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Architecture, counseling and teaching in the target language

Per affrontare il problema del mancato uso della L2 nelle classi di lingue straniere, l'autore esamina due priorità per la formazione dei docenti: una conoscenza approfondita della linguistica applicata delle classi di lingue straniere ed una più grande consapevolezza dei bisogni degli studenti nelle classi dove la L2 è la lingua d'istruzione. Queste due capacità che si rinforzano reciprocamente vengono descritte tramite le metafore dell'architettura e del counseling per l'insegnamento delle lingue straniere.

1 Introduction

A variety of studies across nearly two decades suggest that integration of the target language (L2) as the means of classroom communication in foreign language (FL) teaching is rather meager (Warford, 2007). Meanwhile, more and more policy frameworks from the departmental to the national level are pressing maximal teacher use of L2. A number of researchers, particularly in the UK, where (near-) exclusive use of L2 in the classroom is the standard, have bristled at this prospect (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 1995, 2001); however, even the most vocal critics of (near-) exclusive use of the L2 recognize that more L1 necessarily comes at the expense of opportunities for second language acquisition (SLA). As Atkinson (1993) states, "failure to engender enough use of the target language in the classroom is one of the major methodological reasons for poor achievement levels in language learning" (p. 4).

Empty mandates are insufficient to influence teachers in the direction of using more L2. Pearson, Fonseca-Greber and Foell (2006) have called for more attention to the study of FL classroom discourse in teacher training, with the expressed goal of increasing candidates' capacity to teach in the L2. Such training should recognize that the virtue of maintaining L2 as the medium of instruction, in itself, is not just a question of quantity; the quality of classroom use is an equally important consideration, not just for acquisition and interactional competence, but also for encouraging and sustaining student engagement. Consequently, a true appreciation of the quality of FL classroom discourse centers on two core and interrelated dimensions of FL instruction: 1) literacy in the linguistic architecture of FL classroom discourse and how to optimize it for second language acquisition (SLA) and 2) sensitivity to the socio-affective needs of students within a classroom in which L2 predominates as the linguistic code. The metaphors for these skills are the architect and the counselor, respectively, and within both frames, teachers need to understand the importance of allowing students to use the L1.

2.1 Teacher-as-architect: Literacy in the applied linguistics of the FL classroom in the service of SLA

FL teaching candidates should be thoroughly acquainted with the linguistic architecture of the FL classroom, the building blocks of which are constituted by various discourse features that exist in tension, as evidenced in the continuum between message and medium-oriented interaction (Ellis, 1984), classroom and topic language (Macaro, 1997), as well as between spontaneous (context-dependent) and scientific (academic) language (van Lier, 2004; Vygotsky, 1986). From overview to directions for activities, transitions and closure, FL teacher talk is richly imbued with a variety of L2 lexical, morphological and syntactical features that quickly become salient through repeated use, offering input for acquisition. Yet, FL teachers often, for reasons of time-efficiency, give in to the impulse to gloss their L2 utterances in L1 (Duff & Polio, 1990; Üstünel and Seedhouse, 2005). In general, *efficiency* is a dubious principle to invoke in teacher code-switching to L1; it assumes an outdated 'transmission' metaphor for language teaching. The efficiency principle also

suggests an excessively linear view of SLA, one which undermines the kind of spontaneous L2 use that students may come up with. An alternative to self-translation that would be more respectful of students' capacities would involve prompting them to paraphrase or translate teacher utterances.

Teacher talk also has the potential to foster the development of interactional competence. Unfortunately, the linguistic architecture of the FL classroom is undermined by layers upon layers of lexical chaining (Hall, 1995) in the form of drills and other form-focused activities that bear little resemblance to real communication. Ironically, traditional language practice exercises are the only area of FL teacher talk that tends toward L2 (Warford, 2007). Training in FL classroom discourse should press candidates beyond traditional IRE (teacher initiates, student responds, teacher evaluates) scripts, and extend opportunities for students to manage topics. The concept of instructional conversation points toward classroom interaction that is less mechanical and more supportive of "equal turn-taking rights" (Ellis, 2003, p. 182); it has the potential to open up monumental spaces in the linguistic architecture in which learners might engage in the kind of cited (rather than recited) L2 use that should prepare them for real-life L2 interaction.

An instructional conversational perspective on the FL classroom is constructed upon a view of instruction as mediated, rather than simply transmitted. Research in conversation analysis (CA) has uncovered the smallest unit of mediational processes in classroom discourse, the repair sequence. Repair, in applied linguistics, refers to a way to "resolve trouble in speaking, hearing, or understanding" (Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain, 2003, pp. 375). According to Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2003), repair in FL instructional settings is more often focused on negotiation of form, and usually involves some form of code switch to L1 by teachers and learners (Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain, 2005). With regard to student code choice, it is by now well-established in SCT (Sociocultural theory) that L1 represents an essential semiotic tool that learners employ in engaging L2 learning tasks (Antón, 1999; Brooks & Donato, 1994), so that exception must be allowed; it is perhaps the only clearly principled justification for L1 in the FL classroom; however, I strongly disagree with the prevailing assumption that the same latitude should be extended to teachers.

Before I explain my reasons, it is important to introduce two key SCT concepts into the discussion: the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1986) and dynamic assessment (DA) (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005). One of the central points of a Vygotskyan view of language development is the virtue of offering 'just enough' assistance to the learner to lead them from an actual to a proximal level of development, a quality of mediation that is both dynamic and emergent. DA offers a useful framework for navigating repair sequences within students' ever-changing zones of proximal development. Unlike traditional assessment methods, DA blends teaching and testing in a way that allows the teacher to tune in with more precision to the potential for development. There are essentially two varieties: interventionist and interactionist DA. While the former involves more formal tools like pre-/post-testing, interactionist DA has the benefit of most closely connecting instruction and developmental processes through strategic teacher-student dialogue.

To return to the discussion of the language code of instruction, teacher abandonment of L2 during repair sequences also abandons the principle of 'just enough' assistance, particularly in the case of cousin languages, which are replete with cognates, and undermines the opportunity to establish the floor of learners' emergent capacities to interpret and negotiate meaning in the L2; more importantly, teacher use of L1 in repair sequences exacerbates learners' dependence on L1 and retards the development of the L2 as a semiotic tool. While some may argue that the latter is unattainable, there is evidence that use of L2 in private verbal speech related to L2 problem-solving tasks increases at more advanced levels of proficiency (Centeno-Cortez, 2004).

There seems to be a consensus that teacher talk in L2 fosters acquisition and interactional competence. While there is a place for student use of L1 in language development, particularly in the case of repair sequences, unchecked teacher use of the mother tongue undermines the integrity of the linguistic architecture of the FL classroom; it is akin to spackling over a cracked beam. In addition to benefitting acquisition and interactional competence, teacher use of the L2 through repair sequences also benefits rapport by offering empathic use of the L2, a point that will be extended in the following section.

2.2 Teacher-as-counselor: Humanizing engagement in classroom use of L2

A foundation in ways of optimizing FL classroom discourse for acquisition and interactional competence is complemented by sensitivity to the socio-affective quality of instruction in which L2 predominates from the students' perspective, an orientation that borrows from counseling psychology. Teaching in L2 is no virtue if it does not recruit and sustain student engagement, a skill that benefits from the interweaving of several theoretical frameworks under the umbrella of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000), a paradigm in social psychology that points to a way to teach in the L2 that addresses a quality of humaneness. SDT postulates that intrinsic motivation is sustained

to the extent that three needs are met: autonomy, competency and relatedness. With regard to autonomy support, Levine's (2003) study suggests a picture of learners ready for instruction in L2 and over-anxious instructors holding them back. DA and instructional conversation provide the perfect medium for instruction that adequately honors students' emergent capacities. Competency, which is mediated by structure, addresses the managerial concerns new teachers express about teaching in the L2. Knop (2009) has presented tools and techniques for preparing students for learning the L2 through the L2, including language ladders and writing lesson plans on the board, techniques that fit nicely with interventionist DA.

With regard to relatedness, the third intrinsic motivational need, iconic, responsive teacher use of L2 has implications not only for sustaining intrinsic motivation in the classroom, it resonates with an essential and often overlooked affective-volitional dimension of establishing the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1986), and it most likely predicts students' future intention to interact with L2 speakers. An emergent ecological-semiotic view of SLA (van Lier, 2004) suggests that teaching in the L2 is at odds with the stages of developing sign systems in L2. It is difficult to argue against the point that learners bring a primal emotional and sensorial bond to their mother tongue; however, to disregard the possibility of L2 firstness undermines opportunities for pedagogical innovation and deeper engagement of students in L2 development. Again, students should feel free to use L1; coercing L2 only erodes the authentication process and the virtue of 'unconditional positive regard', which is the heart of Rogers' (1951) humanistic view of the therapeutic relationship.

In addition to intrinsic motivation and an iconic quality of L2 instruction, positive student engagement also must address issues of authenticity. In SDT research, authenticity has been found to benefit both autonomy and relatedness needs (Deci, 1995). With regard to authenticity in FL teaching and learning, there is a tendency to perceive authentic L2 use as at odds with the authenticity of FL classroom relationships. Atkinson (1993) describes authentic L2 teaching as a 'real-life' quality of classroom L2 use, as well as tool and task selection. While some researchers (i.e. Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001) dismiss the pursuit of this quasi-virtual L2 world in the classroom, others affirm the authenticity movement's positive impact on student engagement (Atkinson, 1993; Chambers, 1992; MacDonald, 1993; Turnbull, 2001) and sociolinguistic competence (Polio & Duff, 1994).

In applying the authenticity principle to participation in FL instruction, teachers continue to reserve L1 for authentic communication related to morale-building or empathizing with students (Polio and Duff, 1994). Edstrom (2006), in analyzing her use of English to empathize with a struggling Spanish student, reported that L1 "was the most 'real' for all of us" (p. 286), a sentiment that illustrates why Cook (2001) referred to (near-) L2 exclusivity as a 'straightjacket' (p. 410) and argued that open use of L1 enhances, rather than undermines authenticity in the FL classroom, a position echoed by van Lier (1995). If we apply the Bakhtinian (1981) notion of heteroglossia, the corollary assumption, that L1 is more 'genuine', is not a given. Today's classrooms are increasingly diverse and multilingual, not just in terms of students' L1s but also within the many intersecting discourses and dialects that they bring into the classroom.

To be sure, more teacher L2 does present a potential challenge to morale maintenance, and, if poorly implemented, it may even alienate students (Chambers, 1992); however, unqualified use of L1 out of empathy for students presents a dangerous precedent. Polio and Duff (1994), in response to extensive teacher use of L1 for empathizing with students warned: "While this may have positive affective consequences, it nonetheless prevents students from receiving input they might be exposed to in' real life' social situations outside the classroom and reinforces the notion that English, not the FL, is the language for genuine communication" (p. 322).

Alexander Calder, Tree (Fondation Beyeler, Riehen bei Basel).

An alternative to the dualistic portrait of authenticity lies in Van Lier's (1996) notion of authentication. The concept is too complex to fully discuss here, but the central idea is a process view of authenticity – that it is not so much about the quality of the content but rather how it is explored by teachers and students that determines the true genuineness of learning experiences. With careful planning, it is not hard to imagine engaging ways of personally involving students in the exploration of authentic content within the constraints of their limited proficiency in the L2. For example, borrowing from whole language techniques, the teacher could collect student reactions and write down their L2 equivalents on the board. At the end of the day, students are not going to feel at home in the L2 if the teacher does not model the same. As a non-native speaker of Spanish, if I feel 'fakey' in directing class through the L2, how can I expect open and genuine use of L2 from my students?

3 Conclusion: Mixing the metaphors

For a profession ruled by the managerial rhetoric of efficiency, quality integration of the L2 as the normal means of instruction requires new professional metaphors: FL teachers as architects of acquisition and sensitive counselors. While the former focuses on questions of achievement in L2 study and the latter on questions of sustaining student engagement, the exercise of one also benefits the other. Mixing the metaphors, one could imagine a way of FL teaching modeled after client-centered architecture and counseling by design. In this dance of structure and spontaneity, the folklinguistic theory often employed in the training of therapists, 'Sometimes what you give is not necessarily what they get', gives us pause to re-examine our own assumptions about classroom code-switching and reminds us that it is ultimately the learner who decides what counts as quality in FL teacher discourse.

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Foreign language teacher talk survey (Warford & Rose, 2007)

This survey assesses your overall approach to using English (L1) vs. the target language (L2) in various aspects of language teaching. It should take about 10 minutes to complete. Explanations of categories indicated with an asterisk (*) are provided on the following page.

Category of foreign language teacher talk	0% in L2 (always L1)	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100% in L2 (never L1)
Procedural (discourse related to the 'nuts and bolts' of running the class)											
1. Calling roll / Taking attendance											
2. General announcements											
3. Attention signal ("Listen up!" / 3 2 1 countdown)											
4. Preparation check ("Everyone ready?")											
5. Giving directions for a class activity											
6. Time check ("You have three more minutes.")											
7. Explaining work for outside of class (homework, projects, exam study)											
8. Calling on students											
9. Courtesy markers (i.e. gracias)											
10. Warm-ups (i.e. date, weather, time, review questions)											
11. Anticipatory set (generating prior knowledge of lesson topic)											
12. Overview of lesson (agenda for lesson, goals for the day)											
13. Transitions ("Now that we've read the story, let's go to p.…")											
Instructional (discourse related to lesson content)											
14. Introducing vocabulary											
15. Reviewing vocabulary											
16. Modeling (miming/acting out use of a grammar feature, vocab.)											
17. Extension scenarios/Providing examples											
18. Grammar instruction											
19. Culture instruction											
20. Book exercises/worksheets											
21. Choral repetition											
22. Oral practice drills, controlled Q&A (focus on grammar usage)											
23. More open-ended communicative activities (less form-focused)											
24. Interpretive activities (listening, reading, viewing)											
25. Presentational activities: student oral presentation											
26. Presentational activities: student written presentation											
Offering and soliciting feedback (discourse related to individual/class progress, repair sequences)											
27. Praise (IRE: Input, Response, Evaluation of accuracy)*											
28. Praising and repeating correct answer (IRE)*											
29. Explicit correction (IRE: "I **get** it; there's no s on the end of get.")*											
30. Implicit correction: Prompting self-correction (IRE: i.e. "you *get**S*** it?)*											
31. Answer to student question.											
32. Individual feedback on performance, progress											
33. Paired/Small group feedback on performance, progress											
34. Whole class feedback on performance, progress											
35. Check for student comprehension ("Any questions?)											
36. Closure: ("What did you learn today?")											

Spontaneous L2 / Instructional conversation (opportunities for acquisition, the development of interactional competency)											
37. Facilitating class discussions											
38. Incidental anecdote											
39. Incidental cultural note(s).											
40. Eliciting more student talk (IRF: “You like to ski? Where?)*											
41. Spontaneous conversation (beyond form-focused practice)											
42. Expressing sympathy/concern											
43. Expressing humor											
44. Q. / comment related to a student interest (big game, sticker, etc.)											
Management / Discipline (related to the promotion of ‘engaged’ and discouragement of disruptive/disengaged behavior)											
45..Encouraging on-task behavior											
46. Discouraging off-task behavior											
47. Reminder of rules											
48. Overall estimation of use of L1 vs. L2 in the classroom											

49. Below, please provide any information that might clarify your approach to using the first vs. the second language with your students.

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50. Is there a category this survey has overlooked? If so, please indicate below:

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***Elaboration on Particular Teacher Talk Categories**

Teacher feedback:

#27-30: IRE / IRF: The distinction between types of teacher feedback. IRE (teacher initiates, student responds, teacher evaluates) is a common sequence in which teachers are mainly looking at the accuracy of the student response with regard to a particular grammar point. in an IRF sequence (teacher Initiates, student responds, teacher follows up), the teacher actually focuses on the students’ message, rather than linguistic accuracy.

IRE:
T: Paul, ¿cuántos años tiene Juan?
S: Juan tiene 5 años.
T: Sí, Juan tiene 5 años. Bueno.

IRF:
T: Lucía, ¿juegas al fútbol?
S: Sí.
T: ¿Dónde?

#30. Prompting student for correction: Teacher leads student to correct answer by pausing at a certain point in the sentence or by raising voice intonation around the point of error.

Secondary acquisition opportunities: Instructional (extending opportunities within the lesson to offer L2 for students to acquire)

#40. Teacher follow-up / to elicit more student talk: IRF / teacher asks a follow-up question or makes a comment that provides increased opportunity to hear the language and that encourages student to continue.

Foreign language teacher talk inventory (Rose & Warford, 2007)

This form may be used in conjunction with a scripted/videotaped lesson. It is designed to complement the teacher talk survey as a tool for reflection on use of L1 vs. L2; it is not designed for supervision purposes. (see Teacher Talk categories for reference).

Category of foreign language teacher talk	Check here each time observed in L1	Check here each time observed in L2	Comments (May address motive, specific wording, if L1 is combined with L2, etc.)
Procedural (discourse related to the 'nuts and bolts' of running the class)			
1. Calling roll / Taking attendance			
2. General announcements			
3. Attention signal ("Listen up!" / 3 2 1 countdown)			
4. Preparation check ("Everyone ready?")			
5. Giving directions for a class activity			
6. Time check ("You have three more minutes.")			
7. Explaining work for outside of class (homework, projects, study)			
8. Calling on students			
9. Courtesy markers (i.e. gracias)			
10. Warm-ups (i.e. date, weather, time, review questions)			
11. Anticipatory set (generating prior knowledge of lesson topic)			
12. Overview of lesson (agenda for lesson, goals for the day)			
13. Transitions ("Now that we've read the story, let's go to p.…")			
Instructional (discourse related to lesson content)			
14. Introducing vocabulary			
15. Reviewing vocabulary			
16. Modeling (miming/acting out use of grammar feature, vocab.)			
17. Extension scenarios/Providing examples			
18. Grammar instruction			
19. Culture instruction			
20. Book exercises/worksheets			
21. Choral repetition			
22. Oral practice drills, controlled Q&A (focus on grammar usage)			
23. Open-ended communicative activities (less form-focused)			
24. Interpretive activities (listening, reading, viewing)			
25. Presentational activities: student oral presentation			
26. Presentational activities: student written presentation			
Offering and soliciting feedback (discourse related to individual/class progress, repair sequences)			
27. Praise (IRE: Input, Response, Evaluation of accuracy)*			
28. Praising and repeating correct answer (IRE)*			
29 .Explicit correction (IRE: "I **get** it; there's no s on the end")*			
30. Implicit, prompted self-correction (IRE: "you *getS* it?)*			
31. Answer to student question.			
32. Individual feedback on performance, progress			
33. Paired/Small group feedback on performance, progress			
34. Whole class feedback on performance, progress			
35. Check for student comprehension ("Any questions?)			
36. Closure: ("What did you learn today?")			
Spontaneous L2 / Instructional conversation (opportunities for acquisition, the development of interactional competency)			
37. Facilitating class discussions			
38. Incidental anecdote			
39. Incidental cultural note(s).			
40. Eliciting more student talk (IRF: "You like to ski? Where?)*			
41. Spontaneous conversation (beyond form-focused practice))			
42. Expressing sympathy/concern			
43. Expressing humor			
44. Q. / comment related to a student interest (big game, etc.)			
Management / Discipline (related to the promotion of 'engaged' and discouragement of disruptive/disengaged behavior)			
45..Encouraging on-task behavior			
46. Discouraging off-task behavior			
47. Reminder of rules			

Notes about quantity and quality of L1 vs. L2: ____

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