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A Proposal to Use Classroom Discourse Frames to Investigate Patterns of Teacher L1 Use

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This paper proposes a theory-driven yet practical instrument for teachers to use when examining their own classroom use of the L1. First, the author summarizes research on what EFL teachers in monolingual classrooms, especially those in Japan, believe about teacher L1 use. Teacher beliefs about their own L1 use are strongly influenced by the particular socio-cultural context of their classroom. In Japan, there are four stances (Virtual, Maximal, Optimal, and Regressive) that teachers take. Second, the author discusses how and why EFL teachers in monolingual classrooms, especially those in Japan, use the L1, concluding that researchers must clearly separate the two issues of *how* teachers use the L1 and *why* they do so. Finally, the author proposes that teachers use *classroom discourse frames* to discover patterns in their own L1 use.

Introduction: Coming out

During the past decade, there has been increasing interest in how and why students and teachers use or avoid the L1 in foreign language classrooms. Much of this interest has come from NNESTs who are interpreting the research literature in ways that speak to their particular socio-political and teaching context. Some researchers are work-

ing in bilingual EFL contexts such as Hong Kong where students and teachers share the same two languages; other researchers are North American university professors of modern languages. All are opening up the formerly taboo topic of teacher L1 use for local discussion and local answers.

In this paper, I explore teacher use of the L1, particularly in the context of EFL teaching in Japan. The ultimate purpose of this paper is to propose a theory-driven yet practical instrument for teachers to use when examining their own classroom use of the L1.

I am a bilingual and bicultural sojourner, a parent of bilingual and bi-literate children, and a university faculty member expected to function at a reasonable level in two languages (English and Japanese). Faced with constant code switching both at work and at home, I have found my own language boundaries blurring.

As an English teacher, I have started to worry that Japanese is simply “coming out” of my mouth during my classes, unconsciously and/or at random. This anxiety is probably not unusual. In his examination of L1 attrition among EFL teachers, Porte (2002) writes about long-term resident EFL teachers in Spain who worried that they were engaging in code switching more often than they intended. In Japan, Critchley (1999) also notes that “the [L1/L2] balance can be difficult to achieve, particularly for bilingual teachers who have little difficulty code switching themselves.” (p.13). Code switching becomes progressively easier as one becomes more bilingual; the problem is controlling it.

In response to this anxiety, I took several steps. First, in this paper, I tried to answer the following questions:

(1) What do EFL teachers in monolingual classrooms, especially those in Japan, believe about teacher use of the L1 in the classroom? How

can we make sense of those beliefs within their teaching context?

(2) How and why do EFL teachers in monolingual classrooms, especially those in Japan, use the L1? Exactly which uses should be encouraged or discouraged?

(3) How can EFL teachers easily examine their own use of the L1 in the classroom?

The second thing I did in response to my uneasiness about code switching was to videotape my own classroom. In a follow-up to this paper, I will “come out” of the classroom closet and examine my own L1 use in a longitudinal action-research study, while piloting the instrument that I propose here.

Finally, I gathered interested colleagues, alumni, and students in an action research group to examine the issue of teacher L1 use in the classroom. I hope that someday our various research projects will “come out” in print.

Definition of terms

Much of the literature uses the terms L1/L2, derived from second-language acquisition studies, to denote the first and second language. This is appropriate for describing ESL situations in which learners are acquiring the L2 outside the classroom as well as learning, and learning about, the L2 inside the classroom. This terminology is also appropriate for describing code switching in bilinguals; indeed, we can say that, as developing bilinguals, this is what our students are doing. However, this terminology may be confusing if the teacher’s L1/L2 is different from the students’ L1/L2. It also becomes very confusing when the review of literature includes studies involving, for example, English taught in Japan, and Japanese taught in the US.

In this paper, I shall use *target language* (TL) to refer to the language that is being learned, and L1 to refer to the students' (but not necessarily the teacher's) first language. I chose not to use the term foreign language (FL) because some of the research that I cite was conducted in countries (e.g. Hong Kong, Malta) in which English is a second, not foreign, language.

There is one more caveat: although I intend to focus on teacher L1 use, much of the literature also includes student use of the L1. When possible, I have tried to clarify which concept is being discussed.

Theoretical Positions

Is there any foreign language teacher who, in casual discussions with colleagues, has not justified using or avoiding the students' L1? Some teachers take an emotional stance, invoking their personal teaching style or past learning experiences. Others use pedagogical terms to lay out elegantly-reasoned theories. Because of these differing conceptual levels, it seems that discussions on L1 use are rarely productive. What is needed here is a way to sort through various arguments, so that the teachers themselves can better understand where they stand.

In this paper, I use Macaro's (2001) framework to make sense of various stated beliefs regarding the teacher's use of the students' L1 in monolingual foreign language classrooms. Macaro mentions three positions that the teacher can take. It is clear that Macaro's framework derives from the constructivist approach in education, an approach that attempts to make sense of teacher actions by uncovering their beliefs. Thus, these positions reflect the individual teacher's value system: what he or she believes the value of the L1 to be in the TL classroom.

(1) The Virtual Position: The classroom is like the “virtual” target country, so the aim of the classroom is the total — or near-total — exclusion of the L1, as long as the teacher is skilled enough. (Macaro, 2001)

FOR: Among teachers of ESL or EFL, this is known as the “English only” position. This position is supported by the theory that students need comprehensible input in the TL, or even that they need to be “pushed” by incomprehensible input. In this view, a dense L2 environment, including classroom management in TL, allows students to develop their own language systems (Chaudron, in Burden & Stribling, 2003).

AGAINST: Recent years have seen more and more arguments against the Virtual Position. By depriving learners of natural communication (Allwright & Bailey, in Burden & Stribling, 2003), “English only” encourages asymmetrical student-teacher relationships, and even smacks of linguistic imperialism. More significantly, “English only” has not been proven to be pedagogically sound (Auerbach, 1993). Finally, it can become a teaching strategy that dominates all other teaching strategies, stifling reflective practice (Macaro, 2001).

I think that it is important to note that the Virtual Position does not reflect the day-to-day reality of many language teachers. After reviewing a number of studies on teacher beliefs on L1 use in a variety of contexts, Macaro (2001) concludes that “none had found a majority of teachers in favor of excluding the L1 completely” (p.395). Essentially, the Virtual Position was born not from teachers’ classroom experiences, but from the sheltered womb of second-language theory (see Cook, 2001, for a complete discussion), and has been an awkward

stepchild for classroom teachers ever since.

(2) **The Maximal Position:** Because there is no pedagogical value in L1 use, teachers intend to use the TL maximally as the language of instruction. However, teachers have to resort to using the L1 because of teaching and learning conditions. (Macaro, 2001)

FOR: This position is similar to the “English only” position in that teachers intend to use the TL as much as possible, except that instead of holding to a theoretical position against all odds, teachers are more pragmatic and use L1 as the situation dictates.

In the U.S., Turnbull and Arnett (2002) review theoretical and empirical literature on teachers’ uses of the L1 in foreign language university classrooms, including theoretical perspectives on exposure to TL input, motivation, cognitive issues, and code switching. They conclude that there is a strong consensus that teachers should use the TL as much as possible, but that “more process-product studies are needed to determine the relationship between teachers’ TL and L1 use and students TL proficiency” (p.212).

AGAINST: The problem with this position is, of course, that classrooms never offer optimal teaching conditions, so the teacher can easily fall into overuse of L1 (Harbord, 1992). This can lead to “feelings of guilt and inadequacy” (Macaro, 2001, p.535) because the teachers feel that the classroom should expose students to as much TL as possible.

(3) The Optimal Position: Some aspects of learning may actually be enhanced by the use of the L1. We need to discover the pedagogical principles for using the L1.

FOR: Cook (2001), perhaps the strongest supporter of this position, attempts to dismantle the Virtual and Maximal positions. He claims that the justification for the Virtual Position rests on a “doubtful analogy with first language acquisition, on a questionable compartmentalisation of the two languages in the mind” (p.402) and on the idea that maximalizing the use of the TL does not necessarily imply the banning of the L1.

In practical terms, Atkinson (1993) provides a clear description of and rationale for specific techniques using the L1 in monolingual EFL classrooms. For a description of other teaching methodologies that use the L1, see Cook (2001).

AGAINST: Some supporters of the optimal position clearly have a pre-existing agenda. For example, Larrea (2002) reviews the literature while focusing on the socio-political value of code switching in Latin America. Given the role of English there, he claims that the incorporation of elements of the L1 will help students feel that the English language and culture are not being imposed on them. Although appealing to the Latin American teachers who would read the journal, his conclusion is not derived from the literature, and research is needed to back it up.

The Japanese Context

Next, I briefly discuss each position in relation to EFL teaching in Japan. I also add a fourth position to account for the Japanese secon-

dary English language teaching context.

(1) The Virtual Position: L1 is banned

Regarding EFL teaching by native English-speaker teachers (NESTs) at the tertiary level, it has been charged that this position is simply a convenience for teachers who are not competent in the students' L1 (Barker, 2003) or for publishers of textbooks for international markets (Weschler, 1997).

Regarding the teaching of English by non-native English-speaker teachers (NNESTs) at the secondary level, the crux lies in the last eight words: "as long as the teacher is skilled enough". Many teachers in Japan, as in many other countries around the world, simply are not. This brings us to the Maximal Position.

(2) The Maximal Position: L1 is a necessary evil

Most secondary teachers in Japan who are not "skilled enough" to follow the Virtual Position probably take the Maximal Position. But how do they distinguish the "as much as possible" of the Maximal Position with the "near-total" of the Virtual Position? I believe the answer lies partly in percentage of L1 use, but mostly in the teacher's perception. If the teacher intends to use the TL almost all of the time, and believes that she is doing so, then she is following the Virtual Position. However, if the teacher perceives a mismatch between how much L1 she intends to use ("as much as possible") and how much she has to "resort to" using, then she will experience a pedagogical dilemma: The Maximal Position.

What are the factors that pressure a teacher to use the L1 against his or her intentions? In a review of studies on L1 use, Macaro (2001) found that learner ability and time pressures such as exams were major factors in how much the L1 is used, and this is most certainly true in Japan as well. Official policies can also come into play. In Korea, for

example, the curriculum that came into effect in 2000 required that English be taught using an “English only” approach, even though a survey concluded that only a small minority of that country’s English teachers are communicatively competent in English (Dash, 2002). I speculate that in Korea, what Dash calls “the romanticized ideal of English Only” (p.16) could be forcing many teachers into taking the Maximal Position.

(3) The Optimal Position: L1 is an important tool

My impression is that more and more Japanese teachers of English are networking in small research groups and within their schools to find ways to incorporate the L1 into their classes in a disciplined and meaningful way. However, relatively few NESTs support this position. (For some who do, see Weschler, 1997, and Cole, 1998). I believe that in Japan, the first two positions have been over-simplified and emotionalized, and that the Optimal Position offers the most stable pedagogical base. That is the position from which this paper is written.

Macaro’s (2001) three positions assume environments in which it is a given that instruction will take place mostly in the TL, with code switching in the TL → L1 → TL direction. “No one however, takes the regressive position that L1 should deal with all teaching purposes, as with the grammar-translation method.” (Justifying, n.d.) No one? Unfortunately, there are such classrooms around the world even today. Macaro’s positions assume that the teacher is competent enough to use the TL in instruction and to code-switch — which is often not the case.

I argue that, to account for secondary EFL teaching in Japan, we need to add a fourth, non-theoretical position, which I call the Regressive Position after the citation above. In this case, it is *not* assumed that instruction will take place in the TL. Therefore, any code switch-

ing that does occur would be in the direction of L1 → TL → L1.

(4) The Regressive Position: In some contexts, TL monolingual classes should rely mainly on L1 instruction, which is the most effective way for these classes to be taught.

In the past, traditional teaching methods were the only way for teachers without the resources to improve their own English ability to conduct their classes. Older secondary and tertiary teachers of this generation will probably have a clear rationale for holding this position. However, I speculate that some younger Japanese secondary teachers of English may also hold the Regressive Position, although they might not be comfortable admitting so.

Recently, at the urging of the Education Ministry, secondary teachers have tried to incorporate more communicative methods. However, many still claim to be under pressure to use the L1 for various reasons: entrance exam preparation, lack of time to cover materials, students' low proficiency, the need for TL → L1 translation skills. After experiencing the guilt and inadequacy of the Maximal Position, some secondary teachers might possibly find a more stable psychological state by reverting to the Regressive Position. (Once again, the difference between the Maximal and Regressive Positions lies not only in the amount of L1 used by the teacher, but in the teacher's stated beliefs.)

In Japan, instead of simply labelling teachers as native or non-native, it may be more useful to look at teachers in terms of which theoretical positions are most available to them.

	Relatively fluent in TL	Not fluent in TL
Relatively fluent in Ss' L1	Maximal Position Optimal Position	Regressive Position
Not fluent in Ss' L1	Virtual Position	

I imagine that teachers who are relatively fluent in both languages would tend to hold the Maximal or Optimal position, although any of the four positions are possible for them. However, teachers who are fluent in English but not in Japanese will, *by default*, hold beliefs that are incompatible with those held by teachers who are fluent only in Japanese. This contributes to the duality of English language teaching in Japan.

In Japan, there is a dual curriculum in secondary and, to a lesser extent, tertiary English education (Sakui, 2004). Very broadly, NNESTs teach the TL reading, writing, and grammar from a Regressive Position, and NESTs teach the TL oral communication skills from a Virtual Position. I suggest that, as the number of bilingual teachers (both NEST and NNEST) increases at all levels of EFL education in Japan, we will see a gradual shifting away from this dual curriculum into a more mature, coherent curriculum taught from the Optimal Position.

Review of Literature

Research on how and why teachers use the L1 can be broadly grouped into two somewhat overlapping categories: affective and pedagogical.

L1 for relationship-building

One of the commonly-documented uses of the L1 is for relationship-

building (Macaro, 2001). Instructors can use the L1 as a “we-code” in order to demonstrate solidarity with students. For example, studies in Sri Lanka (Canagarajah, 1995) and Malta (Camilleri, 1996) have found that teachers and learners attend to the symbolic values associated with the L1 and with English in their classroom conversations. English is associated with formal, written discourse. The L1 is used for an informal atmosphere, establishing warmth and encouraging participation and discussion on the part of the learners.

However, in socio-political contexts where English is not seen as a threat, the L1 might not necessarily be perceived as a “we-code”. Tang (2002) surveyed highly-motivated students and teachers in China to find out their attitudes toward L1 use in the classroom. The subjects were 98 first-year English-major students and 18 [non-native] teachers of English at a university in Beijing. About 70% of both students and teachers believed that the L1 should be used in the classroom. For these students, however, affective reasons were unimportant: “Few of them feel that English is imposed on them or regard the use of English as a threat to their identity” (p.41).

Teachers also use the L1 to express their own emotions (Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002). It has also been found that, if the teacher is not a native-speaker of the students’ L1, students often help the teachers with their L1, leading to greater solidarity (Polio & Duff, 1994). Finally, teachers use the L1 to encourage students and put them at ease. This would imply that that greater TL use in the classroom would be accompanied by greater anxiety on the part of the students. To test this hypothesis, Levine (2003) developed an online questionnaire that was answered anonymously by 600 FL students and 163 FL instructors from colleges in the US and Canada. (The TLs being studied were nearly always Spanish, French, or German.) The questionnaire inves-

tigated [self-reported] amounts of TL use, beliefs about TL use, context of TL use, and anxiety about TL use. In fact, Levine found a significant *negative* relationship between TL use and anxiety. Students and teachers who reported more TL use in their classes reported lower levels of anxiety about TL use, presumably because that is what they are used to.

We should remember that Levine's study was with self-selected college students, of whom more than half reported themselves to be "highly" or "extremely-highly" motivated. It may be less important for these students, who are to some extent already good language learners in a relatively comfortable situation, to build a relationship with their teacher than it is for the teacher to build a relationship with them! Perhaps we should revise our way of approaching the question of L1 use and relationship-building: When teachers use the L1 to create a "we-code", is it in response to student needs — or to our own?

L1 for Pedagogy

Some studies show that students believe that the L1 is a useful pedagogical tool. In Tang's (2002) survey mentioned above, the majority of the Beijing university students felt that L1 explanations of difficult grammar points or vocabulary are necessary. Critchley (1999) surveyed 160 first-and second- year Japanese university students on whether they thought their Japanese-speaking NEST should use Japanese. 87% of the respondents preferred occasional L1 support to make pedagogical activities more comprehensible. However, Burden and Stribling (2003), who surveyed 151 English major and non-major university students regarding their own and their teachers' L1 use, found that after only one semester, students had become more accept-

ing of a TL-only environment. In any case, students beliefs are often naive and do not necessarily reflect best practice.

In addition, beliefs are based on perceptions, and one study suggests that student perceptions of L1 use may be wildly inaccurate. In a classroom-data based study in Japan, Tuitama-Roberts and Iwamoto (2003) describe how a senior high school used NSTs and NNSTs to teach a unified curriculum. Although not the main part of the research, in order to check that NSTs and NNSTs were using mostly TL, classes were videotaped. In a follow-up survey to check student attitudes, it was found that Ss perceived the NNSTs to be using more L1 than the NSTs, even though the videos showed that this was not so. The most diverse instance was 70% perceived use of L1 as against 10% actual use! This suggests that there is a need for further research in the area of student perceptions of L1 use.

In the study mentioned above, Levine (2003) proposes that simply using the L1 as the unmarked (i.e. the “off-stage”) code will not reduce anxiety or increase efficiency; rather, the L1 should remain a marked (“on-stage”) code by serving *specific* pedagogical functions. In line with the Optimal Position, some researchers are starting to investigate the specific functions that the L1 can serve.

Rolan-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002) analysed samples of teacher code switching during one beginning French lesson taught to five Australian university course sections taught by NSTs and NNSTs mostly in the TL. Their results confirm previous research: that teachers use the L1 to translate, to comment about forms, and to manage the class. In a follow-up study, they found evidence of uptake after teacher comprehension checks in the L1 and of learner correction after L1 feedback. They conclude that there is a role for the L1 within CLT by helping learners perceive TL forms.

Hosoda (2000) reported on the code switching of one teacher in Japan, which mostly occurred in four contexts: (1) Explaining prior target language utterances; (2) Defining unknown words; (3) Giving instructions; and (4) Providing positive and negative feedback. Such research supports the use of the mother tongue as a bridge between languages to provide a more efficient, comprehensible and comfortable learning environment.

In China, Liu (n.d.) examined nine hours of EFL teacher-training videos produced by a university in Beijing and taught by four experienced NNSTs using the TL as the language of instruction. Instances of code switching were found to fulfil the functions that have been found elsewhere: for translation of new words, for repetition and for building solidarity with students. In addition, Liu claims that TL → L1 code switching occurs due to the teacher's insecurity or lack of competence, and also that L1 → TL code switching occurs during explanations in the L1 when there is not a clear L1 equivalent for the TL term. Liu correctly points out that "many switches may either be multifaceted, or open to different functional interpretations" and that the data would be strengthened by interviewing the teachers themselves.

Rather than categorizing instances of code switching according to their functions, Lin (1990) did a qualitative discourse analysis of four ESL teachers in secondary Hong Kong schools. She found that, although there were differences across the teachers and variability across the lessons taught by each teacher, teachers tend to use certain patterns of language alternation (TL-L1-TL) when teaching grammar or vocabulary. Code switching was an effective marker of discourse boundaries and of changes in classroom frames, enabling teachers to negotiate meaning that would have been difficult to express otherwise. Lin concludes that code switching is "an important addition to the

teacher's repertoire of communicative resources in the classroom" (p.4).

How and why teachers code switch

Liu (n.d.) points out that a single instance of L1 use can have multiple functions. I suggest that a better way of putting it would be that various reasons can be attributed to a single function of L1 use, and that one reason for L1 use can be realized via various functions. For example, a teacher can use the L1 to translate a lesson item. This function can be performed for various reasons: to make the input comprehensible, to provide repetition, to respond to a student request for a translation, and so on. In the same way, a teacher might intend to use the L1 to strengthen her relationship with her students. This intention can be realized through various functions: checking comprehension, giving feedback, talking about the world outside the classroom and so on.

To my mind, the results of the research I have discussed so far are somewhat confusing because they mix together observable phenomenon (e.g. "Teachers use the L1 to give instructions.") with inferred intentions (e.g. "Teachers use the L1 to make information comprehensible.") Instead, we should separate *how* teachers use the L1 from *why* they use it. By examining the two separately, the picture becomes much clearer.

Researchers in this area commonly use the term "*functions of L1 use*". I believe that this label should be limited to the observable phenomenon, the pedagogical acts that the teacher is actually performing. Any classroom observer should be able to easily identify these functions using some kind of scheme, which is what I will propose next. On the other hand, the label "*reasons for L1 use*" should be reserved for explaining why a teacher code-switches. This information can be

provided only by the teacher herself, through qualitative methods such as introspection or self-commentary.

After sifting through the literature, I made two lists of the functions of and reasons for L1 use. This involved consolidating overlapping concepts, and inferring definitions for others. Then, I considered ways of categorizing the functions. One such schema has been proposed by Rolin-Ianziti, J. and Brownlie, S. (2002), involving metalinguistic/linguistic uses, pedagogic uses, and communicative uses.

Although their research is extremely solid, I felt that these categories extrapolate the teacher's reasons from the functions, which is what I strongly wish to avoid. In order to focus solely on the functions, without considering the reasons, I turned to a more discourse-based model.

Code switching as role-switching

When my children were small, a bilingual researcher interested in code switching came to my home from time to time to videotape their play for later analysis. I was particularly fascinated by one aspect of their code switching: when they purposely switched languages to be "on-stage" or "off-stage". Although I don't remember the precise words that my daughter used, I recall her "playing house" in English, and then changing to Japanese to inform her brother that he was now supposed to pretend to go shopping.

As I was analysing the data for this study, I remembered my children's instinctive use of language alternation to highlight their "on-stage/off-stage" voices. It is well documented that teachers juggle multiple roles simultaneously. While reading the literature for this paper, I was starting to analyze my own classroom discourse. However, some of my own code switching seemed inexplicable. Could I be

code switching in my EFL classes in order to highlight my different roles as a teacher?

Other EFL classroom discourse researchers have been exploring this very idea.

At least one study has found that teacher code switching obscures the teacher's roles. Polio and Duff (1994) conclude that when NST teachers of foreign languages in US universities used the L1 for genuine communication and the TL for patterned practice, the students couldn't tell whether the teacher's questions were display questions or "real" questions.

Other studies find that teachers use code switching to highlight their changes in roles. Lin (1990), using Goffman's 1974 concept of discourse frames, found that code switching in Hong Kong secondary schools was an effective marker of changes in classroom frames, enabling teachers to negotiate meaning that would have been difficult to express otherwise. More recently, Edmondson (2004) analysed the student-teacher interaction during secondary EFL classes in Germany. He found that switching languages helps teachers to clearly mark their separate roles as models of the L1 and as pedagogic personae. In fact, a lack of code switching can lead to "communicative and pedagogic disarray" (p.175).

Pennington (1999, 2002) has developed a system of classroom discourse frames. She visualises these as concentric circles that are permeable — open to influences from other frames. In the center or "bull's eye" is the *lesson frame* where the curriculum is presented. In this frame, both the teacher and the students use the TL. In the next circle is the *lesson-support frame*, which is used for structuring communication and behaviour. In this frame, it is mostly the teacher who speaks, either in the L1 or the TL. In the *institutional-support frame*,

the teacher takes care of institutional business using the L1. The outermost frame is the *commentary frame*, in which both teachers and students use the L1 to comment on the classroom and on the world outside. Pennington notes that in this frame, student discourse may devolve into an alternative discourse — off-lesson talk — that is inappropriate for the lesson.

I suggest that Edmondson's two roles correspond to Pennington's innermost two frames. When being a model of the L1, the teacher functions within the lesson frame, and when being the pedagogic personae that is structuring the lesson, the teacher functions within the lesson-support frame. In other disciplines, the teaching of chemistry, for example, there would not be much confusion between these two roles or frames. However, when using language to teach a language and to teach about a language, these roles can become very unclear very quickly.

Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2005) also look at the teacher's use of code switching to mark frames in advanced content-based language classrooms. They found that classroom code switching patterns resemble code switching in non-classroom bilingual settings. First, in natural conversation, code switching can be used in *participant-related* functions. In this case, the switches correspond to the preferences of the speaker or the listener. They found that this type of code switching predominates among learners and teachers. An example of this in the classroom would be when, anticipating that the students won't understand, the teacher switches to their L1.

Second, in natural conversation, code switching can help to organize the conversation by indicating changes in *discourse-related* functions, for example, by making asides or by quoting. In classrooms, research indicates that only teachers code-switch for discourse-related

functions. Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain argue that this is misleading, simply because it is "still rare" to find TL classrooms that allow the use of the L1. In fact, they found that both teachers and students use the discourse-related function to indicate that they are moving in or out of the teaching/learning context, and concluded that language learners conceptualize the classroom as a bilingual space. Given such interesting results, I predict that we will see more and more such research in Japan.

Creating a coding scheme

I felt that Pennington's (2002) *classroom discourse frames* theory would provide a useful way of categorizing the functions of L1 utterances. Pennington developed this complex framing schema after years of discourse analysis of classroom conversations. However, teachers who are not trained in discourse analysis need a simple and usable guideline for discovering their discourse patterns. At the risk of greatly oversimplifying Pennington's work, I would suggest the following benchmarks:

1) If the teacher is acting as a linguistic or metalinguistic informant, then she is functioning within the lesson frame. More simply, if the code-switched utterance would *only* occur in a TL classroom (not a chemistry or art class), then it is part of the lesson frame.

2) If the teacher is acting as a classroom teacher in order to structure communication and behaviour, then she is functioning within the lesson-support frame. More simply, if the code-switched utterance could occur in any classroom (not only a TL classroom), then it is part of the lesson-support frame.

3) If the teacher is acting as an institutional personae taking care of institutional business, then she is functioning within the institutional-

support frame. More simply, if the code-switched utterance could occur in any institutional space (classroom, office, hallways), then it is part of the institutional-support frame.

4) If the teacher is acting in a non-institutional, personal role in order to comment on the lesson, the students and the world beyond, then she is functioning within the commentary frame. More simply, if the code-switched utterance could occur in a non-institutional space, then it is part of the commentary frame.

If my understanding of Pennington's model of classroom discourse frames is correct, then the functional aspects of code switching could be placed into the four nested classroom frames, highlighting the role that the teacher is taking at the moment. Table 1 shows how functional aspects of teacher code switching can be categorised within each frame. I believe that this provides a workable, practical framework for classroom teachers to use when examining their own L1 use, and I will pilot an instrument based on it in a follow-up to this paper.

Finally, I turned to the reasons for code switching. Once more, I emphasise that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the functions and the reasons, and that the reasons can be provided only by the teacher herself through introspective, qualitative methods. Once again, I listed reasons for code switching, both purposeful and non-purposeful, that have appeared in the literature (see Table 2). I believe that this checklist provides a reasonable starting point for a teacher to focus on her intentions when using the L1.

Teachers who are concerned about their L1 use usually begin by investigating how much L1 they are actually using. This may involve counting the number of L1 utterances in a given lesson or checking their lesson at given intervals (such as every 5 seconds) to see whether they are using the L1 or the TL. However, teachers also need to know how

Table 1. Functions of Teacher L1 Use.

FUNCTION	EXPLANATION	OCCURS IN DATA
Teacher's L1 use in the lesson frame		
Translate lesson item	Provide brief L1 equivalents to make lesson items comprehensible	Macaro (2001); Polio & Duff (1994); Hosoda (2000); Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002); Liu (n.d.)
Translate instructions	Provide brief L1 equivalents to make instructions comprehensible.	Macaro (2001); Polio & Duff (1994); Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Comment on L2 forms	Teach grammar or vocabulary formation explicitly	Macaro (2001); Polio & Duff (1994); Tang (2002); Lin (1990); Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Comment on L2 culture	Comment on TL culture or with L1 culture	Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Comment on language learning	Comment on language or language learning in general	
Teacher's L1 use in the lesson-support frame		
Give feedback		Hosoda (2000); Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Give instructions	Give procedural instructions for complex activities	Macaro (2001); Hosoda (2000)
Check comprehension		Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Manage/control students		Macaro (2001); Polio & Duff (1994); Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Comment on lesson		Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Comment on classroom equipment		Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Teacher's L1 use in the institutional-support frame		
Comment/explain institutional information		Pennington (1999)
Teacher's L1 use in the commentary frame		
Comment about self		Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
Comment about students		
Comment about world		

and why they are using the L1. Tables 1 and 2 provide a simple way for teachers to better understand their pattern of L1 use and its relationship with their classroom roles.

Table 2. Reasons for code-switching

Purposeful	
To make information comprehensible	Tang (2002); Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
To provide repetition and variety	Sert (2005); Liu (n.d.)
To get students to do something	Cole (1998; Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
To lessen student anxiety by building a relationship with them (“we code”)	Sert (2005); Larrea (2002); Camilleri (1996); Liu (n.d.). Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002); However, Tang (2002) and Levine (2003) dispute this.
To supply translation requested by student	Rolan-Ianziti & Brownlie (2002)
To make teacher’s change of role explicit	Sert (2005); Canagarajah (1995); Camilleri (1996); Lin (1990)
Non-purposeful	
Automatically triggered by other L1 utterance	Polio & Duff (1994)
Teacher lacks competence or confidence	Liu (n.d.)
Habit	Liu (n.d.)

Conclusion

In this paper, I hoped to answer the following questions:

- What do EFL teachers in monolingual classrooms, especially those in Japan, believe about teacher use of the L1 in the classroom?

To answer this, I have summarized research on teacher L1 use in monolingual foreign language classrooms. It is clear that teacher beliefs about their own L1 use are strongly influenced by the particular socio-cultural context of their classroom. I have proposed that, in Japan, teacher beliefs about the use of L1 fall into four positions: the Virtual, Maximal, Optimal, and Regressive positions. I suggest that teachers who are not fluent in both the L1 and the TL are forced, by default, into taking the more extreme Virtual or Regressive positions.

- How and why do EFL teachers in monolingual classrooms, especially those in Japan, use the L1?

I suggest that we must clearly separate the two issues of *how* teachers use the L1 and *why* they do so. The research seems to suggest that there are clear patterns of how teachers use the L1 regardless of the teaching context. I suggest that classroom discourse frames help make sense of the various uses of the L1 within the various roles that teachers play. It is also clear that some reasons for using the L1, such as “lessening student anxiety via use of the L1 as a we-code” might not be valid in all teaching contexts.

- How can EFL teachers easily examine their own use of the L1 in the classroom?

I suggest that, rather than simply quantifying the amount of L1 use, teachers can use classroom frames to discover patterns (or lack of them) in their L1 use. This instrument could help teachers to clearly link their L1 use with their various classroom roles. I hope to pilot and validate this instrument in a follow-up paper.

Given the persistence of teacher L1 use, it is astonishing how little we know about its impact on student learning. If individual classroom teachers are to contribute to research in this area, they must have access to theory-based yet accessible instruments that will help them observe and understand their own L1 use. I hope that this paper will provide the first step in creating such an instrument.

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