

# The Role of Language in the International Classroom



# Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module you will...

1. be able to identify the language management strategies deployed by teachers and students in intercultural multilingual classrooms.
2. be able to develop strategies in teachers which balance/compensate for language diversity.
3. be able to identify the impact of disciplinary discourse on language use and learning assessment.
4. be able to draw upon multilingual repertoires and practices of learners and teachers as a resource for intercultural learning and teaching.

Slide 2



# Activity 1: Warmer Activity



# Warm-up

- Reflect on the sentence starters on your cards.
- How would you complete them?
- Find the person with the same cards as you and compare ideas.
- Mingle with other members of the group to exchange and compare ideas.
- Sit with the person who has the same cards as you.





In the international classroom, teachers need to be able to...	Communicative competence means being able to...	What counts in lingua franca contexts is...
The risks for students learning content in a second language are...	Having students with varying levels of language proficiency in the same class means that...	Native speakers in the international classroom are...
Teachers who teach in a second language in an international context are...	Switching between languages in the international classroom is...	Accents in an international classroom are...
All teaching and learning involves...	In the international classroom, grammatical accuracy is...	In the international classroom, lexical accuracy is...





# Language in the international classroom

*International Academic Communities communicate in largely non-native groups. **What counts is** clarity, effectiveness, and contextual appropriateness of communication. While high academic standards are vital, native-like English is not. (Mauranen 2007)*

**All teaching and learning involves** teaching and learning language?

*All teachers are language teachers (Airey 2012)*



## Activity 2: Video description



# Observe...

- Video of a teaching and learning situation:
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year Bachelor's in biology class, English-taught programme, mainly local students, France





# Observe...

- In pairs:
  - participant A faces the screen
  - participant B faces away from the screen
- Participant A: watch the video (no sound)
  - describe what you see
- Participant B: listen
  - write down what you hear







# Observe...

- How many of the things you have written involve language?
- Listen to the video – can you add anything to your notes?







# Read...

- Look at the script of the video more carefully.
- How does language structure the teaching and learning?
- Highlight places where language helps to organise the teaching and learning





[chatter]

[French chatter – moi j'ai envie de mettre]

TEACHER: OK, OK, yes. OK, right. So the questions that the girls were raising... they were a bit worried because they said I wouldn't have the idea of drawing the trees like this because it's not asked this way in the text. This is true, but I just thought it was easier for everybody to understand the differences between the families. Now you don't need to write the... to represent the trees. I think it's a good idea, OK? You would get... what you're asked to provide is the genotypes. OK, so Charles, so can you comment on the genotypes?

STUDENT: So the parents are heterozygotes [unintelligible]

TEACHER: Yep... you should also provide the genotype of the mother.

STUDENT: It's the same.

TEACHER: Yeah, but...just.

STUDENT: I, I... It's just for the parents. The...

TEACHER: Yeah, but please, don't be lazy.  
[laughter]

TEACHER: And now that you've done it are you sure that both parents are mu- ... so they're mutated in the same gene, OK, but they carry the same mutation? Do you know that or not?

STUDENT: No.

TEACHER: OK, this is why I wanted you to write it.

STUDENT: So, it can be A1-

TEACHER: OK, it can be A1-, A2-... they can be mutated into 2 different nucleotides, OK. But they are mutated in the same gene. So, if you know we can sequence their gene and find out if they have the mutation or not, the parents, if they if they do have the same mutation, what do you suspect... hey, hey, this is an important question. I repeat the question, please, in case A, OK, you sequence the genes, the genes A of both parents and you find out that they have exactly the s-, they carry exactly the same mutation, both parents, the mother and the father, they have the same mutation, what then do you suspect?

STUDENT: That they are in the same family?

TEACHER: That they are?

STUDENT: In the same family?

TEACHER: That they are related somehow, maybe they are cousins or they are...no? Usually not brothers and sisters, but they could be related, they could be cousins, either very close cousins, how do you say Joanne...





# Remember...

Language is ubiquitous.

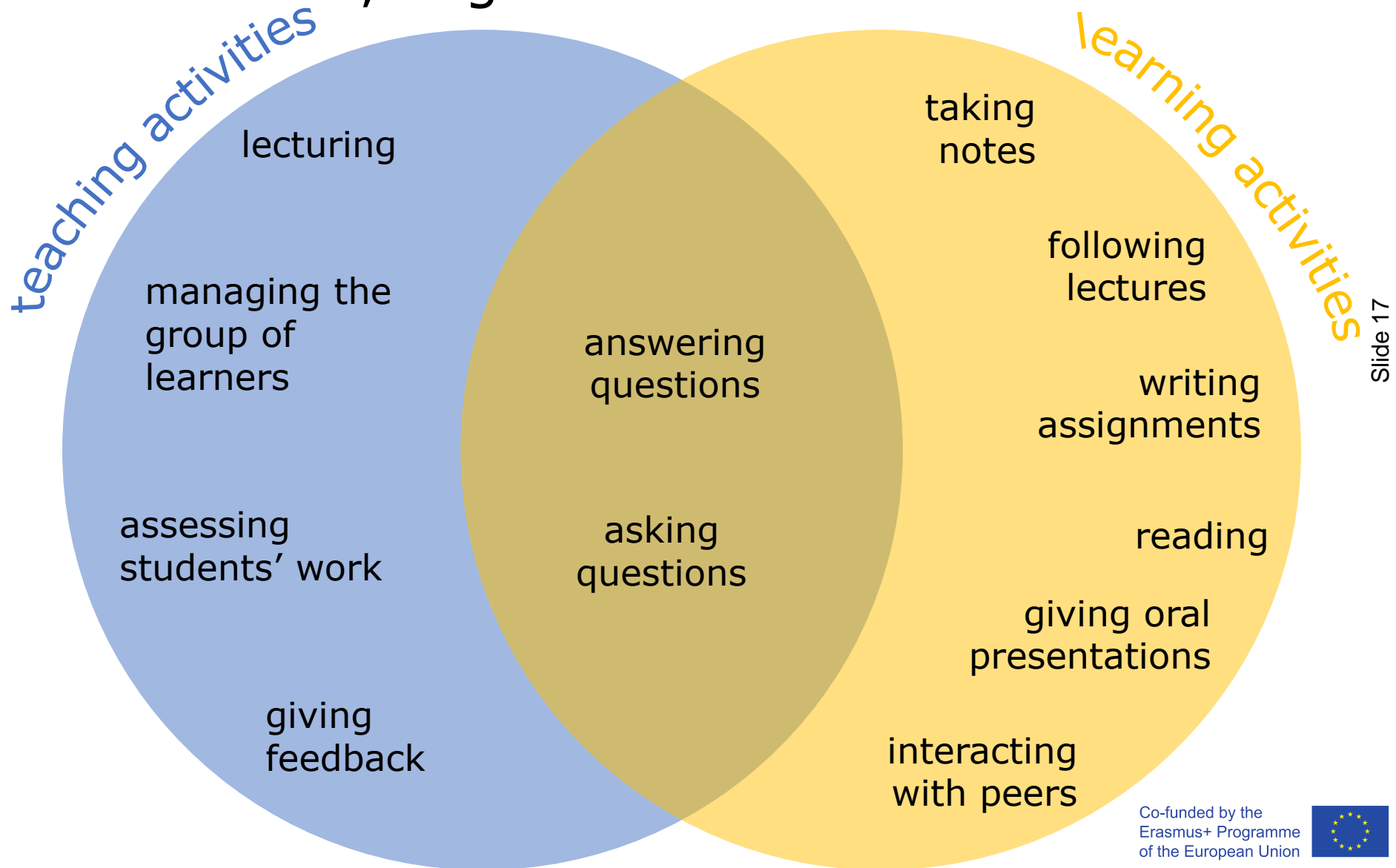
Slide 15



# Activity 3: teaching and learning in the international classroom



# How will these activities be impacted in international, lingua franca classroom contexts?





# The impact of language

- Lecturers and students will likely speak more slowly → less content can be covered
- Interaction will likely be less spontaneous, students tend to be less inclined to ask questions
- Students can find it difficult to take notes AND follow a lecture
- Reading and writing about content will take longer
- Assessment and feedback will be more challenging



# Activity 4: Teacher talk



So what's next?





# Teacher Talk

- What do teachers typically say? Brainstorm in your groups.
- When would you say these phrases?





# Teacher Talk

- Would you use these expressions?
- What is their function?
- Look at the bubbles one by one and classify the expressions according to their function.





MAKING SMALL TALK  
/ CONNECTING

ORGANIZING TALK

GIVING FEEDBACK

HIGHLIGHTING /  
EMPHASISING

ILLUSTRATING

EXPLAINING /  
ANALYSING

ORGANIZING THE  
CLASS / COURSE

ASKING FOR  
CONTRIBUTIONS

CHECKING WHAT  
STUDENTS KNOW

GIVING EXPLICIT  
INSTRUCTIONS

Slide 23





# Teacher Talk

- Walk around the room and see what the other groups have done with their cards.



It's a bit cold today... are the radiators on?

We'll look at that again later

OK so let's take a 10-minute break... we'll start again at 11...

Let me just explain what this means...

Your presentation should contain no more than 5 slides

Who knows how the projector works in this room?

So let's move on to...

So...how can we address this problem?

So the key idea here is ...

You'll need to revise this point for the exam...

You might have heard of...

So let's stop there for today

So, let me see.... what's the next step?

One interesting example of this phenomenon can be seen in...

No, not exactly.... Look again at the figure...

The first slides pick up where we left off last time...

To summarise the main points...

What sort of ideas have you come up with?

If we compare the first model for the process with the second then we can see...

I think you might have missed something there...

Can we close the door?

On the next slide we can see the process illustrated

You need to check the webpage before the class to see the introduction to this module

What's important is...

Put your hand up if you think the answer is B.

I know it's late but...

As I said earlier...

What are the advantages of this technique?

This is what you really need to think about...

Right. Well done! So how did you get to that solution?

What we're going to focus on today is...

Here we are, I'm almost finished

Can anyone tell me what/how....?

One way of understanding this is by thinking of...

Well, that's partly true... but there's more...

Do stop me if I speak too fast or if I use a word you don't understand.

I do answer student e-mails but please indicate your group and year in the title of the mail.

If we look at the value of  $X$  then we would expect  $Y$  to be...

Work with a partner – take 5 minutes to check your understanding of this point...

Let me just switch the light on so we can see that better...

## MAKING SMALL TALK / CONNECTING

It's a bit cold today...  
are the radiators on?

Who knows how the  
projector works in this  
room?

You might have  
heard of...

Can we close  
the door?

I know it's late  
but...

Let me just switch the  
light on so we can see  
that better...

## EXPLAINING / ANALYSING

If we look at the value of  
X then we would expect  
Y to be...

Let me just explain  
what this means...

## ORGANIZING TALK

We'll look at that again  
later

As I said earlier...

The first slides pick up  
where we left off last  
time...

What we're going to  
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To summarise the  
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illustrated

Do stop me if I speak  
too fast or if I use a  
word you don't  
understand.

## GIVING FEEDBACK

No, not exactly....  
Look again at the  
figure...

I think you might have  
missed something  
there...

Right. Well done! So  
how did you get to that  
solution?

Well, that's partly  
true... but there's  
more...

## ORGANIZING THE CLASS / COURSE

You need to check the  
webpage before the  
class to see the  
introduction to this  
module

OK so let's take a 10-  
minute break... we'll start  
again at 11...

I do answer student e-mails  
but please indicate your  
group and year in the title of  
the mail.

## HIGHLIGHTING / EMPHASISING

So the key idea  
here is...

What's important is...

This is what you  
really need to think  
about...

## ASKING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS (referential questions)

What sort of ideas  
have you come up  
with?

Can anyone tell me  
what/how....?

## CHECKING WHAT STUDENTS KNOW (display questions)

So...how can we  
address this problem?

So, let me see....  
what's the next step?

What are the  
advantages of this  
technique?

One interesting example  
of this phenomenon can  
be seen in...

If we compare the first  
model for the process  
with the second then we  
can see...

One way of  
understanding this is  
by thinking of...

Your presentation  
should contain no  
more than 5 slides

You'll need to revise  
this point for the  
exam...

Work with a partner –  
take 5 minutes to check  
your understanding of  
this point...

Put your hand up if  
you think the answer  
is B.



# Language use in the international classroom

- What do teachers need to be able to do?
- What does it mean to have communicative competence?





MAKING SMALL TALK  
/ CONNECTING

ORGANIZING TALK

GIVING FEEDBACK

HIGHLIGHTING /  
EMPHASISING

ILLUSTRATING

EXPLAINING /  
ANALYSING

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CLASS / COURSE

ASKING FOR  
CONTRIBUTIONS

CHECKING WHAT  
STUDENTS KNOW

GIVING EXPLICIT  
INSTRUCTIONS

Slide 29





# Language use in the international classroom

- What do teachers need to be able to do?
- What does it mean to have communicative competence?
- Lingua franca repertoire
  - classroom talk
  - questions
  - meta-discourse (signposting)
  - voice, delivery, non-verbals





# (Intercultural) Group Work

## **Top 10 Challenges identified by Turner (2009):**

1. Unequal language skills
2. Quietness or silence
3. Leadership or role ambiguity
4. Communication issues
5. Conflict
6. Unequal commitment to the group
7. Time keeping or punctuality
8. Free riders or lack of participation
9. Differing expectations of groups
10. Over-talking or interrupting





# Language use in the international classroom

*International Academic Communities communicate in largely non-native groups. What counts is clarity, effectiveness, and contextual appropriateness of communication. While high academic standards are vital, native-like English is not.* (Mauranen 2007)

Slide 32





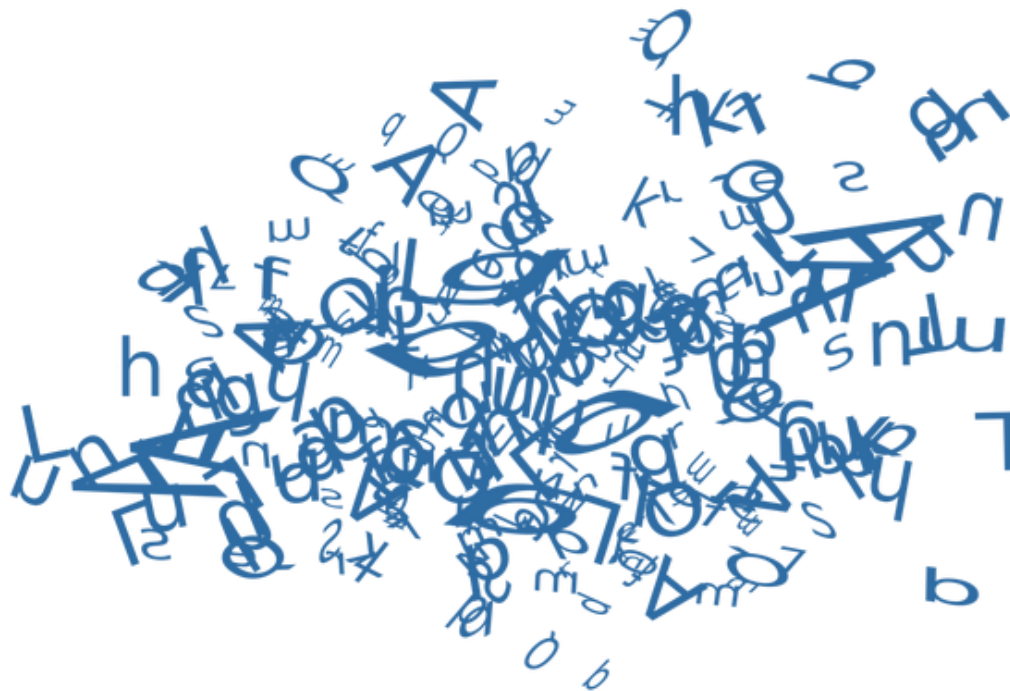
# To sum up...

- Language is ubiquitous.
- Language plays a key role in teaching and learning.
- In the lingua franca classroom:
  - ☹ challenges for the students - finding it more difficult to ask questions, to participate and engage in extended discourse, etc.
  - ☺ possible changes - speaking more slowly, using signposting language, repeating important information, rephrasing key points, etc.

(Dafouz & Núñez, 2010)







# Activity 5: Language Support Strategies



# Learning Support Strategies 1

- What strategies can / do teachers use to manage language load for learners?
- Brainstorm in groups / write down a list.
- Have a look at the post-its / add your strategies on post-its.





when lecturing,  
slow down and  
plan breaks

put key terms /  
new terms /  
content vocabulary  
on your slides

use examples that  
are universal and  
not specific to the  
local culture

make your  
pedagogical  
approach explicit

reduce the amount  
of content you  
deliver through  
lectures

plan and use clear  
signposting  
language

use your learners  
to rephrase or  
translate

allow moments for  
“think / pair /  
share”

avoid highly  
colloquial  
expressions /  
metaphors

get students to  
compile a glossary  
of key terms

use group  
discussions and  
quizzes during  
lectures

seek opportunities  
for group and  
project work

allow students  
time to formulate  
their questions

ask students to  
prepare/read  
sections before  
lectures

use images on your  
slides to illustrate  
what you are  
saying

get students with  
the same first  
language to work  
together

provide  
multilingual  
translations of  
your documents

read out text on  
your slides

deliver lectures by  
video

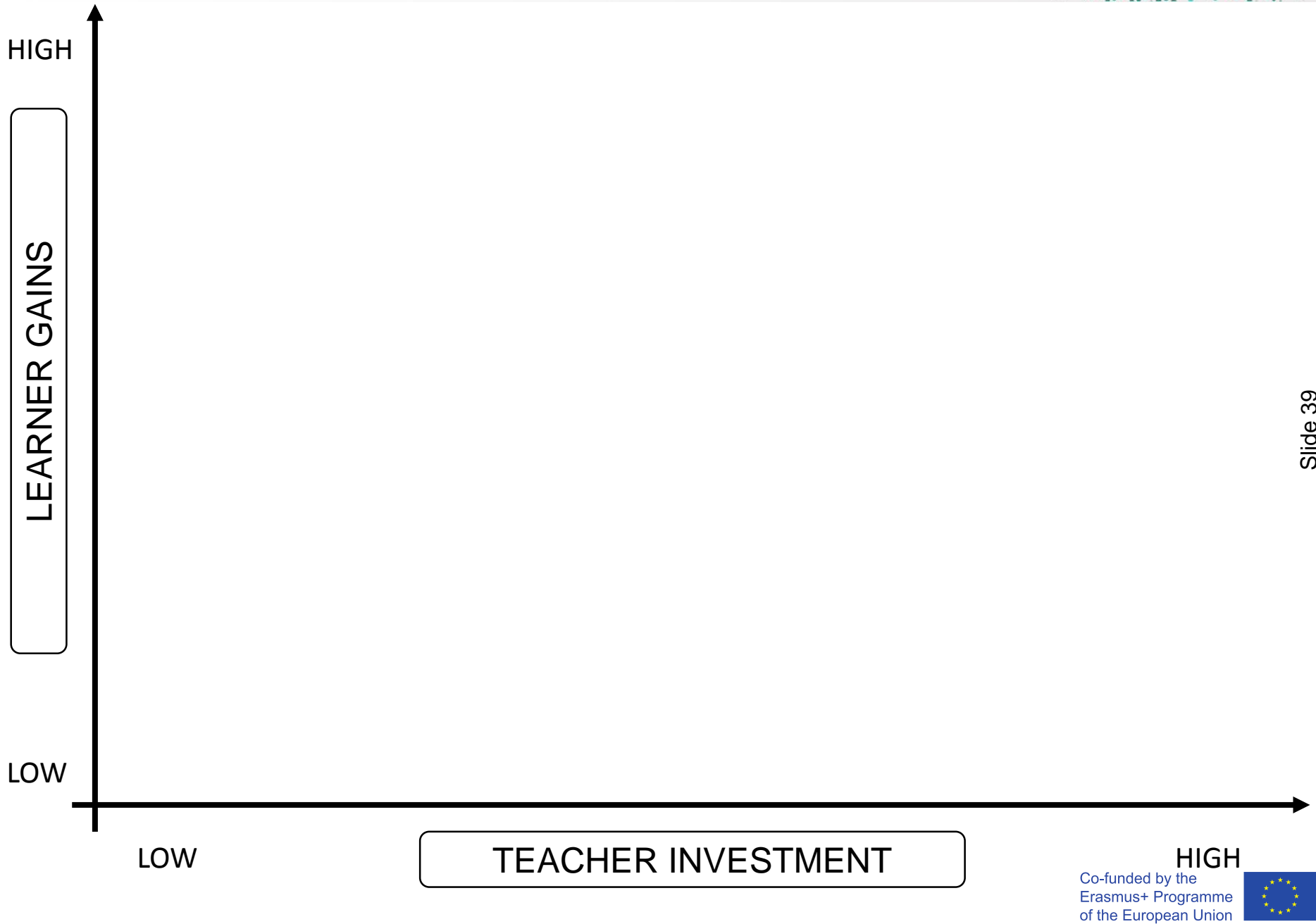
compile a glossary  
of key terms for  
students

make your lecture  
handouts more  
detailed than they  
usually are

flip your class

group students  
according to  
language  
proficiency



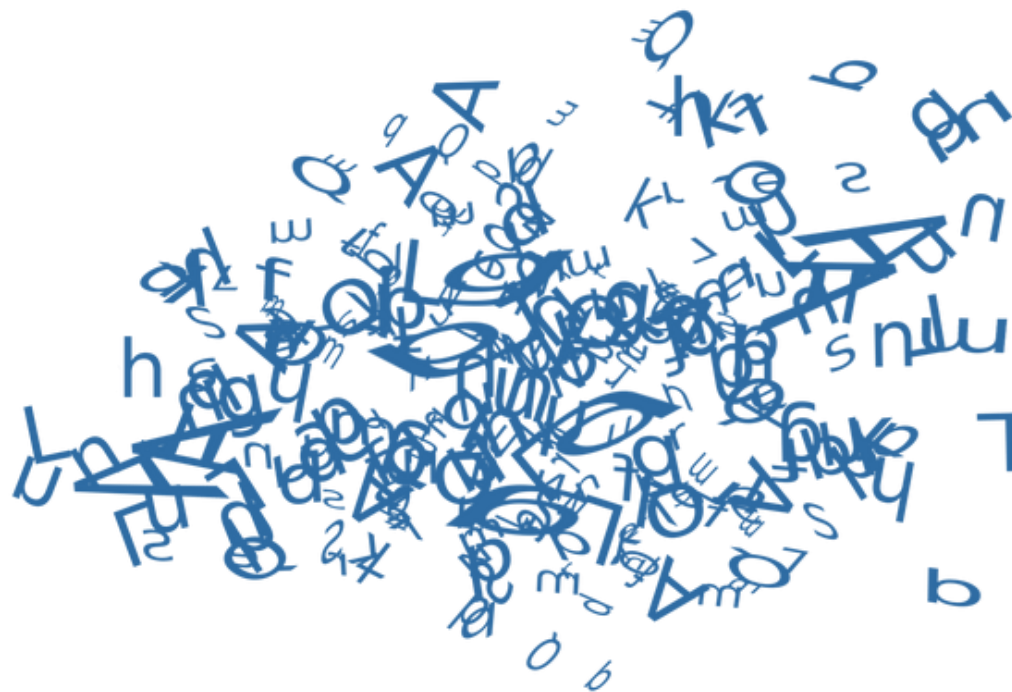




# Learning Support Strategies 1

- What strategies can / do teachers use to manage language load for learners?
- Brainstorm in groups: Write down a list
- Have a look at the post-its / add your strategies on post-its
- Plot the strategies on the graph
- Present them to the other groups
- Back to your initial teams: debrief (Differences? Similarities?)





Pick your  
top 3 strategies





# Learning Support Strategies 2

- Which strategies also help develop intercultural competence and foster intercultural collaboration?
- Which strategies could hinder them?
- Discuss with your group



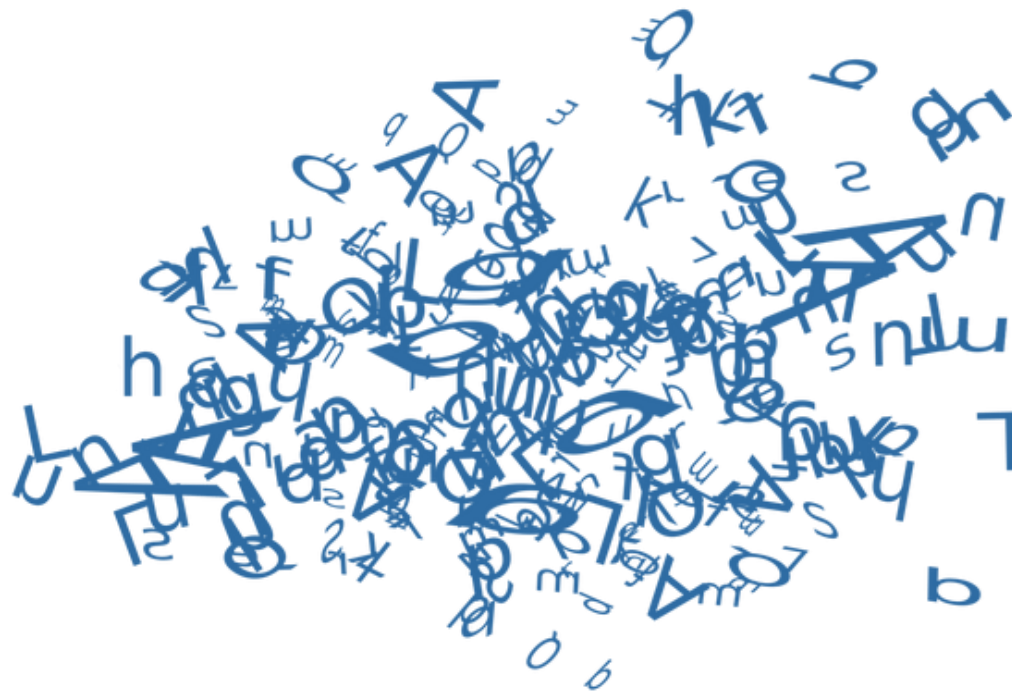


# Take-away message

- To manage the language load for learners, it is important to be strategic.
- Small changes can have a big impact.
- There needs to be careful consideration of the context. Each context is different.
- Teachers and EDs need to reflect and adjust their strategies to the needs of the learning context.







# Activity 6: Disciplinary Literacy



# Disciplinary literacy is...?





# Disciplinary literacy is...

*the ability to appropriately participate in the communicative practices of a discipline. These communicative practices relate to three sites: the academy, the workplace and society (...)  
every discipline places a unique emphasis on developing disciplinary literacy for these three sites. Thus, becoming disciplinarily literate involves learning how to communicate about the discipline in research circles, in the world of work and in society at large (e.g. a popular science description of the discipline). (Airey 2015)*





# Disciplinary literacy is...

*the ability to appropriately participate in the communicative practices of a discipline. These communicative practices relate to three sites: the **academy**, the **workplace** and **society** (...) every discipline places a unique emphasis on developing disciplinary literacy for these three sites. Thus, becoming disciplinarily literate involves learning how to communicate about the discipline in **research circles**, in the **world of work** and in **society at large** (e.g. a popular science description of the discipline). (Airey 2015)*





# Disciplinary literacy across disciplines...





	<div>Strongly disagree</div> <div>←-----→</div> <div>Strongly agree</div>			
Disciplines have different views of knowledge, different research practices and different ways of seeing the world. (Hyland, 2002: 389)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In soft knowledge fields arguments need to be expressed more cautiously by using more hedges. (Hyland, 2000: 204)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
[Classroom] discussions are an important element in soft field disciplines. (Neumann, 2001: 139)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
[Across the disciplines] students are expected to possess a good memory and a competence in problem solving. (Neumann et al. 2002: 413)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For science majors the task of learning scientific information is all consuming, which gives them no chance to think creatively about the meaning of the knowledge they are gaining. (Brown and Pallock, 2014)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should be made aware of the discourse conventions of the genres / texts they need to produce. (Hyland, 2007: 160)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In the sciences, English use is a pragmatic reality for both lecturers and students, while in the humanities and social sciences it tends to be viewed as an additional or auxiliary language. (Kuteeva and Airey, 2014: 541)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





# Disciplinary Literacy

*A one-size-fits-all approach to the problems of language use in higher education risks ignoring the disciplinary needs of the students.... what is needed are local, disciplinary-specific decisions about which skills lecturers want their students to be able to perform in which language(s), coupled with purposeful, coordinated strategies for developing those skills. (Airey 2010b)*





# Disciplinary Literacy

*A one-size-fits-all approach to the problems of language use in higher education risks ignoring the **disciplinary needs** of the students.... what is needed are **local, disciplinary-specific decisions** about which **skills** lecturers want their students to be able to perform in which language(s), coupled with purposeful, coordinated strategies for **developing those skills**. (Airey 2010b)*





# What else will have an impact on disciplinary literacy?

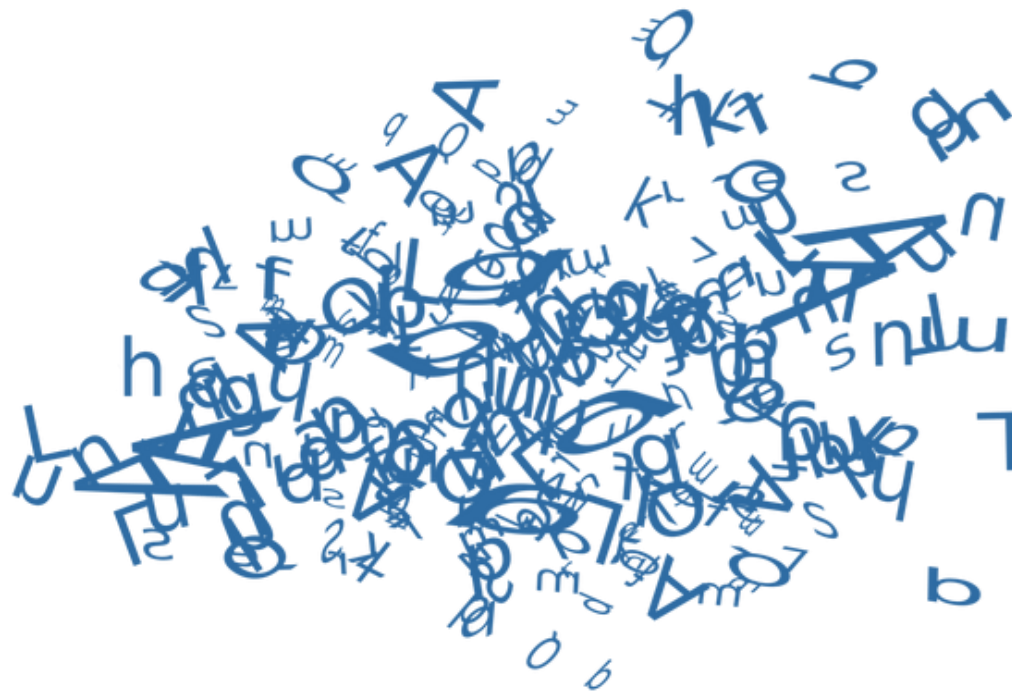




# What else will have an impact on disciplinary literacy?

- local culture
- academic culture
- individual teaching practices
- disciplinary culture
- student language levels
- student behaviour / personalities
- teacher behaviour / personalities / persona
- teaching style
- institutional framework / organisation
- university level (undergraduate / postgraduate)
- course design





# Activity 7: Teaching and Learning Dilemmas



# Teaching and Learning Contexts

- Look at your set of cards describing a range of disciplinary and institutional contexts.
- 2 cards are blank: write 2 other contexts in your HEI and swap them with another group.
- Put the new cards into the pile and shuffle.
- Draw one card at a time. For each card, discuss:
  - (a) what are the risks for language?
  - (b) what are the opportunities?
  - (c) what guidelines or support could you offer educators teaching in this context?





# Teaching and Learning Dilemmas

- Meet with the members of the group who provided you with their own contexts.

The 2 group members who are familiar with the contexts stay seated.

The other 2 members move to the other group whose contexts they have discussed.

- Debrief on these cards.





<p><b>PSYCHOLOGY</b></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> year, Bachelor's degree 500 students, some Erasmus 10 x 1h lectures</p>	<p><b>BIOLOGY</b></p> <p>Master's degree 15 students, international and local 10 x 2h tutorials</p>	<p><b>ECONOMICS</b></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> year, Bachelor's degree 100 students, some Erasmus 5 x 1h lectures + 10 classes of 30 students</p>	<p><b>LITERATURE STUDIES</b></p> <p>1st year, Bachelor's degree 60 students, visiting (1/3 Chinese) and some Erasmus 30 x 1h lectures + 20 x 1h classes of 30 students</p>
<p><b>LAW</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> year, Bachelor's degree 700 students, some informally internationalised students Blended learning course (5 classes + 20h online learning)</p>	<p><b>CHEMISTRY</b></p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> year, Bachelor's degree 120 students, international and local Lab practicals, groups of 30</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC HEALTH</b></p> <p>Master's degree 16 students, 3/4 international tutored project, 1h weekly tutoring for 2 students</p>	<p><b>MEDICINE</b></p> <p>Post-graduate students, hospital internship with real patients, tutored by professor 5 students per group</p>
<p><b>YOUR INTERNATIONAL CLASSROOM?</b></p>	<p><b>OPTICS</b></p> <p>International PhD supervision 2h one-to-one 2 sessions per semester</p>	<p><b>COMPUTER SCIENCE</b></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> year, Bachelor's degree 80 students, local and East Asian Group project, 6 x 2h tutorial session, every 2 weeks, for 4 students</p>	<p><b>NEUROSCIENCE</b></p> <p>Master's degree 30 students, international and local 2h research presentation, invited British native speaker 1 topic</p>
<p><b>SOCIOLOGY</b></p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> year, Bachelor's degree 2 students, local and international Supervision of degree dissertation 1 x 2h session per semester</p>	<p><b>YOUR INTERNATIONAL CLASSROOM?</b></p>	<p><b>ART HISTORY</b></p> <p>Master's degree 20 students, mostly international Reading seminar 10 x 2h session</p>	<p><b>POLITICAL SCIENCE</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> year, Bachelor's degree 30 students, some informally internationalised Study methodology 1 x 2h session every week</p>










# Any good advice? Any problems solved?





# Are there any other situations in your own contexts that you would like to discuss?





# To sum up...

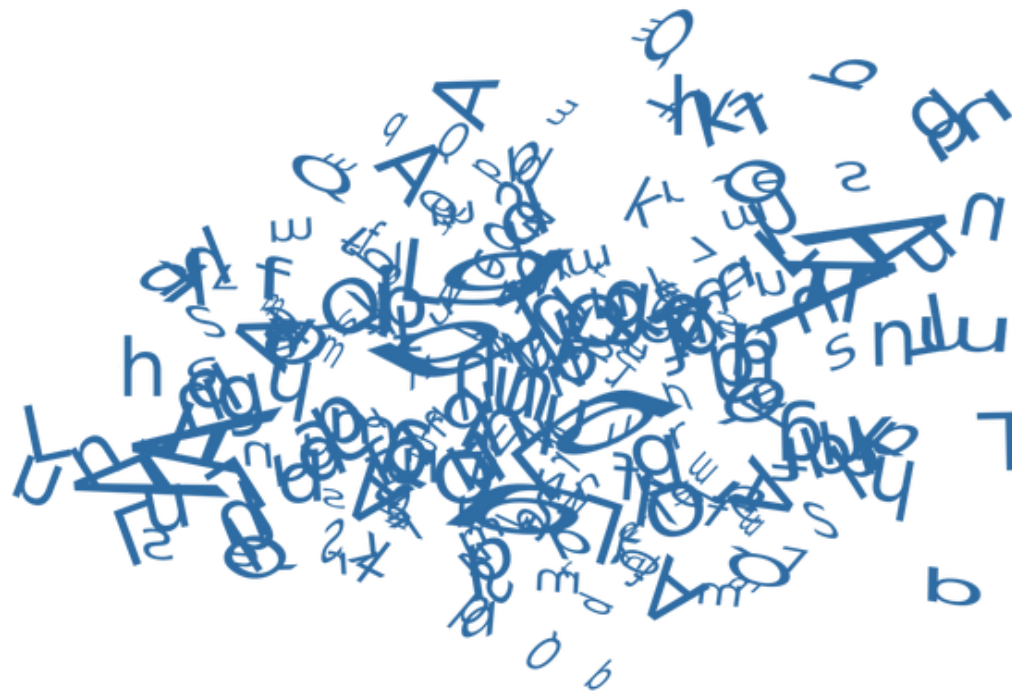
Different contextual factors should also be considered as they may impact teaching and learning contexts.

For example:

- Number of students per group
- Level of studies (e.g. Degree, Master)
- Teaching time
- Language level of students
- Type of teaching and learning event (e.g. seminar, lecture, lab session, tutorial, internship, hands-on)
- Academic and disciplinary cultures







# Activity 8: Teacher's Questions



# Teachers' questions...

- You are going to see questions teachers might ask educational developers
- Discuss each question with your partner for 2 minutes.
- Move on to a new partner for each new question.





How can I adjust my teaching for a student group that is very heterogeneous in terms of second language proficiency (from B1 to C2)?



Slide 69





Can I help the home students out in the home language  
that I share with them during small group work?



Slide 70





Is it OK to chat with the home language students in the  
home language after the class has ended?





Can the Japanese students use Japanese for group work if I don't understand Japanese?



Slide 72





If I'm lecturing, can I switch between languages to  
elucidate terms and concepts?





Should I encourage students to use translation in peer-to-peer interaction to elucidate concepts?





Can I let home students write exams in the home language  
if the course was taught in a different language?





Should I evaluate the quality of the language when marking  
written or oral work?



Slide 76





# Reflect...

- Which practices are inclusive?
- Which are exclusive?

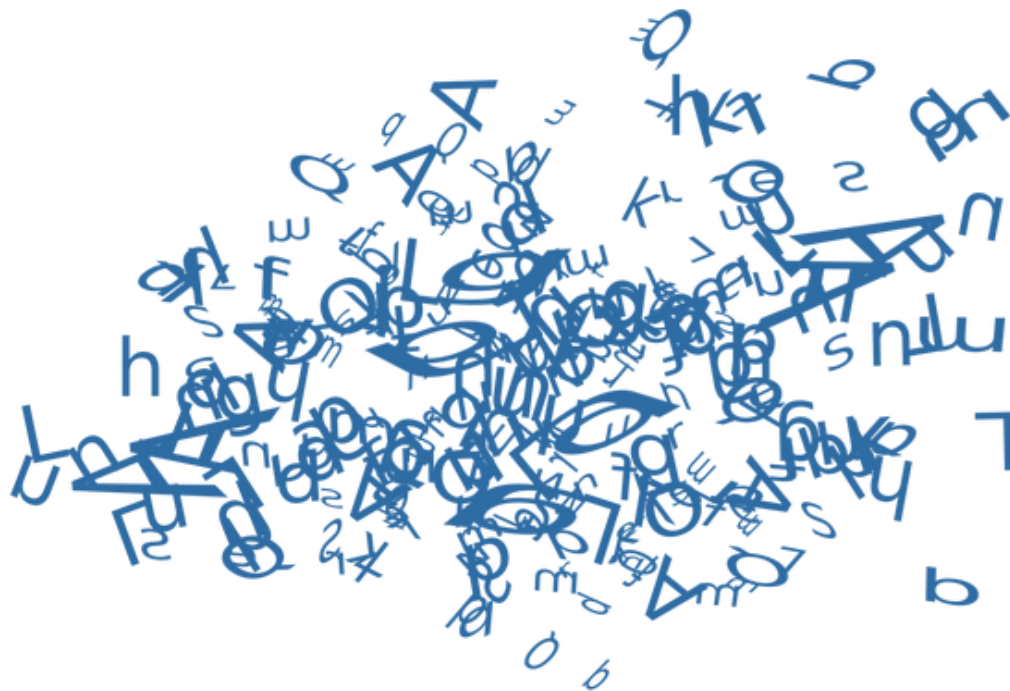




# Teachers' questions

- How can I adjust my teaching for a student group that is very heterogeneous in terms of second language proficiency (from B1 to C2)?
- Can I help the home students out in the home language that I share with them during small group work?
- Is it OK to chat with the home language students in the home language after the class has ended?
- Can the Japanese students use Japanese for group work if I don't understand Japanese?
- If I'm lecturing, can I switch between languages to elucidate terms and concepts?
- Should I encourage students to use translation in peer-to-peer interaction to elucidate concepts?
- Can I let home students write exams in the home language if the course was taught in a different language?
- Should I evaluate the quality of the language when marking written or oral work?





# Activity 9: Wrap-Up



# Wrap-up

Take 5 minutes to write down the key concepts and messages you have taken away from this session.

Bear in mind the intended learning outcomes...

1. be able to identify the language management strategies deployed by teachers and students in intercultural multilingual classrooms.
2. be able to develop strategies in teachers which balance/compensate for language diversity.
3. be able to identify the impact of disciplinary discourse on language use and learning assessment.
4. be able to draw upon multilingual repertoires and practices of learners and teachers as a resource for intercultural learning and teaching.





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