INITIAL RESULTS
OF THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE
Aim of the questionnaire

• To find out what kind of language problems L2 students have in subject classes

• To find out which scaffolding techniques teachers use to help students with language-related difficulties
Number of respondents

- 846 persons viewed the questionnaire
- 679 persons started filling it in
- 236 completed it

-> Number of answers per question varies
Background of respondents

• Gender: 75.1% female
• Age of students they teach:
  14-16 years (39%); 11-13 years (33.6%)
• Maximum number of students with other L1
  3-6 students (33.5%); 1-2 students (30.7%)
• More than 50% of respondents (56.3%) have received training in teaching L2 learners (43.7% have not)
• 74.3% have guidelines/special curriculum for L2 students
Subject(s) most frequently taught by respondents

- Mathematics: 28.8%
- History/civics: 27.5%
- Geography: 22.0%
- Biology: 15.7%
- Chemistry: 11.9%
- Physics: 11.4%

Note that 128 respondents were language teachers!
Countries where respondents teach (N=261):

- Ireland: 36.01%
- Norway: 18.01%
- Czech Republic: 16.86%
- Finland: 7.28%
- France: 5.36%
- Greece: 3.83%
- Romania: 5.75%
- Netherlands: 3.45%
- Other: 3.45%
Situations where L2 speakers have language-related difficulties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During whole-class discussions</td>
<td>67,8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During group work activities</td>
<td>44,9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During pair work activities</td>
<td>28,4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On written assignments</td>
<td>84,8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During social interactions (at break time, etc.)</td>
<td>26,7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During oral presentations</td>
<td>65,3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My L2 students do not face language-related difficulties</td>
<td>4,7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12,3 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Signs of language-related difficulties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of attention / daydreaming</td>
<td>54,2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance on assessments</td>
<td>68,6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbing other students</td>
<td>28,4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of participation (silence)</td>
<td>77,1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-task behaviour</td>
<td>32,2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My L2 students do not display any of the above-mentioned behaviour</td>
<td>6,4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8,1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most difficult skill for L2 students and aspects of language causing most problems

In order of difficulty:
1. Writing (59.8 %)
   - Grammar, message cohesion
2. Reading (42.6 %)
   - Subject specific vocabulary, message cohesion
3. Listening (32.5 %), reading and speaking (30 %)
4. Listening (41.8 %)
Referring to students’ L1

- More than half of the respondents (57.4%) refer to the students’ L1 in the classroom.
- They do this especially when explaining complex concepts (33.5%) and explaining tasks and translating vocabulary (both 25.9%).
Scaffolding techniques that respondents use

- Help with vocabulary: 67.80%
- Students use a dictionary: 53.39%
- Give less demanding exercises: 31.36%
- Give more simple study materials: 35.17%
- Give visual help: 61.44%
- Reformulate the instructions: 66.53%
- Make the task more explicit: 51.69%
- Ask what language problems students have: 35.17%
- Ask about learning strategies students use: 28.81%
- Ask about students’ subject-related problems: 40.68%
- Models of possible solutions: 27.12%
- Help students to help each other: 26.27%
- Students may use their L1: 21.61%
- Students may use eg Google translator: 23.73%
Examples of students’ language problems when learning a subject

- Vocabulary (subject specific terms as well as simple words) (88)
- Overall understanding of the subject (39)
- Reading textbooks (35)
- Writing (24)
- Understanding subject materials, tasks, exam questions (24)
- Speaking in subject classes (21)
- Abstract (16) and dense information (13)
- Too low L2 proficiency (13)
- Grammar (13)
- Language conventions in school (12)

(number of respondents in parenthesis)
How to support the students?

• Referring to students L1 when
  – explaining complex concepts
  – explaining tasks
  – translating vocabulary

• Techniques
  – Ask students to help each other
  – Help students with vocabulary
  – Reformulate instructions
  – Give visual help
MORE RESULTS TO BE PRESENTED AT THE

14TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE
ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE AWARENESS
« TOWARDS LANGUAGE AWARE CITIZENSHIP »
AMSTERDAM, 4TH-7TH JULY 2018

FOR MORE INFORMATION: HTTPS://ALA2018.COM/