

《論文》

# 英語授業における大学生の母語使用の認識について

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College Student Views on the Use of the First Language in ELT

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first language (L1), target language (TL)

## Abstract

The present study examined Japanese college student views on the function and value of first language (L1) use in the English classroom. The first-year students at a college completed a questionnaire consisting of 11 closed questions on their views, and two open-ended questions on the advantages and disadvantages, of using L1 in English classes. The results indicate that college students perceive a positive role for L1 use in core, framework, and social functions: a core function for imparting knowledge about the target language (TL), framework function for managing the classroom, and social function for reducing classroom anxiety. While students recognize this functionality of L1 use, they also perceive L1 use as a potentially demotivating factor. The students' conflicting views on L1 use call for further research, to investigate the optimal L1/TL distribution for maximizing TL teaching and learning.

## Introduction

An enormous amount of theoretical and pedagogical research has been generated regarding the best means of teaching and learning a new language. Discussion of teaching methodology and research in English language teaching (ELT), in particular, has typically assumed that English should be taught and learned monolingually, without the use of the learner's first language (L1), except as a last resort (e.g., Hall & Cook, 2012, 2013). Phillipson (1992) points out that the monolingual assumption amounts to the belief that exclusive use of English will maximize the learning of English, regardless of what other languages the learner may know; and argues that the devaluation of the learner's L1 in ELT had its roots in the British colonial tradition. McMillan and Rivers (2011) claim that "the monolingual approach has long been prescribed by official policies in the field of English language teaching" (p. 251). Nonetheless, L1 use in foreign language teaching has been an object of debate among researchers. According to Rolin-Ianziti and

Varshney (2008), the debate is “based on the underlying differences in approach regarding the language classroom environment and the goal of language learning” (p. 250).

In recent years, the monolingual assumption has been questioned by a number of scholarly works, which reassess the role of L1 use in language education. Hall and Cook (2012), for instance, introduce a wide range of applied linguistics knowledge related to L1 use in language education, such as the amount and functions of L1 use; theoretical frameworks from psycholinguistic, SLA, constructivist, sociocultural, and sociolinguistic perspectives; and teacher and learner perceptions of L1 use. They also suggest that a paradigm shift is underway in language teaching and learning, which acknowledges the existence of a bi- and multilingual world.

With regard to the aforementioned knowledge, a number of studies have focused on the pedagogical functions of L1 use in language education (e.g., Ellis, 1994; Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008). The results of these studies appear to suggest that the reported functions of L1 use are relatively constant, while the reported quantities of L1 use vary with the context. Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008), for example, drawing on Ellis's (1994) distinction, classify the functions of L1 use into teachers' (a) medium-oriented goals, such as explaining vocabulary items and teaching grammar, and (b) framework goals, such as giving procedural instructions and assigning homework. Similarly to Kim and Elder (2008), Littlewood and Yu (2011) draw a distinction in L1 use, between core goals for teaching the target language, framework goals for managing the classroom situation, and social goals for expressing personal concern and sympathy. They also note the reassuring

role that L1 use can play in class, counteracting the potentially alienating effects of monolingual teaching.

In a similar manner, supporting the positive view of the affective-humanistic and interpersonal functions of L1 use, Edstrom (2002) suggests that teachers have a moral obligation to judiciously employ the students' L1, in order to show appreciation of the students as individuals, show respect and concern, support learner identity, and create a positive affective environment. Therefore, Widdowson (2003) concludes that L1 use is an inevitable and natural element of classroom life, and can and should be treated as a positive resource for language teaching, not an impediment to learning the TL.

While numerous studies regarding teacher perceptions of L1 use have emerged, which acknowledge the beneficial functions of such use (e.g., Kim & Elder, 2008; Macaro, 2006; Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009; Littlewood & Yu, 2011), there has been a relative lack of research regarding *learners'* perceptions of L1 use. Some studies note that L1 use makes grammar instruction more intelligible and reduces learner anxiety, though overreliance on L1 use may demotivate learners (e.g., Chavez, 2003; Levine, 2003; Macaro, 1997; Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008). In order to further examine learners' attitudes in this regard, the present study addressed the following questions: What are Japanese college student views on L1 use in ELT? Are the aforementioned pedagogical functions and/or dangers of L1 use revealed in student perceptions?

### The study

The study's specific aim was to explore Japanese college student views on L1 use

in ELT, in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context. The study considered situations where the English teachers and students share a common L1 (Japanese) in most of the lessons, but students sometimes have an opportunity to take English conversation classes from native English-speaking teachers (mainly from the United States or England) who may have little proficiency in Japanese. In such an EFL context, the classroom is the main or only source of student exposure to the TL (English).

Previously, relying on qualitative data, Saito (2018) investigated Japanese college student perceptions of L1 use in ELT. The results of this study on the pedagogical functions of L1 use suggested that college students appreciate L1 use in a variety of situations, in contrast to numerous studies suggesting that English teachers tend to have a sense of guilt in using learners' L1 in lessons. In order to enhance the quality of the relevant data, drawing on Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008), the present study employed both qualitative and quantitative forms of data collection and analysis, and investigated to what extent the respective results of the two forms of analysis were mutually supporting.

Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008) argue that understanding student views is indispensable in language education, "as it allows prediction of areas of conflict between learners and teachers and may help to foster better communication in the language classroom" (p. 250). Like their study, conducted in Australia, the research conducted in Japan, regarding L1 use in ELT, aims to critically assist in improving our understanding of communication between teachers and learners in language education.

## Procedure

The study was conducted at a private college

in Japan. The research participants were first-year students of the college, who were enrolled in comprehensive English and TOEIC preparation classes, both as required subjects. Similarly to Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008), the study was based on a questionnaire that consisted of two sections (see Appendix). The first contained 11 closed questions which were answered on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The second comprised two open-ended questions asking the participants to list three or more advantages and disadvantages of using L1 (Japanese) in English classes. The closed questions assessed student perceptions in four main areas of particular relevance to the study: primarily TL or TL-only instruction (Questions 4, 7, 10); core goals of L1 use in teaching the TL (1, 2, 3); framework goals of L1 use in managing the classroom situation (5, 6); and social goals of L1 use in expressing personal concern and sympathy as teachers, and supporting identity as learners (8, 9, 11).

The questionnaire was administered to 52 first-year students (26 students from comprehensive English and 26 from TOEIC preparation classes) in January 2018. At the time of its administration, 10 months had passed since the start of their college life, making them accustomed to the college learning environment. First, quantitative analysis of the responses to the 11 closed-questions was conducted, followed by qualitative analysis of the responses to the two open-ended questions. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze student responses to the 11 closed questions, in order to calculate the frequency of respective answers to each question. The qualitative analysis was based on two lists of written responses, one describing the advantages of L1 use (Japanese) in English classes, and the

other the disadvantages of such L1 use. The qualitative data was analyzed according to the four main areas of particular relevance to the study, which were the focus of the closed questions. Thus, the overall structure of the study was based on four categories: (1) student views on L1 use for core goals, (2) student views on L1 use for framework goals, (3) student views on L1 use for social goals, and (4) student views on perceived dangers of L1 use. The questionnaire was administered in the students' L1 (Japanese), and the students' written comments were translated into English by the author.

## Findings and Discussion

This section focuses on the abovementioned four categories, and the results of the quantitative analysis are compared with the interpretation of the qualitative data.

### Student Views on L1 Use for Core Goals

This category focuses on students' learning of the TL (English). A majority of students appear to view L1 use as helpful for learning grammar, vocabulary (English words and phrases), and translation. Regarding the learning of grammar, student comments indicate that L1 can facilitate the understanding of English grammar when teachers explain complex or difficult grammatical structures:

English alone is not enough for the detailed explanation of English grammar. Use of Japanese, on the other hand, can explain difficult elements in detail. (Student #42)

Use of Japanese helps me to learn English grammar precisely for English examinations. (Student #46)

The response frequencies for Closed Question 1 reveal a similar preference for L1 use when

teachers are explaining the grammatical structure of the TL: 46 students (88%) strongly agree or agree that L1 use makes understanding grammatical explanations easier, 6 (12%) neither agree nor disagree, and none disagree or strongly disagree.

In terms of vocabulary (English words and phrases), student comments tended to suggest that L1 use makes understanding vocabulary explanation easier as well:

I often fail to properly hear difficult English words in English-only lessons. On the other hand, use of Japanese makes it easier to understand them. (Student #18)

Instruction with Japanese use makes it easier to understand the meaning of difficult English words. (Student #40)

Use of Japanese helps me understand the meaning of English words and sentences. (Student #48)

The quantitative analysis of Closed Question 2, concerning vocabulary (English words and phrases), shows a high frequency of agreement with these comments: 39 students (75%) strongly agree or agree that explanation with L1 use makes it easier to understand the meaning of English vocabulary, 11 (21%) neither agree nor disagree, 2 (4%) disagree, and none strongly disagree.

Student responses to the open-ended question regarding the advantages of L1 use suggest that translation is useful for understanding English:

English-only lessons makes it difficult to understand the meaning of English sentences and important points of lessons, but translation into Japanese makes it easier to understand English. (Student #1)

Quantitative analysis of the responses to Closed Question 3 indicates that students tend to understand long sentences better if the TL is

translated into the L1. In this case, 42 students (81%) strongly agree or agree that translation into the L1 enables them to better understand long sentences in the TL, 7 (13%) neither agree nor disagree, 3 (6%) disagree, and none strongly disagree.

The results of qualitative and quantitative analysis suggest that students appreciate L1 use for learning the TL. Supporting these results, Widdowson (1978) suggested that learners can draw upon their knowledge of how their L1 is used to communicate, and can make use of translation, because learners should conceive of the TL in the same way as they conceive of their L1, and use the TL in the same way, as a means of communication. In theoretical support of this approach, Cummins (2007) claimed that learning is likely to be more efficient if teachers draw learners' attention to the similarities and differences between the L1 and TL, coordinating and reinforcing learning strategies across languages. In pedagogical support, Duff and Polio's study (1990) suggested that teachers were more likely to use the learners' L1 when it was notably different from the TL in terms of writing system or grammar. Thus, in the present study, "easy to understand" is found in almost every student's open-ended response regarding the advantages of L1, indicating the significant importance of L1 use for learning the TL. The students may have relied more on the L1 (Japanese) because the structure of the TL (English) is quite different from that of the L1 in terms of grammar and writing system, unlike the relatively minor differences among Indo-European languages.

The expressions, "easy to ask questions" and "easy to communicate" in L1, are also observed in many students' written responses regarding the advantages of L1 use. This may be explained from the sociocultural perspective that asserts

that language learning is a collaborative process driven by social interaction (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf, 2000). From this perspective, L1 use is regarded as a cognitive process for learners, through which learning is facilitated. L1 use, such as in asking questions and pair work between students, enables learners to work with teachers or experts at a level that may otherwise be beyond their reach, and facilitates communication when communication in the TL fails.

The results further indicate that students tend to appreciate translation into L1, in order to understand long TL sentences, though distrust of translation has been deeply ingrained in ELT for many years, in favor of monolingual TL instruction. The results may at least suggest a need to pay attention to Cook's (2010) argument that in many contexts translation is a natural and effective means of learning the TL, improves important skills, answers students' needs, and protects their linguistic and cultural identity. In addition, current SLA research, such as Laufer and Girsai (2008), supports the conceptions of "noticing" and "focusing on forms," and advocates the effectiveness of contrastive analysis and translation as one of the strategies for form-focused instruction.

Furthermore, expressions such as "can save time for learning," "can learn lessons quickly," and "lessons go smoothly" are observed in many qualitative responses describing the advantages of L1 use:

I can understand quickly because the use of Japanese can save time in understanding English and make me focus on the content. Lessons go smoothly because the use of Japanese can reduce the need for repeating explanations, while English-only lessons require time for things to be explained in a comprehensible way. (Student #7)

English-only lessons make me tired because I need to concentrate too much on listening. (Student #23)

These student responses indicate that L1 use can facilitate learning by reducing the processing load for learners during cognitively challenging tasks (Hall & Cook 2012). In this connection, Macaro (2006) noted that L1 use in classroom discourse can lighten the cognitive load on learners, and provide efficient shortcuts in the learning process employed by learners.

Thus, overall, the results concerning student views on L1 use for core goals suggest that TL lessons in the classroom do not preclude L1 use, because such use provides effective shortcuts in the learning process, which may otherwise be lengthened and rendered more difficult in TL-only lessons.

#### Student Views on L1 Use for Framework Goals

Framework goals are associated with English teachers' administration, organization, and management of classroom activities. Responses to the open-ended questions regarding the advantages of L1 use suggest that students tend to appreciate use of the L1 in classroom management, such as explanations of class outlines and activities:

Since I can understand class outlines better, I can participate in activities more easily. (Student #5)

I can follow instructions easily in Japanese, which makes lessons go smoothly. (Student #18)

I cannot understand English-only lessons at all, and am confused about what I should do in response to their instructions. (Student #25)

The use of Japanese made it easier to understand today's class activity. (Student #47)

Results of the quantitative analysis of Closed Question 5, concerning classroom management, indicate a high frequency of agreement with such comments: 37 students (71%) strongly agree or agree that teachers should give instructions (about classroom outlines, assignments, details of testing and assessment) in L1, 11 (21%) neither agree nor disagree, 3 (6%) disagree, and 1 (2%) strongly disagrees. Thus, L1 use appears to support the management of classroom events, by providing better opportunities for students to grasp lesson objectives in the overall context of classroom activities, in order to avoid confusion and create a less threatening learning environment.

Included in the category of framework goals is the management of instructions for English examinations; in this case, L1 use for teaching important points or techniques in preparation for English examinations such as the TOEIC and English proficiency examinations. Though L1 use in such instructions overlaps somewhat with L1 use for core goals, the goal here is not merely instruction in the TL itself, but also instruction regarding what the English examination will cover, such as patterns of past examination questions and predicting future examination questions. In response to the open-ended question concerning the advantages of L1 use in this regard, no explicit references to English exam preparation are observed; however, frequent student expressions such as "easy to understand the explanation of difficult elements" may well include understanding more easily the explanation of English examination questions.

In support of this, quantitative analysis of the responses to Closed Question 6, concerning English examinations, indicates a high frequency of agreement that L1 use is effective in this regard: 45 students (87%) strongly

agree or agree that L1 should be used for the explanation of techniques for passing English proficiency examinations, 7 (13%) neither agree nor disagree, and none disagree or strongly disagree. The results suggest that clear and detailed L1 technical explanation for passing exams and completing assignments satisfies students' practical, real-world needs.

Cook (2001) supports the importance of L1 use for framework goals, by suggesting that teachers' L1 use was effective for task organization, maintenance of discipline, contact with individual students, and testing. Supporting the framework functionality of L1 use, Medgyes (1994) also suggests that nonnative English teachers who share with their students the same cultural, educational, and linguistic background are familiar with the general educational goals related to curricular and exam requirements.

### Student Views on L1 Use for Social Goals

This category primarily focuses on the use of L1 in creating a better affective, emotional, sympathetic, and interpersonal environment for supporting students' learning in the English classroom. Student responses to the open-ended question regarding the advantages of L1 use appear to confirm the emotional security provided by L1 use, because roughly half the students (25) used expressions such as "I am reassured," "I have an affinity," and "easy to talk:"

Easy to take lessons and I feel a sense of security. (Student #12)

I can relax because it is easy to communicate. (Student #31)

I can relax because I can understand lessons. (Student #39)

Words of encouragement in Japanese motivate me to study English. (Student #40)

The frequencies for Closed Question 8, concerning

the reassuring role of L1 use, reflect these student comments: 42 students (81%) strongly agree or agree that they feel a sense of security when teachers use L1 in class, 9 (17%) neither agree nor disagree, 1 (2%) disagrees, and none strongly disagree.

Closed Question 9 focused on student perceptions of the relationship between L1 use and human contact in class. Here, 25 students (48%) strongly agree or agree that L1 use is better for human contact with English teachers in class, 23 (44%) neither agree nor disagree, 3 (6%) disagree, and 1 (2%) strongly disagrees. Some students may perceive that TL use with a human touch can also facilitate communication with their teachers, while others may conceive of such use as overreliance on the L1. Since the mean of the response is 2.6 on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree), the main tendency inclines toward agreement with the statement; however, further in-depth investigation is required to explain the somewhat lower percentage of agreement in this case.

The qualitative and quantitative analysis of student responses regarding the emotional domain of L1 use suggest that such use plays a role in reducing classroom anxiety and helping to create a sense of community in the classroom, by enhancing positive relationships between teacher and students and giving students a better opportunity to participate in lesson activities. Littlewood & Yu (2011), for example, highlight the reassuring role that the learners' L1 can play in class, counteracting the potentially alienating effects of monolingual teaching; while Allwright and Bailey (1991) suggest that banning learners' use of the L1 deprives them of their normal means of communication, which supports normal human behavior. Similarly, Cook (2001) highlights

the naturalness of L1 use, which encourages learners to express themselves in an authentic manner, rather than taking on assumed TL personas.

Furthermore, Auerbach (1993) emphasizes that L1 use “reduces anxiety and enhances the affective environment for learning, takes into account sociocultural factors, facilitates incorporation of learners’ life experiences, and allows for learner-centered curriculum development” (p. 20). Meanwhile, reflecting the student comment above, regarding words of encouragement in L1, Schweers (1999) highlights the role of L1 in encouraging learner motivation and positive attitudes towards the TL. Thus, a significant body of research suggests that L1 use is effective in the affective domain, as illustrated by formulations such as “the affective-humanistic benefits of mother tongue use,” “affective and interpersonal functions of L1 use,” and “L1 use for promoting class unity and identity in a variety of ELT contexts” (e.g., Camilleri, 1996; Nikula, 2007; Stibbard, 1998).

Closed Question 11 explored students’ identity as learners in EFL contexts. Here, 19 students (36%) strongly agree or agree that L1 use in English classes is a natural form of support for the self as a learner, 28 (54%) neither agree nor disagree, and 5 (10%) disagree. The quantitative results indicate a relatively neutral position on the students’ part, partly owing, perhaps, to difficulty in articulating their response to identity issues. Additional research, such as a case study with in-depth interviews, may be needed in order to investigate the complicated issues of identity, which vary with the social context.

However, L1 use in ELT may be significant not only in pedagogical terms (i.e., how language is learned), but also with respect to learners’

sense of who they are and what they want to be in an era of globalization. This double significance would appear to be illustrated by the present study, because the students’ sense of security through L1 use is clear from the data, suggesting that the L1 is the strongest identity marker in their everyday lives. In addition, much recent ESL research has focused on speaker identity support in various social contexts, promoting the embrace of a multi-lingual community (e.g., Norton, 2000; Seidlhofer 2011).

### Student Views on Perceived Dangers of L1 Use

This category focuses on the drawbacks of L1 use, from the students’ perspective. Perceived dangers of L1 use include lack of exposure to TL, overuse of L1, and dependence on L1 use. A number of student responses regarding the disadvantages of L1 use in English lessons illustrate the first of these perceived dangers:

Less time of exposure to English. (Student #5)

Less time in English conversation. (Student #14)

English lessons give me the only opportunity to expose myself to English. So use of Japanese lessons exposure to English. (Student #23)

Less opportunity of exposure to English. (Student #33)

These remarks indicate that students regard exposure to the TL as an advantage in learning the language. Such exposure allows learners to acquire comprehensive proficiency in English, while L1 use impedes this type of learning:

Cannot improve my proficiency in English. (Student #32)

Difficult to achieve English proficiency. (Student #39)

A number of responses clearly indicate that

learning the TL becomes difficult without sufficient exposure to it. Among the English proficiency skills mentioned, a number of students appear to find it hard to improve listening comprehension skills with L1 use.

A decline in my listening comprehension due to less opportunity to listen to English. (Student #7)

Cannot improve my listening comprehension. (Student #10)

Much use of Japanese makes it difficult to understand spoken English. (Student #16)

Furthermore, exposure to the TL enables learners to acquire English pronunciation. Thus, some respondents consider L1 use as disadvantageous because it does not allow them to work on the phonetic features of the TL:

Difficult to learn English pronunciation. (Student #11)

Learn pronunciation like Japanese instead of learning English pronunciation. (Student #22)

Cannot learn native English pronunciation. (Student #40)

Though some worry that L1 use has a negative influence on the acquisition of TL pronunciation, a majority of students find L1 use helpful for learning grammar, vocabulary, and translation. Nonetheless, exposure to the TL is typically perceived to foster practical use of the foreign language, whereas L1 use is viewed as conducive to artificial learning, which prevents students from learning English spoken in real settings.

Less opportunity to learn real-life English, not what you find in textbooks. (Student #3)

Not practical due to exposure to Japanese. (Student #8)

Panic when speaking English in a real situation. (Student #27)

Cannot improve English communication

skill. (Student #33)

Cannot enjoy other aspects of learning the language, such as foreign gestures. (Student # 40)

These responses show that L1 use is perceived as detrimental to learning the practical English used in real-life situations typical of English speaking countries. Thus, the word “real” is observed in a number of student comments extolling the English spoken by native English speakers. Some worry that they may lack command of practical English when they visit foreign countries, and one respondent even suggests that L1 use in class impedes the learning of paralinguistic features; that is, non-vocal linguistic phenomena such as facial expressions and gestures.

In addition to lack of exposure to the TL, another perceived disadvantage for learning the TL is overuse of the L1; that is, excessive use of the L1 in the classroom:

Tend to speak too much Japanese, and an effort to learn English comes to nothing. (Student #1)

Speaking much Japanese results in students' whispering in class, which impedes lessons. (Student #48)

As the above comments suggest, some students complain about excessive L1 use, which, among other things, disrupts classroom management. Such overuse of the L1 is also perceived by some to result in cognitive dependence on the L1, which hampers language learning due to lack of attention to the TL:

Rely on Japanese and I do not speak English. (Student #16)

Become dependent on Japanese because it is easy to speak. (Student #31)

These comments indicate that students may feel difficulty in freeing themselves from the L1. Dependence on the L1, focusing on L1

explanations without TL linguistic input, may thus have a negative effect on the cognitive process of thinking in the TL:

Dependence on Japanese creates the habit of thinking in Japanese even in English lessons, and does not aid in the acquisition of practical English. (Student #45)

In addition to its perceived disbenefit to the cognitive process, dependence on L1 may demotivate learners by reducing their willingness to learn the TL:

Weakens the desperate effort to listen and understand English. (Student #25)

The sense of security due to L1 use impedes the effort to listen to English. (Student #34)

Dependence on Japanese does not improve the ability to think for yourself and learn English. It is an escape route for learners. (Student #44)

In sum, some students perceive dangers in L1 use, impairing their ability and motivation to learn TL, while they appreciate exposure to TL, which increases the motivation to concentrate on learning the language for practical use.

The closed questions of relevance to perceived dangers of L1 use are Questions 4, 7, and 10, which assess students' perceptions of instruction either solely or mainly in the TL. The responses to Closed Question 4, concerning TL-only instruction, indicate neutrality or relative disagreement: 1 student (2%) strongly agrees that English teachers should use only the TL in the classroom, none agree, 27 (52%) neither agree nor disagree, 23 (44%) disagree, and 1 (2%) strongly disagrees. Notably, however, in response to the open-ended question, the one student who agreed with TL-only instruction also noted advantages of L1 use. In general, since the central tendency is 3.4 on the 5-point Likert scale, students' perception would appear to be neutral or somewhat in disagreement

with TL-only instruction.

The responses to Closed Question 7, focusing on primarily TL instruction, indicate a neutral perception: 17 students (33%) strongly agree or agree that English teachers should use the TL most of the time in class but explain difficult parts in the L1, 21 (40%) neither agree nor disagree, 14 (27%) disagree, and none strongly disagree. The difference in the frequency of responses between Questions 4 and 7 reveals that students tend to prefer primarily TL instruction to TL-only instruction in the language classroom. Closed Question 10 is a reversal of Questions 4 and 7, to test the reliability of the latter two questions. Here, 16 students (31%) strongly agree or agree that excessive use of the L1 by English teachers hampers the learning of the real-life and practical TL, 27 (52%) neither agree nor disagree, 8 (15%) disagree, and 1 (2%) strongly disagrees. The results indicate a high percentage of neutral response, echoing the neutral tendency of the responses to Questions 4 and 7.

The qualitative and quantitative analysis of student responses regarding the perceived dangers of L1 use suggest that students attribute a positive role to TL exposure, with respect to learning the language for practical use; however, their perception of the dangers in L1 use does not argue for eliminating L1 use in the classroom. These results support those of Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008).

### Summary of Findings and Discussion

This section summarizes the analysis of the results for the four categories discussed in the previous section. In the context of this study, students see a role for L1 use in pursuing core functional language-learning goals, with the open-ended responses indicating that L1 use

is effective for explaining the grammatical system of the TL, and facilitates access to vocabulary meaning and translation. The closed-question responses also indicate that L1 use is conducive to learning the linguistic features of the TL. Similar conclusions were reached in several studies (e.g., Chaves, 2003; Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008), which showed that learners appreciate L1 use in acquiring grammatical knowledge. The student responses appear to support key theoretical elements of psycholinguistic, sociocultural, and SLA perspectives, as discussed in the Introduction. At the same time, neutral attitudes on the part of a significant minority of the students should be a focus for further research, to investigate the individual characteristics of these students, such as their language learning aptitude and overseas experiences.

Students also see a role for L1 use in pursuing framework functional goals, with their open-ended question responses suggesting that they perceive L1 use as effective for classroom management, including instruction related to English examinations. In addition, the quantitative analysis shows that a majority of students give preference to L1 use in such management. In support of this, Macaro's study (1997) reported agreement among English high school students in favor of conducting classroom management in the L1, while Chavez (2003) reached a similar conclusion in the contest of a U.S. university. Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008), on the other hand, reached a slightly different quantitative conclusion, in favor of TL use, at an Australian university, due to the teachers' employment of successful TL teaching techniques.

With regard to the functionality of social goals for creating an affective and emotionally stable environment in TL lessons, the present

study's qualitative and quantitative analysis indicates that L1 use appears to play a role in alleviating classroom anxiety and helping to establish positive relationships between teacher and learner. Moreover, abundant research suggests affective domain benefits from L1 use in TL classrooms, in various social contexts (e.g., Auerbach, 1993; Cook, 2001; Schweers, 1999). One closed question (No. 11), focusing on student identity by exploring the naturalness of L1 use in supporting the self as a learner, received a neutral response, between agreement and disagreement. Further, longitudinal research, with in-depth interviews, would help to elucidate such complex issues of identity in this respect.

While students value the abovementioned core, framework, and social functionality of L1 use, they nonetheless view such use as having some drawbacks. Their open-ended question responses indicate a perception that lack of exposure to the TL and dependence on the L1, which may result from excessive L1 use, not only impede TL learning, but also demotivate students by reducing their willingness to learn the TL; while their closed question responses suggest that the students somewhat prefer primarily TL instruction to TL-only instruction, suggesting that their perception does not preclude L1 use. Given their positive view of L1 functionality, yet concern about the perceived dangers of L1 use, the students would appear to hold somewhat conflicting views on L1 use in TL learning; a similar conclusion to that reached by Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008).

## Conclusion

The results of the study suggest that Japanese college students see a positive role for L1 use

in terms of its core, framework, and social functionality. In particular, L1 use is perceived to perform a valuable core function in the acquisition of explicit linguistic knowledge of the TL, framework function in the management of classroom activities, and social function in reducing classroom anxiety. L1 would appear to be indispensable for TL learning, especially in contexts where learners share a common language with the teacher (Hall & Cook, 2012; Medgyes, 1994). At the same time, students are aware of the need for exposure to the TL, in order to gain practical ability in the language.

The view that students need both languages for language learning is a first step toward researching optimum strategies for maximizing TL use. The student views here analyzed could be reframed in terms of the concept of translanguaging in content and language integrated learning (CLIL). In defining the concept, Ikeda (2017) suggests that it involves proactive and reactive learning activities and interactions, where learners actively and purposefully use L1 and TL in order to maximize their acquisition of context-specific knowledge and academic language proficiency. Further research is needed to investigate the optimal L1/TL distribution, taking account of contextual factors such as teacher training, learners' proficiency in the TL, department policies, etc.

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## Appendix

- statement (1. Strongly agree; 2. Agree; 3. Neither agree nor disagree; 4. Disagree; 5. Strongly disagree).
1. I find it easier to understand English grammar when English teachers explain it in Japanese.
  2. I find it easier to understand English words (phrases) when English teachers explain them in Japanese.
  3. I find it easier to understand long English sentences when English teachers translate them into Japanese.
  4. English teachers should only use English in the classroom.
  5. English teachers should give instructions (about classroom outlines, assignments, details of testing and assessment) in Japanese.
  6. English teachers should use Japanese for the explanation of important techniques for passing English proficiency examinations.
  7. English teachers should use English most of the time in class, only using Japanese to explain difficult elements.
  8. I feel a sense of security when English teachers use Japanese in class.
  9. I think it better to have human contact in Japanese with English teachers in class.
  10. When English teachers often use Japanese in the classroom, it impedes the learning of real-life, practical English.
  11. It feels natural to use Japanese in English lessons, to support the self as a learner.
- Q2. List three or more advantages of using Japanese in English classes.
- Q3. List three or more disadvantages of using Japanese in English classes.