and they would like to learn starting from the inner parts of the flowers respectively in the flower power activity.



CA and SK worked as partners to create their own ENACT activity. After discussing possible themes and products, they decided on creating a common object from both of their cultures. They showcased steps of making hand-puppets on the ENACT webapp.





On a later meeting after their workshop experience, SK reflects on her experience in the ENACT project: “Biz aileler olarak bir araya geldiğimizde, sohbet ettiğimizde kültürel olarak farklılıklarımızın olduğunu ama ortak bir noktada buluşabileceğimizi, konuşabileceğimizi görmüştük. Onlarla bir arada olmak, aynı ortamda olmak aslında aynı dili konuşmak gibiymiş. Birbirimizi daha çok anlamaya başladık. .... Kendimizi onların yerine koyduk, onlar kendilerini bizim yerimize koydular. Ortak noktada buluşup sohbet etme fırsatı bulabildik böyle sizin sayenizde, bu proje kapsamında. Daha da iyi oldu, bize şimdi kendilerini daha da iyi ifade edebiliyorlar. ... Daha iyi anlamaya başladık. ... Yemeklerimizi konuştuk, kültürel faaliyetlerimizi konuştuk. ... Bu tür konuşmalarımız hala devam ediyor.” [When we came together as families, when we chatted, we saw that we had cultural differences, but that we could meet and talk on a common point. Being together with them, being in the same environment was actually like speaking the same language. We started to understand each other more. .... We put ourselves in their place, they put themselves in our place. Thanks to you, we had the opportunity to meet and chat at a common point, within the scope of this project. It got even better, they can express themselves even better to us now. ... we started to get along better. ... We talked about our food, we talked about our cultural activities. ... Such conversations still continue.]