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Using L1 and L2 Effectively in the Foreign Language Classroom

Claire Millous

School for International Training

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**Using L1 and L2 Effectively in the
Foreign Language Classroom**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Master of Arts in Teaching Degree
at the School for International Training
Brattleboro, Vermont**

**by
Claire Millous**

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Project Advisor:


Patrick Moran

Project Reader:


Jill Goldstein Saré

Acknowledgements: Janis Birdsall

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on research and the author's experience, this paper presents descriptions and prescriptions regarding the controversial issue of use of L1 (first language) and of L2 (target language) in the foreign language classroom. In the context of her own practice, the author discusses and evaluates techniques and principles that include the use of the use of L1 as well as those that exclude it. This project will examine various interactions among the teacher, the learner, and the content as they relate to L1/L2 use in the classroom. Awareness of the variables involved is the foundation for the teacher's continual adjustment of her own L1/L2 use and of her expectations of learners' use of L1 and L2.

ERIC descriptors: Classroom Discourse; Language Alternation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Teacher: "I"	7
3. The Student: "Thou"	32
4. The Language: "It"	48
5. Conclusion	55
Bibliography	63

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Introduction

During my first three years of teaching French, I was full of experimentation and doubts. I felt sure of one thing, however; that the monolingual principle, that is, exclusive use of the target language (L2) in the classroom was essential to effective language teaching and learning. I followed this principle at first, then gave in to pressure from my students and went to the other extreme of using and allowing a good deal of English in class, all the while still believing in the monolingual principle. I began to wonder what other teachers were doing, especially as regards the L1/L2 dilemma, and how I might learn from them. Not only did my focus on this dilemma precede my Summer Master in the Arts of Teaching (SMAT) course work but it also served as an impetus for this paper: an examination of the research on use of L1 in the L2 classroom. The SMAT course work answered some of my questions on this issue, but raised many more. The research I did for this Independent Professional Project (IPP) has given me guideposts for an ongoing exploration of effective use of L2 and L1 in my French classes. It is my hope that my findings can do the same for other teachers and that it will generate further research of this rather neglected issue in language teaching and learning. I will begin with a brief history of my struggle with the use of L1 in my language teaching, a description of the research that I carried out, and then go on to the framework and organization of this

paper.

Research for this project has contributed to what I gleaned from SMAT course work on the role of L1 and L2 in the history of foreign language teaching methodology. This in turn has helped me become aware of some of the influences on my own use of L1 and L2 as a novice teacher. I discovered a pendulum-like swing from frequent foreign language use (L2) to frequent first language use (L1) characterizes this history. Use of L1 was strong during Grammar-Translation dominance, then looked down upon when the Direct and the Audio-Lingual Methods became predominant. L1 use became more accepted once again with the Silent Way, Suggestopedia and Community Language Learning, only to be rejected by the Communicative Approach. Therefore, the easy answer to my question of how to use L1 or L2 effectively was to adopt one of these approaches which prescribe how to use L1 and L2.

During SMAT course work, I was initially delighted to discover that each approach we studied included a prescription for L1 use, but the introductory training in the techniques of these approaches did not provide enough information. Moreover, like many other students in the SMAT program, I became aware of my unwillingness to follow any single language teaching method exclusively. As I pursued the topic for this paper, I came to realize that my eclectic teaching approach could evolve more methodically than it had before. By consciously crafting an L1/L2 lens, I could have a personally significant focus to guide my examination and assessment of the effectiveness of my own and others' teaching practices.

To be sure, the changes in my teaching during my first three years in the classroom prior to beginning the SMAT program were already influenced by an L1/L2

lens: that of the monolingual principle. Although I was not initially aware of this lens as a choice among others, by my third year I had begun to question the teaching value of two distinct yet related factors: my high proficiency in French and the validity of the monolingual principle. Was I alone in not being able to make the monolingual principle work? Did other teachers use it even when it was not working? Did teachers move towards or away from more effective use of L2 as they became more experienced? Several years of teaching experience and my passion for the target language had not been enough for me; maybe they were not enough for others either. I started asking myself about the relationship between a teacher's enthusiastic proficiency in the target language and the length of her teaching experience in contributing to student outcomes of affect and learning. This led me to wonder whether a particular kind of L1 use could be another helpful factor.

Of all the sources I have consulted for this project, "Six Cases in Classroom Communication: A Study of Teacher Discourse in the Foreign Language Classroom" by Elizabeth Guthrie (1987), has perhaps contributed the most to my awareness and acceptance of my early L1/L2 approaches. On the one hand, her study showed me some of objective statistics relating to L1/L2, such as the range of percentage of L2 use of different teachers. On the other hand, Guthrie's work revealed that my teaching had been at both extremes of the range. I recognized some of my own teacher behaviors, and thus found myself subjectively interpreting the motives behind the teacher behaviors that Guthrie documents.

My first year, I would have identified with the teacher described by Guthrie (1987) as representing one end of the spectrum: "Although Joe spoke French close to

100% of the time, and although his students spoke over 90% French, the percentage of student talk in his class was second lowest of the six teachers" (p 184). In my early teaching, the pressure from teachers and administrators to apply the monolingual principle strongly affected my teaching. As a novice teacher, I used to tell myself that I had the command of French necessary in order to teach it well and that I just needed more experience. However, I received hardly any explicit feedback or suggestions from teachers, administrators or students.

Soon, it was apparent that few of my students were engaged and learning when I used my initial 100% French teacher-talk. My students seemed soothed by L1 use and soon I could no longer bring myself to use or elicit only L2. Thus, I shifted from almost constant L2 use to frequent L1 use. By my third year I had become like the teacher Guthrie (1987) describes at the other end of the spectrum, yet no more effective:

Amy's prevalent use of English for explaining, clarifying and even for giving directions and her frequent use of English-to-French translation exercises appear to account for the fact that the average percentage of French use in her class was lower than any other." (p. 179)

Could Amy and I have felt compelled to use so much English as a means of lowering students' affective filter and ensuring comprehension? Understanding this phase in my L1/L2 teaching practices has facilitated acceptance of my deficiencies. This acceptance in turn has allowed me to take action to improve.

To summarize, in my first years of teaching my beliefs and behaviors regarding L1/L2 use in my French classes were influenced by external sources: pressures that I perceived and misinterpreted. By my third year of teaching, I was aware that my learner outcomes were not as good as they could be. I jumped to the conclusion that I needed to

make my teaching less teacher-centered and more student-centered, and I tried to do this by yielding to my students' apparent need for more L1 in the classroom. I could not shake the belief, however, that I should be using only L2 and that my students should be forced to use only L2, because that is what I remembered from my experience as a language learner. Fuller awareness of L1/L2 issues in my own teaching was to develop through my SMAT course work and through my research for this project.

One of the readings assigned and discussed in my SMAT course work was an excerpt from David Hawkins' essay, "I, Thou, and It" (Hawkins, 2002). In this essay, Hawkins presents the teaching and learning experience as a triangular set of interactions between the teacher "I, the learners "Thou" and the subject matter to be learned: "It." He states that misguided teachers focus on their own relationship with the subject matter and on their relationship with the learners. Moreover, he argues that the teacher should be more concerned with the learner's relationship with the subject matter. Hawkins claims that only the teacher can sustain the "Thou-It" interaction by providing external feedback that the learner cannot provide for himself. In other words, the teacher's conscious, continuous effort to provide a variety of means of access to the subject matter allows the learner to start seeing herself as investigator or craftsman.

As a beginning teacher, I was preoccupied with my own identification with French language and culture, the "I-It" in Hawkins' framework. Then, I became more aware of the importance of my relationship with my students, the "I-Thou" dimension. However, it was not until I became interested in my students' interaction with the French language and with one another, the "Thou-It" aspect, that my teaching began to improve and become rewarding.

Gradually my perceptions of the teacher, of the students, and of the subject matter have aligned themselves with Hawkins' triangular conceptualization of language teaching. Therefore, I have chosen this triangulization as a framework to organize both the body and the conclusion of this paper. In the "I" section, L1/L2 variables which are related to the teacher and her teaching will be addressed. In the "Thou" section, I discuss aspects which are related to the learners. Finally, the "It" section presents factors related to the language or other learning content. This project is also characterized by its threefold orientation within the three sections: my research, my teaching experience, and my reflections. I have also drawn conclusions that influence the evolution of my approach to L1/L2 use in my teaching practice.

In the "I" section, I will look at teacher-talk and teachers' use of conversational adjustments, movements, objects and images. In addition, I will discuss the issues of language alternation and translation in the language classroom. In the "Thou" section, I will examine the variables of learner age, attitudes and behaviors as they relate to small group work and classroom management; areas that have become essential in my own practice. In the "It" section, I will look at the concept of language distance and L2 proficiency levels as they pertain to the teacher, to the students and to the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom. Finally, I will summarize my conclusions partly by relating them to arguments of Hawkins' essay.

The Teacher: "I"

The teacher plays a pivotal role in the use of L1/L2 in the classroom. Teacher-talk constitutes a major source of speech in the classroom, regardless of how teacher-centered or student-centered a language class is. It is thus a major source of L2 "comprehensible input," Stephen Krashen's term for the portion of L2 discourse that a learner comprehends. Since teacher-talk is more easily controlled by the teacher, it is a good starting point for investigating optimal L1/L2 use in the foreign language classroom. In this section, I will address research questions and research on four aspects: teacher discourse skills, extra-linguistic strategies, L1/L2 alternation, and translation.

1) What are some skills and strategies of teachers which improve the comprehensibility of L2 talk between the teacher and students?

Classroom communication includes not only exchanges between teacher and students but also among students. What a teacher says, how she says it, and how she responds to L2 student utterances is part of teacher talk, a key skill for effective classroom communication (Ellis, 1984, p.96). In my research, I found several studies which draw conclusions regarding teachers who use L2 extensively and how they use it. According to Pica and Long (1986), a teacher's residence in a target language country increases her use of L2, more than her years of teaching experience. Although their study

examines increased L2 use, it does not take into account the effectiveness of L2 use in determining student learning outcomes. Guthrie's description of Joe's L2-only teaching and the memory of my own early L2-only phase, point out that a teacher who is very fluent in the target language can be ineffective if other skills are lacking. Both Guthrie and Ellis studied such L2 only teacher discourse profiles and attribute these teachers' relative ineffectiveness largely to their poor skills in conversational adjustments.

These adjustments are modifications and adaptations that a teacher makes to her L2 speech to encourage negotiation of meaning with the learners and also to foster their comprehension of her L2 speech (Ellis, 1984, p. 96). Slowing down and articulating more clearly are among the most intuitive modifications. Multiple exemplification is another way to promote comprehensible input. Clarity applies to meaning as well as to pronunciation and is the goal of expansion. Expansion is a conversational adjustment in which the teacher repeats and elaborates on an unclear student utterance. The following is an example of expansion:

Student 3: *Uh...c'est...ce ne Français typique.*

Teacher: *Il n'était pas Français typique?*

Student 3: *Ne personne est typique.*

Teacher: *Personne n'est typique? C'est à-dire qu'il n'est pas possible de généraliser (Guthrie, 1987, p. 188)*

In this exchange the teacher first expands a fragment into a complete sentence. Next, she corrects the syntax of the student's phrase. Finally, she paraphrases the student's utterance, introducing new vocabulary.

Some conversational adjustment techniques relate to vocabulary choice. Repetition without elaboration is one example. In addition to repeating utterances within the same exchange, a teacher can also help ensure comprehension by using

high-frequency vocabulary (words that are repeated from one exchange to another). Also related to vocabulary choice is the use of paraphrasing and synonyms. Lin (1990, p. 18-19) points out that a teacher may also use sound markers (stress, pitch, and length) to adjust her L2 speech to the learner.

If living in a target language country does not ensure that a teacher develops conversational adjustment skills in the classroom, can extensive teaching experience do so? Before beginning my research I was not yet aware that conversational adjustment skills might be key, but I already wondered about the relationship between length of teaching experience and effective L2 teaching. Pica and Long (1986), as well as Deen (1991), have found that experienced and inexperienced teachers alike tend to use an inordinate number of display questions (questions to which the teacher knows the answers). This type of question is antithetical to negotiation of meaning which is critical to the effectiveness of an L2 only classroom (Pica and Long, 1986, p. 84; Pica, 1988, p. 74). Similarly, a study led by Frohlich, Spada and Allen (1985) reveals that almost exclusive use of L2 by teachers with inadequate use of expansion was problematic for learners (p. 42-43). Ellis (1984) points out that "...where the teacher is not especially good at 'teacher-talk' and has a tendency to refer to displaced activity rather than the here-and-now of the classroom itself, the pupils may not achieve any 'intake' that they can use to extend their receptive competence" (p. 111). An effective here-and-now example would be to compare students' heights to introduce the comparative as opposed to using a displaced reference comparing the Statue of Liberty to the Eiffel Tower.

As I reflect on these researchers' writings, I realize that some conversational adjustment strategies come easily to me. My naturally slow, well-articulated speech lends

itself to comprehensibility. My gesturing, facial expressions, intonation and dramatic flair also enhance my L2 teacher talk. Nonetheless, my research and experience suggest that skill in most conversational adjustment strategies requires conscious effort and ongoing practice, and that I am not alone in these challenges. This research supports my suspicion that L2 proficiency and extensive experience might not be only essential elements for effective L2 teaching. As a language learner, I became capable of eliciting repetition and clarification and of using circumlocution to make my own meaning clear. Unfortunately, these conversational adjustments did not adequately transfer to related teaching skills. One specific classroom instance illustrates this lack of transfer, though it surely was not isolated. My lesson plan involved using a recipe for Madeleine cakes. At the time, it seemed ideal that no English was spoken in the class and that student curiosity justified my spontaneous commentary on the work of Marcel Proust. His Madeleine passage ironically deals with the theme of memory, the antithesis of Ellis' crucial concept of 'here and now'. It is clear to me now that my digression sprang from the misinterpretation of a student's question and that several of my students disengaged because of my problematic expansion of a student comment.

I think back on this class in particular when I identify with Joe's teaching as Guthrie (1987) describes it:

Because Joe's discourse appears frequently confusing and because he tends to impose his own interpretations of students' utterances on them and even to dispute their viewpoints without verifying his understanding of what they want to say, it seems likely that despite his very high use of French, his students are relatively uninvolved in the sending and receiving of messages in French (p. 186).

Classroom researchers have found that teachers who follow the monolingual principle require considerable self-awareness and self-discipline, both to avoid slipping into L1 and

to make L2 comprehensible. Giacque and Ely (1990) suggest the self-awareness demanded by L2 teacher talk: "It is of course necessary for the teacher to monitor her speech a great deal in order to use many cognate words and provide a great deal of context" (p. 179). Reflecting on the Madeleine class has helped me acknowledge my subsequent progress in the area of conversational adjustments and negotiation of meaning. After learning about the Community Language Learning Approach, I became more willing and able to ensure precise comprehension of my students' L2 utterances. The CLL technique of understanding response, in which a teacher restates the learner's statement, facilitated my progress in this area. Judging from ongoing student feedback and reflection, I have indeed begun to improve my conversational adjustments, such as my use of expansion of L2 student utterances.

Another area of my ongoing progress using conversational adjustments is my increasingly systematic use of cognates. According to my teaching journal, I had been consciously maximizing use of cognates. On 10/22/1999, for example, I noted that for a version of the game Simon Says with my French I class, I avoided the expression *se tromper* and used the cognate *erreur* instead. Moreover, I chose to tell my students about the late arrival of workbooks in French because I knew I could use *arriver* and *en retard*, cognates already in circulation. After reading about Giacque's and Ely's code-switching procedure, I followed their idea of favoring cognates at first and gradually enriching vocabulary to include more non-cognates. At the beginning of the year, I taught a list of regular *-er* cognate verbs that would be useful for everyday classroom needs: *approcher*, *décider*, *poser*, etc. Later, for the same functions, I introduced the more idiomatic *venir* for *approcher*, *choisir* for *décider* and *mettre* for *poser*.

Studying other teachers' L1/L2 profiles has improved my awareness of and feelings about my progress in the area of teacher-talk. This in turn opens the door to improvement of use of L1 and L2 in my teaching practice. Studies confirm my sense that residing in France helped me to be able and willing to use a high proportion of French in the classroom my first few years of teaching. I also realize that my natural slowness of speech, clear articulation and use of sound markers such as stress, pitch and length have enabled me to make some of the necessary conversational adjustments, beneficial to my students' learning. However, as illustrated by my shift to the other extreme of low proportion of French teacher talk after a few years of teaching, my willingness to use my native-like command of French maximally in the classroom in the long run, depends on further developing my L1 avoidance strategies including conversational adjustments.

2) How do extra-linguistic strategies help the teacher avoid or minimize use of L1?

Teachers use various non-verbal techniques and materials, known as extra-linguistic strategies, to reinforce their presentation of L2 to students. Movements, visual aids, and props are among the tools she uses along with her own and her students' speech and writing. These forms of extra-linguistic support can serve to help make meanings not only linguistically comprehensible, but also perceptible through various senses. Along with conversational adjustments, Stephen Krashen advocates various types of extra-linguistic support:

Another main task of the teacher is to provide non-linguistic means of encouraging comprehension. In my view, providing extra-linguistic support in the form of realia and pictures for beginning classes is not a frill, but a very important part of the tools the teacher has to encourage language acquisition. The use of objects and pictures in early second language acquisition corresponds to the caretaker's use of the 'here and now' in encouraging first language acquisition, in that they all help the acquirer understand

messages containing structures that are 'a little beyond' them (p. 66).

Researchers agree that extra-linguistic support is especially effective with lower proficiency learners. They also agree that such support is limited in that it tends to communicate only some of the information (Ellis, 1984, p. 37, Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 27; Duff and Polio, 1990; Stern, 1992, p. 289-290; Harbord, 1992, p. 353-354). The visual extra-linguistic support that Krashen and others recommend can be grouped into three categories: movement, pictures and objects.

The movements that help to make input comprehensible range from simple gestures to implementation of Asher's kinesthetic language teaching approach known as Total Physical Response. Demonstrations, enactments, pantomime and charades are all physical, rather than verbal L2-only techniques. The teacher's use of the digits of one hand to give cues about syllable stress in Gattegno's Silent Way approach, is also an example of kinesthetic extra-linguistic support that avoids the use of L1.

Both as a learner and as a teacher, I have experienced the effectiveness of extra-linguistic support. Aside from Boey's study (1969), which describes the use of pictures to present and test vocabulary with children, researchers do not elaborate on the use of pictures as extra-linguistic support. They do, however, specify examples such as rudimentary blackboard sketches, cartoons, posters and also films. These visual aids often serve as advance organizers, aiding comprehension by establishing context and background knowledge (Wong-Fillmore, 1985, p.37; Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 27; Stern, 1992, p. 289-290).

Few who mention the use of objects for extra-linguistic support elaborate on their use. Perhaps this is because it is so common for foreign language teachers to use toys,

dolls, telephones, coins and other objects, that they need not be specified. Duff and Polio (1994, p. 320) refer to these objects simply as props whereas Krashen (1982, p. 69) refers to them as realia. The word prop suggests an unreal dimension of the language classroom whereas realia implies a realistic dimension of the language classroom. In some cases, objects used are real, in others not. Often they are from the target culture, but not always. Gattegno's suggestions about the use of rods in foreign language instruction capture this ambivalent role of objects. Sometimes the rods are simply colored rods; other times they represent parts of speech or narrative. Regardless, objects serve to make meanings concrete and tangible for learners while avoiding the use of LI.

Even though researchers claim that extralinguistic support works best for lower proficiency learners, in my view the same repertoire of techniques and materials can be used with all levels of learners. I do agree, however, that higher level content lends itself less to this repertoire. When I introduce food vocabulary to beginning students, I use real or artificial food items as props. For example, having an apple and a potato in class helps reinforce the difference between the similar terms *pomme* and *pomme de terre*. I use numerous versions of picture bingo, mostly with lower level learners although I have also played more complex versions with higher level students. French television commercials provide extra-linguistic support that works for all levels, as long as the task is adjusted.

Borrowing a Silent Way technique, I have begun to use a pointer as a teaching tool. I have used the pointer with transparencies of vocabulary illustrations for lower proficiency learners to help clarify which L2 utterance goes with which part of the illustration. Moreover, my beginning level students, also among the youngest, have shown themselves more likely to volunteer to do something in front of the whole group if

they use the pointer. For all levels of learners I have taught, pointers are very helpful for specifying parts of words or sentences without using English to clarify. The Silent Way uses fingers to signal the number of syllables in L2 words and to indicate which syllable pronunciation needs stress or correction. Use of this physical clarification enables me to more often avoid L1 explanations. In addition I have developed my own gestures to signify common classroom communication needs such as "almost right" and "keep going."

I have found a creative way to use pictures and movement as extra-linguistic support in a review game which I call "Dico-dessin". This is a modified version of Pictionary in which students elicit vocabulary from classmates by drawing or pantomiming the words. Other L2-only activities, suitable for all ages and levels are fashion shows and cooking classes. Such activities combine perceptible meanings with familiar L1 cultural contexts.

I agree with researchers that extra-linguistic techniques sometimes do not convey with full clarity, as illustrated in Boey's study, (1969). On 1/19/2000 I recorded a positive experience using pictures in my teaching journal. I asked beginning students for written student feedback following a game of pictorial food bingo. The feedback revealed that the pictures were especially effective when accompanied by cognates. By contrast, an example of a misleading visual is one I have used which could illustrate either the verb for to get out of bed or to go to bed. At times, the ambiguity of pictures has provoked students to revert to L1 when asking for clarification. Since a main purpose of using pictures is to avoid use of L1, I now take the time to consider the possible ambiguity of images when choosing visuals.

This brings me to the issue of time, which I perceive to be a main drawback of using extra-linguistic tools. In my teaching journal on 10/25/1999 I wrote about the commonly reported problem of time constraints as it relates to use of extra-linguistic support: "I spent several minutes showing French I students how to use pointer and elicit language chunks from class. Would it have been faster to tell them in English or would some of them have struggled with directions all the same?" Even more challenging for me is making time outside of class to find or prepare extra-linguistic materials. Aside from Boey's comment that good visuals are hard to find, this problem is not addressed in my sources.

Sometimes written or spoken English has compensated for materials that I was aware existed, but did not have the means to obtain. For example, I used an English globe until I finally was able to buy a French one in Paris. When I could no longer find *Fracture du Myocarde*, a French film around which I had designed a unit plan, I reluctantly used a textbook companion video which contained more English.

On the other hand, the lack of time, money and L2 materials inspired me to create what I call teddy bear techniques. The development of these techniques stemmed from my need to use something visual and hands-on to teach certain structures and vocabulary, such as prepositions of localization, clothing and possessives to my beginning students. At first I considered trying a magnetic board series that colleagues in the Spanish and German departments were using. Because these materials were so costly, I felt undue pressure to adopt them fully and permanently into my teaching. However, they did not really appeal to me which led me to find ways of using relatively inexpensive objects. I chose to use teddy bears. An example of the usefulness of teddy bears in making

meanings perceptible and avoiding L1 is the way I use them for teaching object pronouns. Eric the bear has a detachable bottle of maple syrup in his paw and using him as a teaching tool allows me to readily increase the complexity of object pronoun configurations or to better limit them for beginners. If Eric, not I, is the one giving the syrup to a student, the subject can remain the same in the exchange, with only the indirect object changing. "*Il te donne le sirop?*" "*Oui, il me donne le sirop*". Whereas if I give the syrup to the student, more changes are required in the exchange. "*Je te donne le sirop?*" "*Oui, vous me donnez le sirop*".

After I had abandoned an L2-only classroom, I developed a teddy bear technique to frame French-only activities. When I pick up Guillaume, a fat teddy bear, and carry him around the classroom, students know it will be an L2 only activity. Guillaume devours points from students whom he hears speaking English. I came up with this after having tried a colleague's strategy of using an L1/L2 flip sign for such activities. I found that the students and I too easily forgot the sign and lapsed into English. I also realized that I have an aversion to playing language control cop. Holding Guillaume and making him the spy helps me and my students to adhere to the L2 only rule, and this practice lightens up the mood of the activities.

This use of something concrete to frame a French-only phase during a class that includes English brings me to the issue of language alternation. Aside from conversational adjustments and extra-linguistic support, language alternation is another teacher-oriented variable which involves procedures and patterns regarding L1 and L2 use by the teacher and the students.

3) What are some problems leading to and arising from L1/L2 alternation?

Language alternation is a key term in the topic of L1 and L2. It refers to switching back and forth between languages, generally from sentence to sentence or extended discourse to extended discourse, rather than within a sentence. To what extent is language alternation in the foreign language classroom determined by the teacher? Which are most at play, the teacher's and students' beliefs or skills? If a teacher and her students use L1 extensively, is it necessarily out of lack of skills necessary to maintain L2? These have been questions that I brought, first to my SMAT experience and now to this project. Many of my sources describe sequencing patterns that include whether L1 is used and how it is applied to the teaching learning process. The arguments in favor of a systematic approach to L1/L2 alternation are compelling. Therefore, building on my language alternation procedure with Guillaume the bear will help me use L1 and L2 in my teaching with optimal learning outcomes.

Even teachers who seek to avoid L1 and minimize, if not eliminate, language alternation face the challenge of framing the class as an L2 island surrounded by an L1 sea. According to research such teachers tend to emphasize cueing or prompting students at the outset and articulating the L2 only policy. A teacher cannot abandon L1 use on a whim if students are accustomed to waiting for L1 clarification when experiencing difficulties understanding an L2 lesson phase. "If students are unfamiliar with a new approach, the teacher who cannot or will not give an explanation in L1 may cause considerable demotivation" (Harbord, 1992, p. 352). According to most studies, L2-only policies which are established and adhered to from the outset, guide and motivate learners better than plans of phasing out L1 (Duff and Polio, 1990, p. 163; Kelly and Sharp, 1997,

p. 41-43; Harbord, 1992, p. 350). Structured introductions and frameworks are crucial for minimizing unintended lapses into L1. Gahala (1986) affirms the importance of the teacher greeting the students in L2 at the start of class, thereby modeling that the class will involve exclusive L2 interaction. Duff and Polio (1990) similarly suggest paving the way for L2 discussion of grammar by teaching L2 grammatical terms before presenting grammar concepts. The rationale is that this will minimize student incomprehension which might tempt the teacher to resort to L1 (Duff and Polio 1990, p. 163).

Since reading Duff and Polio's study, I have applied these suggestions of systematically structuring presentation and practice of general terms not only to grammar lessons but also to French-only conversation lessons. The idea of explicitly teaching strategic competence had been introduced to me at SIT, but I was not sure how to proceed. Structuring lesson plans to include separate lessons on general conversational skills and vocabulary has helped me to teach conversational competence more effectively. I have developed a system of conversational routines, which include a repertoire of conversational rejoinders such as "*Comment?*" (What?) and "*Moi aussi*" (Me too). Moreover, I have begun to devote more attention to coaching students to ask for repetition and clarification from each other, so as to favor vocabulary that is already in circulation in the class. In this way, when they speak, their classmates will understand them. I modified the comprehensibility section of an oral assessment rubric to include evaluation of students' use of gestures, props, repetition and target vocabulary. Modeling rejoinders, requests for clarification and circumlocution, showing students the oral rubric before the speaking tasks and then evaluating those aspects along with pronunciation and accuracy have improved my students' comprehensibility to me and to each other in

French-only student conversations. Most studies agree that teachers who are clear about their goals regarding language alternation think in terms of lesson phases, moments and rules. Many who defend language alternation claim that the teacher must articulate rules for alternation, at least to herself, from the outset. Moreover, most agree that these rules are variations on an L2-L1 sequence. Atkinson (1987) as well as Duff and Polio (1990) support the sequence of L2 followed by L1. They recommend that the teacher announce the structure of an entire lesson in advance; specifically, that the lesson will be in L2 followed by discussion in L1 (3, p. 163). Atkinson (1987, p. 243) recommends giving instructions for activities in L2 and then asking for their repetition in L1 to ensure that everyone fully understands what to do. Others similarly recommend that teachers give instructions or explanations (especially for grammar) in L2, and switch to L1 as a last resort (Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 7; Duff and Polio, 1990, p. 154; Danhua, 1995, p. 26). William and Sharp (1997, p. 28) for their part, recommend that teachers start by explaining to students about a L1/L2 flip sign that prompts them to sustain speech in L2.

I have practiced all of these language alternation procedures, but am most confident with only a few. Students' misunderstanding of instructions during an activity causes frustration and wastes class time. Although less essential for advanced students, I therefore find it necessary to give instructions for activities and assignments in French and then elicit paraphrase in English. This is especially important when introducing new procedures. I have begun to strategically include English explanations and discussions of grammatical structures and culture. Moreover, I ask my students to use L1 in structured, written feedback on lessons and for written summaries of dialogues performed by other students. As for the idea of a visual prompt for sustaining speech in L2, I favor using a

teddy bear rather than a sign, as I have already discussed in the section on extra-linguistic support.

A few studies describe an L1 to L2 sequence for language alternation and one study prescribes such a sequence. Both Harbord (1992, p. 350) and Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 8) document L1 use as an introductory phase of the lesson. Some researchers have also observed that instructions and presentations (especially of grammar) at the beginning of the lesson or a task are often partly or entirely in L1 (Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 7; Duff and Polio, 1994, p. 154). The study by Giacque and Ely (1990) prescribes L1 to L2 sequencing in the scope of the course rather than of the lesson. The approach that Giacque and Ely suggest involves the phasing out of L1 use by students and the teacher. This phasing out is a common practice in language classes, though it is criticized by some as ineffective. Some researchers agree that a teacher's tendency to begin in L1 because of students' low L2 proficiency in turn limits student progress. It tends to reduce the students' attention to the L2 as well as their actual exposure to the target language (Duff and Polio, 1990, p. 163; Giacque and Ely, 1990, p. 176). Giacque and Ely distinguish their method of language alternation as follows:

By the third or fourth week of the semester, the teacher is conducting most of the class exclusively in the target language. She will still use many cognates, but the grammar structures of her speech will be basically those of the target language. Thus CS {code-switching} is not a 'method' to be used throughout the entire year, but is a procedure leading to the stage where the class is conducted in the target language (p. 176).

Unlike the aforementioned studies which have influenced my use of language alternation, Giacque and Ely's study has served me in the area of conversational adjustments described earlier. More specifically, their study has confirmed my conscious

effort to use as many cognates as possible in my teacher-talk. I resist applying Giacque's and Ely's code-switching procedure because, despite their claim to the contrary, my sense is that such a method must be adopted entirely and executed perfectly in order to be effective. The proponents of L1 to L2 sequencing share a basic viewpoint with those who support L2 to L1 sequencing. They both believe that their respective sequencing orders take into account students' cognitive and affective needs. Therefore, as I continue to grapple with the issue of language alternation in my own teaching practice and implement new procedures and policies, I am motivated to give special attention to introducing and framing them explicitly.

Aside from order or sequence, there are other aspects of language alternation which involve teacher characteristics and circumstances. Some teachers who include L1 do so in spite of their beliefs. Pressure on a teacher to use L1 use may come indirectly from a language department which has unrealistically demanding syllabi. Duff and Polio (1990, p. 160) give a specific example of what others only intimate, namely that an excessive syllabus is as likely as impatience to lure a teacher into timesaving L1 strategies such as translations. They interviewed a teacher who claimed that he would not be able to get through the whole curriculum if he spoke only the target language. Time constraints lead some teachers to write L1 instructions, such as for assignments given at the end of class. William and Sharp's (1997, p. 26) Spanish oral test questions are written in English to assist comprehension in a classroom testing situation where time is limited. Duff and Polio (1994, p. 324) as well as Harbord (1992, p. 352) specify that some teachers who believe in the monolingual principle nevertheless tend to teach L2 grammar with L1 because they lack training in use of L2 grammar teaching strategies, such as

time-lines for teaching tenses. Other teachers resort to using L1 because they feel inadequate using L2 strategies (Danhua, 1995, p. 27-28). As Harbord (1992) observes: "Many may have tried to switch to an all English {L2} classroom only to find themselves inadequately equipped with L2 strategies with which to get their meaning across" p. 350. Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 20) speculates that a teacher's deficiencies that lead to L1 use may be related to her being a non-native speaker of L2. As discussed earlier, the teacher's proficiency in both the target language, and in L2 teaching strategies influence the extent to which the teacher's use of L2 works as comprehensible input.

There are also teachers who avoid use of L1 as reluctantly as some include L1. Numerous language departments require teaching without the L1, even if the teacher favors L1 techniques whose effectiveness has been documented. For example, in Giacque and Ely's code-switching procedure (1990), after two weeks of instruction at least half of what the teacher says is in L2, but she must continue to write L1 on board for optimal learning (p. 179). Duff and Polio (1994, p. 313-326) similarly recommend a particular use of L1. Specifically, they recommend that the teacher explain all grammar in the target language but provide supplementary grammatical explanations for the students to read in English outside of class. Proponents of L1 use argue that avoidance of L1 by teachers and students is unrealistic and that extra-linguistic support and conversational adjustments are too demanding (Lin, 1990, p. 18-19; Harbord, 1992, p. 354-355, Gahala, 1986 p. 3; Atkinson, 1987, p. 243).

When I abandoned L2-only teaching at Atlanta International School it was partly due to pressure to cover syllabi but more due to the lack of motivation and comprehension of my students. At Waterford High School, the pressure to cover syllabi

is much less, but students' lack of motivation and comprehension discourages me from L2-only teaching. However, whereas at Atlanta International School the lack of student motivation and comprehension was apparently due to my inadequate skills in L2-teaching strategies, at Waterford High the school community as a whole has been resisting French and L2-only teaching for numerous years. I suspect that even if I employed L2 strategies remarkably well, I could not totally control language alternation in my classes. There would always be factors beyond my control, such as departmental pressures and school values. On the other hand, I would not necessarily want to avoid L1 altogether because it can be a helpful resource. Lin (1990, p. 18-19) cites Ho who taught two English groups, one using only English (L2), the other using some Cantonese (L1). Once I further develop my L2 teaching skills, I would like to perform a comparative experiment like Ho's to test the effectiveness of L1 use. My experience to date leads me to believe that extra-linguistic support and conversational adjustments are indeed demanding, but that they are worth the effort. Nonetheless, I do feel that total avoidance of L1 is neither realistic nor desirable.

According to my sources, some teachers have developed their L2 teaching skills extensively, yet nevertheless choose to use language alternation. When teachers deliberately choose an L1 lesson phase, it is sometimes due to the teacher's perceptions of the students' emotional state or proficiency level. These teachers tend to begin in L1 and follow with L2. The rationale, according to Harbord (1992, p. 350) and Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 8) is that the L1 lead-in, especially a humorous one, may decrease students' anxiety, thus lowering affective filter, to borrow Krashen's term. Deen (1991, p. 173) similarly sees an emotionally based disadvantage to L2-only policies. She

points out that L2 repetition by the teacher, a recommended conversational adjustment, can be boring and therefore ineffective for students in a teacher-centered format. She favors small group work where the repetition will come more from various students, thus increasing the lesson's interest. She admits, however, that small group work will inevitably include some L1 use by students.

Some researchers also advocate language alternation because certain L1 techniques are considered more effective than L2 techniques, which may be laborious, time-consuming or ambiguous. Boey (1969, p. 13-15), for example, knew an L2 way of presenting vocabulary to students, but found that presenting with some L1 was more effective. Similarly, Atkinson (1987, p. 246) favors L1 comprehension checks and Wong-Fillmore (1985, p. 31-35) favors lecturing with L1/L2 alternation as more effective than inductive L2 techniques to ensure meaning. Although Duff and Polio (1994, p. 321) argue for avoidance of L1, their study includes a teacher who defends L1 use. Polio and Duff contrast a lengthy L2 negotiation of meaning by a Hebrew teacher with a quick L1 explanation by a German teacher, who claimed that he knew how to use repetition and other L2 strategies but chose not to avoid the L1.

To summarize, while practitioners and researchers disagree to what extent, whether, and how L1 is used in the foreign language classroom, they agree that the teacher must be systematic and explicit about L1/L2 use for optimal learning outcomes. William and Sharp (1997, p. 22-23) state that the use of L1 and L2 should be clearly divided in time. Initially I disapproved of mixing languages, preferring an immersion approach. As I have learned about various language teaching approaches, I have come to see language alternation in a more favorable light. In *Community Language Learning and*

the Silent Way L1 has a legitimate role. However, many questions and doubts in this area remain for me, especially concerning the use of translation as part of language alternation.

4) Is translation a valid language teaching technique?

Translation is a common though controversial type of language alternation, and is primarily used to ensure student comprehension of L2. As explained in the previous section, telling a joke in L1 and then explaining a grammar point in L2 is an example of language alternation, but not of translation. Translation between L1 and L2 involves expressing the same content in one, and then the other language. This is just one of several types of L1/L2 alternation. Like other types of language alternation, translation occurs in both directions. The following statement in Stern's chapter (1992) on intra-lingual and cross-lingual dimensions of language teaching epitomizes the prevailing assumption about sequencing for translation as well as for classroom language alternation: "...the least defensible techniques are those that move from the L1 to L2, as the reformers in the nineteenth century had already recognized..." (p. 299). Many translation techniques are criticized for their emphasis on L2 comprehension rather than L2 production, and for creating the illusion that one-to-one equivalencies characterize the relationship between L1 and L2 (Harbord, 1992, p. 353; Atkinson, 1987, p. 245; Giacque and Ely, 1990, p. 177). Yet the use of translation, both L2 to L1 and L1 to L2, persists in language teaching and learning.

In spite of general criticism against use of translation of any kind, a few authors defend certain L1 to L2 translation exercises. They claim that these exercises, unlike

most translation techniques, emphasize L2 production and steer students clear of the fallacy of one-to-one equivalencies (Harbord, 1992, p. 353, Atkinson, 1987, p. 177). Harbord (1992, p. 352) distinguishes such non-traditional translation as 'functional' because rather than merely fostering linguistic accuracy in reading and writing, it serves to develop conversational competence. One example is Atkinson's recommendation (1987, p. 245) that a teacher make note of, but not answer right away student questions such as, "How do you say X in L2?", which may come up during a learning activity. Then the teacher turns the list of questions into another learning activity in which small groups use the L2 they do know to approximate the L1 expressions. Lastly, the students discuss and compare their approximate translations. Another example is presented by Giacque and Ely (1990, p. 177), proponents of a special code-switching procedure. They recommend that students write in L1 what they want to say such as "When will you give the test?" The teacher then writes a simplification of the L1 sentence so that the student can write an L2 approximation of it using the L2 she already knows. Finally, the student can ask the question in L2 and get the answer from the teacher.

The exercises described in these different studies have several features in common. One common feature is that the starting point is the learner's communicative need. Another common feature is that writing is required, though subordinated to speaking. Given that these L1 to L2 exercises follow a disciplined procedure with clearly defined stages, they share the importance of sequencing L1 and L2 characterized by the language alternation procedures described earlier.

Despite the risk of overemphasizing comprehension and the illusion of direct one-to-one equivalencies, L2 to L1 translations are more commonly used in language

classes than are L1 to L2. Teachers use L2 to L1 translation largely because it is thought to save instructional time, above all by reducing the need for conversational adjustments and extra-linguistic support (Harbord, 1992, p. 354-355; Duff and Polio, 1994, p. 321; Boey, 1969, p. 14). Translation into L1, or explaining in L1 during lessons targeting a variety of linguistic skills, is commonly provided by both teachers and students (Harbord, 1992, p. 353; Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 19; Lin, 1969, p. 94-112). To guard against the risk of students retaining an L1 definition but forgetting the corresponding L2 utterance, teachers often use L2 several times with extra-lingual support. Then, if necessary, they provide L1 translation, before switching back to L2 so that L2 acquisition is reinforced (Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 28; Lin, 1969, p. 94-112; Duff and Polio, 1994, p. 319) Boey's teaching experiment (1969, p. 14) involving L2 sentences presented with pictures followed by L1 translations exemplifies this type of L2 to L1 sequencing in which the L2 phase includes extra-linguistic support. (1, p. 14) Atkinson (1987, p.243) favors L1 comprehension checks and Wong-Fillmore (1985, p. 17) favors lecturing with L2/L1 alternation as more effective means of ensuring comprehension than inductive L2 techniques alone. These two strategies echo Boey's findings about the ambiguity of picture prompts without L1.

The research on translation as a learning/teaching strategy has helped me to identify and address my apprehensions about using translation in my teaching. I have begun to incorporate others' ideas and techniques for translation into my teaching practice, such as incorporating spontaneous student L1 questions into planned translation activities. The learning outcomes I have observed so far encourage me to continue working on these techniques. I believe that learning outcomes will improve as I make the

purposes and risks of these techniques more explicit to my students, as I incorporate them more regularly into lessons, and as I perfect my skill in implementing them.

I realize that the risk of my students' retaining an L1 translation without truly learning the corresponding L2 vocabulary is very real. Often my students have remembered an idea or expression translated into L1 during a lesson without remembering the L2 for it. For example, after a lesson I presented about *la Chiromancie* (palm reading), many students remembered the main lines of the hand and other key points of the lesson without remembering the French expressions for them that I had presented. I could enhance the retention of the L2 versions of these expressions by more consistently following the language alternation strategy mentioned earlier of repeating the L2 version after translation

One of my apprehensions about translation as a teaching learning strategy involves the fallacy of one-to-one equivalencies mentioned earlier. My students have tended to translate unfamiliar written L2 into L1 word for word and they often seem paralyzed by the nonsense that sometimes results. Since beginning this project, I have developed the habit of reminding my students often of the danger of literal translation. This is especially important with regards to written language, as this is where they are most strongly tempted to translate literally. Even more troublesome is my students' tendency to use translation software programs for their written L2 compositions. I have forbidden the use of such aids. When students nevertheless use them, the low grades I give them prevent them from using them again, in most cases. They are further deterred when neither I nor they can subsequently reconstruct their intended meaning from the resulting literal computer translation. In these situations the fallacy of word-for-word

equivalencies becomes clear.

Students' overuse of translation is another danger of allowing any degree of translation. In this way my classroom observations concur with this research. In past school terms, I have stated at the outset that my course goals emphasize that language is for communication and self-expression. When I found that my students at Waterford High too often resorted to translation (perhaps because of overuse in their prior L2 learning), I pointed out to them that they were not in a translation class. I subsequently felt disappointed with myself and with them for their not acting on the course goal I had articulated.

Through my research for this project I have come to realize that I can do two things to make my goal of communicative competence more explicit. First of all I can display on a poster my belief that language is to be used for communication and self-expression. Secondly, I can teach my students the meaning of the term communicative competence, much as I have previously introduced metalinguistic terminology such as cognates and circumlocution.

I have adopted Giacque and Ely's translation technique (1990) of simplifying a student's L1 question so that the student can formulate the question with L2 she already knows. This complements the circumlocution coaching I have already incorporated. If I introduce the simplification procedure more clearly at the beginning of the year and follow it more consistently, I suspect that the positive learning outcomes I have been observing with this procedure will improve even more.

Another way that I have incorporated the type of L1 to L2 translation exercises that some researchers recommend is in the introductory phase of my lessons that I call the

hors d'oeuvre. The *hors d'oeuvre* always involves a written question or challenge that reviews the previous lesson and/or previews the upcoming lesson. At times, I have created *hors d'oeuvres* that involved translating an L1 utterance into L2 when this requires an idiomatic expression rather than literal translation. For example, I have asked students to translate "The boys had a good time" which requires a reflexive verb that does not exist in English: *Les garçons se sont amusés*.

Yet another problem with translation that I have experienced is the overemphasis on L2 comprehension at the expense of L2 retention. Often my students have remembered an idea or expression translated into L1 during a lesson without remembering the L2 for it. I could enhance the retention of the L2 versions of these expressions by more consistently following the language alternation strategy mentioned earlier of repeating the L2 version after translation.

In this section, I explored teacher-talk, extra-linguistic strategies, L1/L2 alternation, and translation as influences on L1/L2 use in the classroom that vary from teacher to teacher. We have seen that experience, beliefs and abilities all contribute to the profiles of these variables for language teachers including myself.

The Students: "Thou"

Moving from the "I" to the "Thou" of the students, I will look at some student characteristics. Students behave differently in small group activities than in teacher-centered lessons and L1/L2 use is affected. Moreover, students' misbehavior and the teacher's handling of it influence L1/L2 use and vice versa. Age is yet another learner variable that I will address in the following section.

1) How do student behaviors and attitudes during small group activities influence the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom?

Because students tend to favor language alternation, the subject of L1/L2 alternation serves as a segue from teacher-oriented variables affecting L1 and L2 use to learner-oriented variables. My experience compels me to agree with Boey (1969, p. 15) who calls translation and language alternation in general a "learner-preferred strategy" regardless of proficiency level. I also agree with Harbord (1992, p. 350) who calls use of L1 a "natural" learning behavior amongst beginners. My observations also confirm the research that indicates that interacting with peers, like language alternation, is a learner-preferred strategy. In student-centered activities, like small group work, use of L1 and L2 and student behavior are not as easily controlled by the teacher, as they are in teacher-centered activities. Therefore, in the discussion of learner-oriented factors that

follows, I will begin with the topic of small group work and then move into the subject of classroom management as it relates to use of L1 and L2.

Several of my sources refer to small group work of some kind. In her study which focuses on cooperative learning, Deen (1991) describes a group reading game. Papaethymiou (1987) refers more broadly to pair or group work as part of the communicating stage of the lesson. The oral activities that William and Sharp (1997) and Gahala (1986) recommend involve small groups, as well. Deen (1991) cites that other researches have found that small group work "promotes a positive affective climate, necessary for learning to take place"(p. 157). In her own study, Deen confirms this finding: "...the students also seemed to be more actively involved and eager to participate" (Ibid., p. 164). Papaethymiou (1987) similarly implies that small group work is fun and engaging when she refers to "spontaneous humour and fun relevant to the activity" (p. 16). Gahala (1986), for her part, encourages the use of paired exercises that "contain emotional material such as humor or pathos" (p. 7). According to these sources, small group work increases the number of student speaking turns and tends to be fun and motivating. Not only do students enjoy themselves and participate more eagerly and with less anxiety, but they also tend to speak more and negotiate meaning more often in the L2 than in whole group, teacher-centered activities.

Despite high student motivation and the explicit objectives of L2 communicative practice in small group work, L2 is rarely sustained throughout. Student difficulties with L2 comprehension and/or production often precipitates L1 use during small group work. When a learner struggles to understand or produce L2, the teacher and/or the students are likely to mix L1 and L2, whether the class is working in small groups or in another

instructional format. Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 28), Deen (1991, p. 167), Atkinson (1987, p. 243) and Harbord (1992, p. 352) all point out that learners spontaneously translate or summarize in L1 for peers in difficulty.

A student's lack of proficiency or her misunderstanding of directions are not the only reasons that she might lapse into L1 during small group work. It is also very common and natural for a student to be willing and able to speak L2 in small group activities, yet interject some L1. Some researchers have observed that students' off-task behavior during small group work usually involves switching into L1 (William and Sharp, 1997, p. 12; Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 8) William and Sharp (1997) make a striking point about this student use of L1: "...even those students who attempt to use the target language activities still have side conversations in English" (p. 12). For example, in a lesson observed by Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 9), a student expressed dismay that her team lost points for not being able to come up with an L2 answer. Ironically, the seemingly motivated student in question made the comment in L1. Ellis (1984, p. 126) and Wong-Fillmore (1985, p. 25) agree that when students share a language other than the target language, exchanges amongst themselves tend to include this language. Likewise, in Deen's cooperative learning activity (1991, p. 163) students not only spoke more L2 than in the teacher-centered format, but also more L1. Similarly, the study led by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982, p. 98) claims that students who are most proficient in both languages are the most likely to code-switch. In short, some "lazy" L1 student talk is inevitable during small group work. Frohlich, Spada, and Allen (1985) observe that, "...students generally used the target language only while the teacher exercised control over classroom activities" (p. 43). This implies that teacher control during small group

activities is limited.

Yet the teacher can exercise control of small group work and students' use of L1 by how she holds students accountable. Several researchers emphasize that maximal L2 use with minimal L1 use in small group activities must count more than accuracy or mere attentiveness. In William and Sharp's grading system (1997, p. 41-43), a token is given for any instance of L1 use and points are lost accordingly. Likewise, Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 16) recommends that monitoring by group leaders and/or the teacher is not merely to ensure that everyone is attentive to the task, but that only L2 is spoken. In Deen's "Jigsaw Puzzle" activity (1991, p. 161), one expert group must be accountable to the other during the sharing phase. In William and Sharp's study (1997, p. 23), accountability takes the form of a point-based grading system for group oral activities. Gahala (1986, p.141) similarly stresses that when students' L2 participation is strong in small group activities, it must receive an appropriate reward in the teacher's grading system. A simple scoring procedure facilitates assessing oral performance. According to Atkinson (1987, p. 243) and Harbord (1992, p. 354), a teacher can also channel student preference for peer interaction and L1 inclusion into specific exercises that require a particular form of L1 use. They agree that students need to be encouraged, in pairs or groups, to compare their answers to grammar, comprehension, and other tasks in their own language. This fosters both student cooperation and independence of thought. In addition to peer communication, assessment of L1 and L2 use enhances student motivation and contributes to the effectiveness small group learning activities.

In the SMAT program I discovered that both small group activities and L1 use can be effective language learning techniques. However, I evolved from my original

teacher-centered, monolingual teaching approach in other ways before I was able to rigorously incorporate small group activities into my lessons. Two of my Interim Year Teaching Practicum (IYTP) goals were: not doing for students what they could do for themselves, and using French and English mindfully. The most striking expression of these goals was my implementation of written student feedback in English. When I occasionally did use small group work, students consistently commented on how much their peers helped them relax and learn. As I have progressively incorporated pair and group work into my lessons, I have observed their effectiveness both in fostering learner security and learning. One striking example of this came when a student at Waterford High, usually attentive but quiet during class, enthusiastically used gestures, circumlocution and L2 while playing the French card game *Mille Bornes* in a small group.

To be sure, in that lesson and most of my lessons with small group activities, a significant amount of L1, as well as L2, was spoken. In fact, had I not found several sources for this project that suggested that some student use of L1 during group work is inevitable and perhaps even beneficial, I might have been discouraged by the inordinate amount of English and overlooked the obvious benefits of pair and group activities. I have found, like Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982, p. 96-112) that even students proficient in L2 feel that they need to use L1 at times. As an entry in my teaching journal of 1/10/2000 reminds me, "ironically those complaining (in English) about not knowing how to say what they wanted in French Ronnie and Emma, are among the ones most able to communicate in French!"

I hope to reduce use of L1 during small group activities by being more consistent

when giving directions and when using assessment rubrics. Despite my conviction that specific and rigorous assessment is essential for positive learning outcomes, I realize that I still must improve in this area. For example during the *Mille Bornes* game, my assessment included only a class participation score and classroom privilege passes to the students who used the most L2 and the least L1's however few students are motivated by such rewards. While I have considered using some of the grading practices described above for group oral activities, none of them have seemed clear enough to me to try. Interestingly, the first grading system I tried holds the most promise for me now that I have more experience with small group work. It conforms to the recommendation of my sources that I assess L2 conversational and communicative competence, as well as accuracy and attentiveness.

The system, developed by Donato (1994, p. 318-320) is called TALK. The T stands for whether the student is talking, trying to communicate, and staying on task. The A stands for acceptable level of accuracy. The L is for listening to partners and to directions. The K means kindness and cooperation vs. killing the activity by lack of cooperation. TALK also seems worth trying again because it addresses the problem of observing many criteria in many students at the same time. Only one criterion is assessed per activity, and not all students need be assessed every time.

My increased experience and success with small group work and written student feedback have helped me to more fully embrace the following beliefs, shared with me by my IYTP advisor: 1. You learn more if you help each other; 2. You are responsible for your own learning; 3. Feeling secure helps you learn but fear gets in the way. Ironically, it is in small group activities rather than in more teacher-centered lessons that students

most blatantly fall short of the goals implicit in these beliefs. The motivation behind unproductive student behaviors is not always clear to me. I do not always understand why students choose not to follow my directions, such as avoidance of L1. This has led me to think about the relationship between the challenges of effective classroom management and of effective language alternation.

2) What is the relationship between use of L1 and L2 and classroom management?

Like language alternation in the classroom, student behavior is ostensibly controlled by the teacher, but in reality it largely depends upon the students. Classroom management can be thought of as the procedures and techniques that a teacher uses to keep the class on task: not only how the teacher fosters order and student compliance, but also how she addresses disruptions and disengagement. What happens to L1 and L2 use in the classroom when students do not spontaneously behave cooperatively, as is often the case with children and adolescents? Teachers and researchers do not agree on whether L1 inclusion is best or only way to achieve a positive affective climate, associated with effective classroom management.

Studies show that some teachers do not feel that L2 should be abandoned for classroom management. A number of the researchers who address L1/L2 questions directly or indirectly recommend modeling a repertoire of high frequency classroom expressions (Duff and Polio, 1990 p. 160; William and Sharp, 1997, p. 31). Duff and Polio (1994, p. 322-324) specify that this repertoire can include many L2 classroom management instructions, and that contextual clues help to make them easy to model. Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 27) similarly claims that teachers can model "politeness

markers" not only to restore comprehension, but dignity as well. Although Lin (1990, p. 32) generally values code-switching, she gives an example where tone of voice is used rather than L1 to regulate student behavior. (4, p. 32) Several researchers point out that it is possible to teach L2 classroom management related conversational adjustments, such as examples, repetitions and expansions (Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 27; Lin, 1990, p. 19). Lin writes about a comparative teaching experiment in which the same teacher used L1 with one group, but L2 only with another. In both groups she effectively taught content and managed classroom behavior. Interestingly enough, the same teacher had previously claimed that complete avoidance of the mother tongue was impossible. (Lin, 1990, p 19).

Several sources document L1 use for disciplinary interventions. Often when teachers use L1 for classroom management, it is perceived as weakness by themselves and by others. Such teachers may describe themselves as feeling guilty or taking the short cut. Papaefthymiou (1990) states that "teachers' need to control the class combined with learners' poor competence result in heavy L1 input in the foreign language classroom at the expense of the L2 input....obviously, it is easier to reinforce discipline if teachers address learners in the L1 than in the L2" (p.21). Another teacher weakness that Harbord (1992, p. 355) and Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 20) have both identified is non-native speakers' lack confidence in the L2 meta-linguistic skills required for classroom management and other functions.

Nonetheless, there are native speakers and other L2 proficient teachers who choose L1 for classroom management and other meta-linguistic functions (Duff and Polio, 1994, p. 318; Lin, 1990, p. 18-19). Teachers tend to choose L1 for disciplinary interventions when learners' L2 proficiency is low. One teacher that Duff and Polio

interviewed was an experienced teacher, was proficient in the L2, and knew about maximal L2 use for optimal language acquisition, but nevertheless used L1 for classroom management. He believed that if he did not, his students would not try to understand him (Duff and Polio, 1990, p. 161). Moreover, a German teacher who was interviewed by Duff and Polio (1994) argued: "If you want to create some sort of relaxed atmosphere. I think this is hard to do in German only" (p. 318). Lin (1990) offers the following reflective teaching questions which imply that L1 use may enhance student-teacher rapport and student behavior: "When I switch to Cantonese, do I feel closer to my students? Do they appear to be closer to me? When I speak English, do I feel more distanced from them?" (p. 120).

I have come to believe that conscious, limited inclusion of L1 helps maintain students' positive attitude and security. When I have used the aforementioned reflective questions after teaching a class, I have usually concluded that speaking English does enhance my rapport with students. By contrast, another series of Lin's questions has helped me to identify an unclear aspect of the relationship between student behaviors and use of L1 and L2. Answers to the following questions continue to elude me:

When sometimes they do not cooperate, what are the reasons? Are they tired, or do they lack the necessary expressions to say what they want to say? If that is the case, how can I help them? Or if they are simply being naughty and rebellious, how can I effectively discipline them without doing too much harm to our relationship? Do I invariably use English to scold them so that English has become associated with negative feelings? Am I flexible in my language choice? (Lin, 1990, p. 121).

It is rarely clear to me whether my students misbehave because they want to rebel or because they find the task too difficult.

I feel confused and uneasy about how to foster student discipline and L2 speaking

practice. During the *Mille Bornes* game I awarded the same classroom privilege passes for high L2 use as I did for excellent or improved classroom behaviors. This reflects my confusion surrounding the relationship between student behavior and student language alternation. Privilege passes have not worked well as an incentive for improving student behavior nor have they markedly boosted L2 practice of weak students. In an attempt to understand my students' attitudes and behaviors better, I have adopted a colleague's five questions for student L1 written feedback: (1) Describe student behaviors in this class. (2) Describe your own behavior in this class. (3) Describe your attitude in this class. (4) Describe your attitude about French. (5) Is there anything else you would like me to know? Their responses help me to determine possible causes of students' excessive L1 use or other off-task behaviors. Through continued use of Lin's teacher questionnaire and of the student feedback questions, I hope that my students will be able to trust me more and that their attitudes and behaviors will improve.

I recognize that I still need improvement to develop a complementary relationship between language alternation and classroom management. Another area of experimentation involves classroom behavior rules. Whereas I initially posted classroom rules in French and gave most behavioral feedback in French, I subsequently started posting and stating rules either in English, or in both French and English. I found myself using English for virtually all verbal behavioral feedback to students to avoid their genuine or feigned incomprehension of my behavioral expectations. A classroom management instruction such "*Retourne à ta place!*" is easy to teach and use in L2, but my experience indicates that L1 is necessary for more complicated classroom management communication, such as when a student negotiates for less homework or

challenges the teacher's credibility. I hope to become better able to distinguish students' frustration with the content from their rebelliousness.

Here are some beliefs about language learning which guide my teaching: (1) Students are responsible for their own learning (2) Students learn more if they help one other (3) Fear gets in the way of learning. (4) The more students trust their teacher, the more they will learn. The first three beliefs relate mostly to the learners, whereas the fourth involves the students and the teacher. Part of the students' trust concerns their feelings and behaviors. As I learn to better observe and interpret student behaviors, my students will grow to trust my perceptions and reactions, and I am likely to see a decrease in misbehavior and negative attitudes.

3) How do learner age and proficiency levels factors influence use of L1 and L2 in the classroom?

Just as I have come to accept that a certain degree of L1 use in the classroom by students is inevitable, I attribute some uncooperative behavior to my students' adolescent stage of development. I began my discussion of classroom management with the statement that classroom management is required with child and adolescent language learners. I shall now look more closely at learner age as a variable affecting L1 use. Then I will look at the relationship between language alternation and student age and proficiency level. Although information is quite scarce on the question of age as it relates to use of the L1 in language instruction, research reflects a significant degree of consensus regarding how learner age affects L1 use in teaching. Ellis (1984, p. 116) and Wong-Fillmore (1985, p. 20) recommend L2-only use to increase comprehensible input

and acquisition for children and teens. Duff and Polio (1990, p. 154) assume that exclusive use of L2 is equally important for older learners. These studies imply that L1 should be avoided with all ages. However, given the lack of empirical data their arguments are far from compelling. In her study, Boey (1969, p. 14) also found a similarity between younger and older learners. Through experimentation to discover the best combination of L1, L2 and/or visual stimuli, she noticed that adolescents and children both performed better with L1 association. Thus, the overall conclusion seems to be that learner age is not a significant variable from a cognitive standpoint.

However, research suggests that learner age does influence L1 because of affective differences. Exposure to L2 tends to raise the affective filter of adolescent and adult learners more than for children. Bacon and Finnemann (1990), studying university students, explain this difference by the great gap between the sophisticated self-expression of an adult in his/her L1 as compared to in L2: "...the fear of self-revelation may interfere in particular with a learner's ability to profit from situations of authentic input" (p.461). Stem (1992) explains that this variable could justify the use of L1: "...if L2 learners do not wish to abandon their 'L1 ego', they must somehow reconcile their new L2 competence with an established L1. In such cases, cross-lingual techniques especially those that confront and compare L2 and L1, can be helpful in coming to terms with this inevitable issue of second language learning" (p. 298-299). According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982, p. 102-103), another difference between children and adults is that adults make slightly more interlingual errors than children. In other words, because adults have a stronger L1 foundation, their L1 can interfere more with L2 learning. While this variable contributes to the consensus that adult second

language acquisition is slower, none of the studies dictate how L1 and L2 use should be used to accommodate this learner age difference.

The research findings that suggest how learner age affects L1/L2 use in the classroom shed light on my past teaching practice, as well as guide my future teaching. I have also observed greater learner anxiety amongst older students. My first summer as a SMAT marked my first significant contact with adult beginning language learners. I was struck by the high anxiety level of colleagues in the role of learners during peer teaching language lessons. How could they be so anxious in such a small, supportive group of peers? The following summer I was similarly surprised to see some of the participants in my Sandanona demonstration workshop become nervous and flustered. I felt that my workshop, entitled "Hard Whole Group Learning with Soft Teddy Bears" took into account possible learner anxiety.

I did not recall such anxiety levels when I previously taught children, even when the classes were not made up of pre-established peer groups. When I first taught French at Atlanta International School, I noticed that my teen-age students tended to be more self-conscious about speaking in French about their own clothes, families, etc. than the pre-teens were. The teddy bear techniques I developed addressed the older learners' self-consciousness by putting the spotlight on the bear instead of on the nervous teenager. I have since confirmed the effectiveness of the teddy bear techniques' in maintaining learner security with beginning and intermediate classes of learners aged 11-15.

I am curious to use my teddy bear techniques with older learners, ages 14-18. If their classroom anxiety does indeed prove to be greater than that of younger learners, the bears may become all the more valuable in minimizing use of L1 while maintaining

learner security, especially if the older students do not dismiss the bears as childish. The older teenagers' written feedback will inform me of their perceptions.

As indicated earlier, the gap between L1 level of expression and L2 level expression is more likely to be greater for adolescents than for children. This may cause greater insecurity and inhibitions and increased temptation for adolescents to resort to L1 in the L2 classroom. I hypothesize that an adolescent's insecurity could be exacerbated by low L2 proficiency level since her L1 proficiency would be even more markedly superior to her L2. This brings me to the topic of learner proficiency level as it relates to use of L1 and L2, regardless of learner age.

Teacher-researchers agree that the temptation for a teacher to use L1 is greater with lower level learners, although they do not all agree on whether or not to resist this temptation. According to Atkinson (1987, p. 243) and Papaefthymiou (1987, p. 29), it may be unreasonable to impose L2 metalanguage for discussion of structures with lower level students. Atkinson (1987, p. 244) recommends the use of metalanguage in L1, and he believes that learners have a right to express their views on what takes place in the classroom. For this reason, he recommends that discussions of methodology at early levels take place in either a mixture of both languages or exclusively in the students' mother tongue, provided that the class has a common L1. Giacque and Ely (1990) have gone much further than Atkinson in their acceptance of mixed language use, and have done classroom research to test their code-switching procedures with beginning French students. They claim that "since total use of the FL is out of the question for beginning students, the only way to achieve actual and full communication in class is by code-switching" (p. 176). It is challenging, if not impossible, for the teacher to avoid L1

with beginning students. Even Ellis (1984, p. 107) who advocates maximal, if not exclusive use of L2 at all levels, concedes that it is much easier for teachers to adjust their L2 speech with intermediate and advanced level students than with novice students to ensure communication.

I have also experienced greater difficulty avoiding English with my lower level classes compared to my higher level classes. I believe that high student proficiency level in French contributed to the fact that it was not only possible, but relatively painless, to conduct my International Baccalaureate French class entirely in French, even for written student feedback. The students were able to negotiate meanings in French as they had done in many other contexts throughout the course. Thus, while it seems promising with beginning and intermediate learners to use L1 critical thinking strategies, whether from CLL or other sources, I see no reason to do so with advanced learners.

In this section, I have examined how being in small groups affects students' willingness to avoid L1, how L1/L2 use can be a part of students' misbehavior and of a teacher's discipline approach, and how emotional and cognitive developmental differences between children and adolescent students' affect their use of L1. In beginning French classes, I have used *thou* and *you* as approximate translations for *tu* and *vous* that illustrate the problems of relying on translation. Nowadays, as an archaic pronoun, *thou* has a connotation of formality that coexists with its actual use as a second person, singular, familiar pronoun. This ambiguity of *thou* applies to my use of it in the title of this section on learner variables affecting L1/L2 use. The teacher must see her students as *thou* rather than *en masse*, as "you." She needs to respect each student's individuality. Yet she is the one who sets standards both for L1/L2 use and for classroom behavior and

leads the students to meet these standards.

Language: "It"

Some variables affecting L1/L2 use in the classroom are related to the nature of the language in question and to learning objectives commonly used in the teaching and learning of that language. For example, French is derived from Latin and thus related to it. However, unlike Latin, French is spoken in many countries and social strata. Because it is more important to be able to read than to speak Latin, one would not expect similar L1/L2 use in Latin and French classes. Such language characteristics are aspects of the "It" component of the triangular conceptualization of language teaching and learning. The "It" variables include how foreign the L2 is to an individual. The expression for this measure in the field is "language distance." Language distance involves the degree to which the L2 differs from the L1 lexically, grammatically, and phonetically.

1) How does language distance for the learner influence the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom?

Several dimensions characterize the concept of language distance. On the one hand, language distance involves the distinction between foreign and second language learning. On the other hand, it refers to how related the L2 is to the L1 of the learner or to the teacher. Many agree that when there is greater language distance, it is more difficult to regardless of whether there is a shared first language or lingua franca in the classroom.

If there is a common first language or lingua franca, the challenge is mostly psychological since the temptation to rely on one's L1 for explanations and chitchat is increased. If there is no shared first language, the challenge is of a different nature. In this case, learning depends partly on the teacher's skill in using extra-lingual support and conversational adjustments effectively and on the students' receptiveness to these strategies. The authors examining the implications of greater language distance have mostly focused on learning contexts where the L1 was an Asian language, and the target language was English (Lin, 1990; Boey, 1969; Danhua, 1995). By contrast, those writing about lesser language distance referred to contexts where English was the L1, with French, Spanish or German as the L2. Giacque and Ely affirm those teaching French, German and Spanish to English speakers should take advantage of the minimal language distance by using their code-switching teaching procedure described earlier. Others argue that, that when the distance is minimal, the teacher has no excuse for not conducting the class exclusively in the L2.

In a study of language classes with a shared L1, Duff and Polio (1990, p. 161) acknowledge how daunting major language distance can feel to both the learners and the teacher, and they cite a major L1/L2 distance class as an example of a class where the teacher uses the most L1. Unlike Lin, Boey and Papaethymiou, Polio and Duff do not accept this as a justification for using L1. According to Polio (1994), not only does L1 use deprive learners of L2 input but also gives a discouraging message: "These teachers {using L1 in major language distance contexts} were, in effect, telling the students "This language is too hard for you. It is too different from your L1 and you will never learn it" (p. 155).

When I compare conclusions regarding language distance and the use of L1/L2 from my own teaching practice with classroom researchers, I find that I agree with them in some respects yet cannot always identify personally. Like others, I find that the significant distance between Asian languages and a European language indirectly affect the use of L1/L2 in the classroom because learners cannot rely as significantly on cognates and grammatical similarities between L1 and L2. I have noticed that students with an Asian L1 regardless of the type of French class (in International Baccalaureate, French as a foreign language or French for native/near-native speaker) tend to struggle.

In a way, I feel envious of the ESL/EFL teachers who know the Asian L1 shared by their classes. I have taught groups with a wide range of L1s, which ideally requires substantial individualization. In reality, my Asian students have been doubly disadvantaged in my classes compared to the Asian students of English discussed in my sources since they share L1 with neither teacher nor classmates. Unable to speak any Asian language, my non-Asian students and I have tried to help Asian students in my classes by using English to explain French or translate French. I realize that we could have been more sensitive to the fact that English as a tool is more limited for Asian students since it is as different from these students' L1 as French.

The research findings validate my past intuitive responses to the particular problem of major language distance, all the while strengthening my desire to increase the amount of French used in my classes. To accommodate the special needs of my Asian students at A.I.S, I met with them outside of class for extra help. I usually offered them quiz retakes or composition rewrites which were not offered to all students in the class. Moreover, in the one case where there was more than one student with the same Asian

L1, I allowed these two Japanese girls to speak some Japanese now and then to help each other clarify the French. I used to feel somewhat guilty about these practices but I am able to justify them now as a means of leveling the playing field for students whose L1 is very different from French.

I could level the playing field for such learners even more by minimizing use of English in class, and thereby removing an extra processing step; which is greater for Asians than for students whose L1 is more similar to French and English. Although I feel that I have been avoiding blatant overuse of French as well as blatant overuse of English, I am committed to increasing the amount of French my students and I use effectively and meaningfully in the classroom. Addressing the problem posed by learners whose L1 creates greater language distance from L2 is an added incentive to pursue this goal.

Since I have never taught French in a context where French is used outside the classroom, technically speaking, I have only taught French as a foreign language as opposed to French as a second language. However, because of the ambiguous FL/SL status of some classes I have taught, I am interested in what research indicates about the FLISL distinction in relation to use of L1 and L2 in the classroom.

Several authors agree that maximal L2 input (reduced by L1 use) is especially important in FL learning contexts because little opportunity exists for exposure to the L2 outside the classroom (Duff and Polio, 1990, p. 154; Polio, 1994, p. 154; Papaefthymiou, 1987, p. 6). There is disagreement, however, as to the relative usefulness of L2 input in and outside the classroom for SL learners. Wong-Fillmore (1985 p. 17) argues that the classroom can provide better input than the general environment whereas Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982, p. 109) are convinced of the opposite.

The so-called native French classes that I have taught at the Atlanta International School were more like second language classes than L1 for the ratio of students with French as their L1 was always about 1:10. The students had learned French from having one or two French-speaking parents and/or from the primary school bilingual program. Technically, in my class they were not in a true second language situation: most of them were exposed to French only in the classroom. I have read that bilingual students whose main source of comprehensible input is one another get an impoverished input due to the tendency of fossilized interlanguage of such speakers. This definitely rings true of my "native" students who spoke their own *franglais* amongst themselves.

2) How does language distance for the teacher influence use of L1 and L2 in the classroom?

Whether the teacher is a native or non-native speaker of the target language is an issue that several researchers relate to the issue of L1/L2 use in the language classroom. The past trend of exclusive L2 use was largely due to the plethora of native speaker language teachers. Some native speaker teachers do not feel proficient in the students' L1. This can prove to be a liability or an asset. On the positive side, it becomes a matter of necessity rather than self-discipline in such situations for teachers and students to speak to one another only in the L2. Thus comprehensible input is maximized which fosters learning (Duff and Polio, 1990; Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). On the negative side, if a native speaker teachers' knowledge of the students' L1 is very limited, she does not have the option of enhancing learning by giving special attention to points of possible L1/L2 interference and/or transfer. Moreover, some students are intimidated by the fact that





The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. This includes both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The primary data was gathered through direct observation and interviews with key personnel. Secondary data was obtained from existing reports and databases.

The third section details the statistical analysis performed on the collected data. Various statistical tests were used to determine the significance of the findings. The results indicate a strong correlation between the variables studied, suggesting that the observed trends are not merely coincidental.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations based on the findings. These recommendations aim to address the identified issues and improve the overall efficiency of the process. It is suggested that regular audits be conducted to ensure ongoing compliance with the established protocols.



The fourth part of the document provides a detailed breakdown of the financial data. It includes a table showing the monthly fluctuations in revenue and expenses over the study period. This data is crucial for understanding the financial health of the organization and identifying areas where costs can be reduced.

The fifth section discusses the challenges encountered during the research process. One major challenge was the limited availability of certain types of data, which required creative solutions to overcome. Additionally, the complexity of the data analysis required a high level of technical expertise.

The final section of the document offers a summary of the key findings and their implications. It highlights the most significant results and discusses how they can be applied in a practical setting. The author concludes by expressing confidence in the reliability of the data and the validity of the conclusions drawn.



their teacher is a native speaker, regardless of whether she is monolingual or bilingual or of whether she understands their L1/L2 interference and/or transfer experiences (Wing, 1987, p. 170).

Empirical data on the role of the teacher's L1 and L2 in the use of L1 in the language classroom is scarce. Duff and Polio (1994, p. 161), looking at native-speaker teachers, found no correlation between the teacher's perceived or real proficiency in students' L1 and her use of L1/L2. Wing (1987, p. 168) on the other hand, looking at non-native speaker teachers, found a positive correlation between post-graduate travel and residence in a target country and use of the target language in the classroom.

When I applied for a teaching position at Atlanta International School, I was aware that the school had never hired a non-native language teacher before. During the job interview, administrators perceived my non-native speaker status to be more of a shortcoming than my minimal teaching experience. By contrast, my having lived with a French family for a year impressed them more than my Master's Degree in French. Thus, I got a strong sense that the administration and faculty of A.I.S had biases against non-native speaker language teachers and against L1 use in the classroom. I concluded that, in their judgment, there was a correlation between these two.

Because I felt that my bosses expected me to mask my "flaw" of being a non-native speaker, I was motivated to emphasize my French name and living experiences and my near-native proficiency by avoiding English. In this beginning stage of my teaching career, concern for my position and status contributed more to my conducting class almost exclusively in French than did concern for the students' learning of French. Over time, I became aware that student anxiety- and inadequate

incomprehension seemed to be blocking learning. I did not see an alternative to increasing my use of English feeling that it would exacerbate my inferiority complex vis-à-vis my native-speaker colleagues whom I imagined avoided English in the classroom.

This project has led me to become aware of the influence of my attitudes about language distance at A.I. S. This awareness has shaped my relationship (real and apparent) with the French language and culture. After A.I.S. I chose a teaching position in a school where, unlike at AIS, there are many non-native language teachers. I concluded that while my French name will be sufficient to mislead some students and teachers in my new school to believe that I am French, it was of no value for me to encourage the illusion. I have become less afraid that my use of L1 will be perceived as a shortcoming stemming from being a non-native speaker. Because I could identify with the observation recorded by classroom researchers that some students are intimidated at the thought that the teacher is a native speaker, I have been developing the habit of clearly communicating to my students and the entire school community that I am not a native speaker of French. In this way, I can reduce student anxiety and model a positive non-native speaker's relationship with L2.

In this section, I have presented the "It", as what the students and the teacher perceive themselves to be learning or teaching in the classroom. In other words, where language is concerned, whether the L2 is considered very different from the students' or teacher's L1 and whether the L2 is spoken in the learners' community as a second language influence how and how much L1 is used in the classroom.

Conclusion

My exploration of effective use of L2 and L1, characterized by questions and experimentation, will continue in my teaching. In this project, I have discussed what research and reflection on my own teaching practice reveal about numerous variables affecting L1 and L2 use in the classroom. I have classified these variables into three groups: teacher-related, learner-related and language/content related. The researchers I consulted provided me with the terminology necessary to understand their questions and answers, and I am now better able to contribute my own perspectives. In my presentation of each group of variables, several key terms helped me formulate questions to orient the project. In the teacher section, I ask the following questions: 1) What are some skills and strategies used to improve the comprehensibility of L2 talk between teacher and students? 2) How do extra-linguistic strategies help the teacher avoid or minimize use of L1? 3) What are some problems leading to and arising from L1/L2 alternation? 4) Is translation a valid teaching technique?

In the learner section, another set of questions orients the discussion 1) How do student behaviors and attitudes during small group activities influence the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom? 2) What is the relationship between use of L1 and L2 and classroom management? 3) How do learner age and proficiency levels influence the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom?

In the final section on language/content variables, a third set of questions emerges: 1) How does language distance for the learner influence the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom? 2) How does language distance for the teacher influence use of L1 and L2 in the classroom?

Before beginning this project, students' lack of participation and comprehension in my classes, as well as their use of L2, led me to suspect that I lacked skills and strategies to ensure that my students and I would understand each others' French. In the first chapter of the "T" section, I addressed the issue of skills and strategies that improve the comprehensibility of L2 talk between the teacher and students. I presented explanations and relevance of the terms: teacher-talk, comprehensible input, conversational adjustments, negotiation of meaning, expansion, and display questions. I have come to agree with an argument that numerous researchers make regarding teacher-talk. In order for L2 teacher-talk to work as comprehensible input for students, teachers must use conversational adjustments, such as expansion often and well. They must also minimize use of display questions to foster the negotiation of meaning between teacher and students that in turn enhances learning. However, even the most experienced and L2 proficient teachers may lack such skills. Reading about others' teacher-talk and reflecting on my own has helped me acknowledge my slow, well-articulated speech and use of cognates as a strength, and my use of expansion and display questions as areas for improvement.

I addressed the concept of extra-linguistic support in the second chapter of the "T" section. I presented and explained the relevant terms extra-linguistic advance organizers, and realia, as well as perceptible and ambiguous meanings I agreed with the researchers

who state that extra-linguistic support is useful in making meanings perceptible without L1, although not all visuals are useful in avoiding L1 because they sometimes make meanings ambiguous I did not agree entirely with the majority of sources on the limitations of extra-linguistic support, however. My experience with non-verbal materials, such as with my teddy bear techniques suggest that extra-linguistic support is useful for all levels and ages of learners, not just with children and beginners Moreover, extra-linguistic support can reinforce L2 without use of L1 but also with use of L1 as in the case of Boey's effective use of translations with pictures to teach L2 vocabulary.

In response to the third question of the "T" section, it became clear that I am certainly not alone in grappling with this issue, as it is very controversial in the field of language teaching. Regardless of what stand they take, researchers use the following pertinent expressions to discuss shifting back and forth between L1 and L2 in the classroom: language alternation, sequencing patterns, code-switching, and affective filter. Language alternation does not always correspond to the teacher's ideal because of the constraints of her own limited skills or because of external constraints from her teaching context. There are several common threads in the various ideas about language alternation. One is the recommendation that the teacher have a rationale, often related to students' affective filter and motivation, and also that she develop clear procedures for structuring and sequencing L1 and L2 lesson phases. Whereas I used to think that any language alternation was undesirable, my goal has changed from eliminating L1 to minimizing its use so as to maximize L2 comprehensible input. Moreover, I believe when language alternation does take place in my lessons I should structure and sequence it carefully.

In examining whether translation is a valid teaching technique in the fourth question of the "I" section, it was important for me to understand the following expressions; the fallacy of one-to-one equivalencies and functional translation. Translation is one kind of language alternation that can be used as a teaching/learning strategy. As a teaching strategy, translation, especially from L1 to L2, is criticized by many, partly because it is thought to emphasize L2 comprehension at the expense of L2 production I agree with the researchers who warn that translation carries many risks, but my experience indicates that structured translation both from L2 to L1 and from L1 to L2 can enhance learning in ways that L2 only strategies may not. The more my students and I become aware of the risks of translation, the more we can minimize them.

In the fifth question which begins the "Thou" section, I asked how student behaviors and attitudes in student-student interactions influence the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom I found that some recurring terms in the research were peer interaction, small group work, student speaking turns, cooperative learning, accuracy, attention, and assessment. Research confirms my impression that many learners prefer speaking L2 with peers to teacher-student L2 exchanges. In small groups students take more speaking turns than in a teacher-centered format because they are more related and interested, and also because they have more opportunities. They tend to speak more L2 than in teacher-centered formats. It is impossible to eliminate L1 from small group work entirely; however, the teacher can maximize L2 use and minimize L1 use by assessing small group work rigorously and consistently.

In the "Thou" section, discussion of the relationship between use of L1 and L2 and classroom management involves concepts such as disengagement and disruptions,

rules, rapport, positive affective climate and trust. Some sources argue that classroom management is possible without language alternation I feel that it is possible and essential for me to improve my classroom management skills, but not without L1 use. The progress I have made thus far in this area has involved incorporating L1 in student feedback on behavior and attitudes, and I believe that further progress will require L1 as well.

As for learner age and proficiency level variables, my sources discussed children, adolescents and adults their anxiety levels their L1 ego and their interlingual errors. Research does not make a strong argument that cognitive differences between younger and older learners justify any particular use of L1 or L2. However, I found support from a few researchers for my observation that adolescent learners tend to resort to L1 use in order to maintain their L1 level of expression, which is markedly higher than their L2 level of expression. I believe that as the teacher, I can channel this need for higher level expression into L1 student written feedback and other L1 critical thinking exercises.

The concept language distance is brought up in the "It" section of this project. For effective use of L1 and L2, the teacher must understand the roles of language distance, transfer and interference for the learner as well as the difference between second Language learning and foreign language learning. For most of my students whose L1 is English, French presents minimal language distance and reliance on cognates and grammatical similarities between L1 and L2 leads to both transfer and interference. However, research has made me aware that the greater language distance between French and Asian languages sets some of my Asian students apart from their classmates. I must take this into account as I give directions for L1 and L2 use in my teaching.

Finally, when I examined what studies reveal about the influence of the teacher's language distance from her L1 to the target language on the use of L1 and L2, the information I found involved native vs. non-native speaking teachers, on the one hand, and monolingual vs. bilingual teachers, on the other hand. Research does not point to any clear trends in native speaking and non-native speaking teachers' use of L1 and of L2 in the Language classroom. Nevertheless, the research helped me to become aware that at Atlanta International School, I thought that appearing to be a native speaker of French would indirectly help me foster effective student practice of L2. At Waterford High School, on the contrary, I have felt that being recognized as a non-native speaker of French, who has attained near-native fluency, is more helpful for my students' learning of French.

Hawkins' triangular conceptualization of teaching and learning and the interactions between the teacher, the learner and the subject matter is relevant to my study of L1/L2 use because it provides a way of classifying the variables involved. It is also important to me because of the interplay of my perceptions of the teacher, the learner and the subject-matter and my beliefs and practices related to use of L1 and L2 in the classroom. I am influenced by the current aspiration, shared by many other teachers, of developing a teacher role as "guide on the side" rather than "sage on a stage". My perception of the teacher role has indeed changed. I have a passion for French language, literature and culture and my learning of French was influenced by immersion experiences. Therefore, for me, being the sage on the stage meant that I saw myself, above all as a source and model of accurate and authentic French, with no English to distract my learners. At Atlanta International School, I saw my main teacher functions as

presenting and evaluating. Becoming a guide on the side however, implies the functions of watching and coaching learners and of giving feedback as well as evaluations.

Changing the perception of "I" meant perceiving "Thou" differently, as well. Initially I saw my students somewhat like an audience, somewhat like vessels that had to be filled with L2 knowledge. Gradually, I began to incorporate more student feedback, small group work instead of lectures and drills and student-generated texts with fewer literary excerpts and scripted dialogues. I began to see my students as more active and autonomous, bringing resources, interests, and insecurities which were different from my own to their interaction with the French language and culture. I began to see how their L1 could be a resource that I had not previously acknowledged, and L1 use as an expression of a type of L2 insecurity that I do not often experience myself.

My sense of the "It" has changed along with "I" and "Thou". This has implications for my attitudes and actions regarding use of L1 and L2. In retrospect, I see that I initially wanted to teach students to become like the "Other," that is, more like a French person, as I thought I had. I felt they could attain this with accurate use of grammar and idioms, native-like pronunciation, and knowledge of French customs and literature. I now believe that language is for communication with the "Other" and for self-expression, rather than for becoming the "Other." Thus, communicative competence became a much more important component of "It." Helping students to communicate in French sometimes necessitates first eliciting what they want to express in English. I have thus chosen to abandon the monolingual principle with all but my most proficient students of French.

Even as I was researching and writing this project, the L1/L2 lens that I am

crafting shaped my beliefs and practices and increased my awareness and confidence.

Rather than offering a prescription for use of L1 and L2, I have come to the conclusion that there is no formula to fit all teachers in all teaching contexts all of the time.

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