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**Interactions in the multilingual classroom:
A case study of teacher beliefs and student attitudes on
L1 use in multilingual classrooms**

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Abstract

The subject of L1 use in target language classrooms has been the object of debate among practitioners of second and foreign language teaching. As second language learners are de facto speakers of another language, student use of L1 remains a core feature of second language (L2) or target language (TL) classrooms, making the L1 almost impossible to eliminate. Despite increasing literature supporting the L1 as playing instrumental cognitive and affective roles that enhance L2 or TL learning, the English-only approach has been preferred and prescribed by both official and non-official policies in English Language Teaching.

This thesis explores English language teacher beliefs and student attitudes about L1 use in multilingual classrooms in a New Zealand university language centre. A mixed method approach has been employed in order to obtain a more holistic view of the participants' beliefs and attitudes. Results indicate that despite an English-only rule, both teachers and students view L1 use in the classroom setting as a potentially beneficial language learning tool - especially at lower levels. However, teachers and students generally perceived English as the preferred in-class instruction language due to the students studying in a New Zealand university environment. Tensions emerged when the teachers perceived an over-reliance on student L1 use in the classroom most especially due to lack of English language proficiency and/or lack of interest to participate in classroom activities in English. The thesis concludes with recommendations on how the monolingual rule can be modified to reflect the multilingual classroom environment and how students could be made more aware of classroom expectations in a New Zealand university prior to arrival.

Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
List of figures	ix
List of tables	x
List of abbreviations/acronyms	xii
1 Introduction	1
The position of the first language in an English language classroom: The L1-L2 debate.....	1
My interest in the L1-L2 debate.....	5
Chapter outline	10
2 English language education	11
The rise of English as a global language	11
The prestige of having an English arsenal	12
Background of the English-only approach	15
The monolingual fallacy.....	18
In defence of the L1.....	19
Reasons for allowing strategic L1 use.....	20
Teacher L1 use as a pedagogical tool.....	21
Student L1 use as a cognitive language learning tool.....	21
L1 use as a communicative / social tool between students-students and teacher-students	22
L1 as an affective tool for students	22

L1 use as a representation of identity.....	23
The L1-L2 continuum.....	24
Overview.....	24
3 Beliefs and attitudes about teaching and learning L2	26
Teacher education and teaching experience: Constructing teacher beliefs.....	26
Teacher beliefs.....	28
Factors influencing teacher beliefs	29
Language teacher beliefs about first language use in the English classroom.	30
Teacher beliefs about negotiating English-only policies.....	31
Student attitudes about first language use within a university context	32
Internationalisation: Multilingual classrooms in New Zealand universities.....	36
Research questions	39
4 Methodology.....	42
A case study approach.....	42
Research context	43
Research design	47
From one instrument to three	47
Justification of instruments	48
Focus groups.....	48
Student written questionnaires.....	49
Classroom observations.....	49
Triangulation of instruments.....	50
Ethical considerations and ethics approval	51
Avoiding conflicts of interest at work.....	51

Maintaining confidentiality	52
Design of the written student questionnaire.....	52
Distribution of the questionnaires.....	53
Implementation of the instruments.....	54
Piloting the focus group questions and written student questionnaire.....	55
Focus groups for English language teacher participants.....	56
Content lecturers	57
Classroom observations	59
Written student questionnaires.....	60
Summary.....	60
5 Teacher responses	62
Justifications for L1 use	63
Student identity.....	63
Affective filtering.....	66
Cognitive learning tool.....	68
Justifications for maximising English use.....	71
Classroom etiquette.....	71
Target language environment.....	73
University context.....	74
Practice makes perfect.....	75
Factors mitigating the extent of L1 or English use in the classroom.....	76
Proficiency	77
Class make-up.....	78
Motivation	79

Tensions and complexities in practice: Balancing differing values	80
L1 use as a means to save face but	81
L1 use is part of the multilingual classroom but	82
Dictionaries are a good resource but	84
Summary	86
6 Student responses	88
Background of the student participants.....	90
Age and course of study.....	90
Ethnicity and first languages	91
Length of time having studied English.....	92
Beliefs about first language use while learning English and reasons for using the first language in the classroom.....	93
Student attitudes about first language and English use by both students and teachers in the classroom.....	97
Reasons for using English in the classroom	102
Factors affecting L1 and English use in the classroom.....	104
Overview.....	105
7 Research reflections and discussion	108
In an ideal situation	108
A communicative approach: English as the lingua franca in a multilingual environment.....	109
The situated learning context.....	110
The nature of the courses	112
In the real world	115

Diglossia in the English language classroom: English as the language of education.....	115
Teacher beliefs and student attitudes regarding L1 use.....	117
L1 use as a reflection of the students' identity as L2 speakers	118
L1 use as a learning resource	119
L1 use as a coping mechanism	120
L1 use as an affective filter.....	123
Summary.....	125
8 Conclusion.....	127
The implications of multiculturalism on the L1-L2 debate.....	127
Research objectives	129
Research questions and design.....	129
Limitations and recommendations for further research	136
Implications from theory to practice.....	137
References	140
List of appendices.....	158

List of figures

Figure 1	A notice board in a student common area delineating an 'English only' zone	6
Figure 2	Kachru's concentric circles	12
Figure 3	The overlapping factors contributing to the extent of first language and English use in a classroom	105
Figure 4	English-only zone	108
Figure 5	Advertisement of one of the university bridging courses on the university website	113

List of tables

Table 1	Summary of English language course offered at the Centre C4 methodology	44
Table 2	Summary of teacher participants	58
Table 3	Summary of relevant themes emerging from teacher focus group discussions	63
Table 4	How old are you & which course are you currently studying?	90
Table 5	What is your first language?	91
Table 6	How long have you been studying English?	92
Table 7	When I learn English, I ... (<i>General English and university bridging participants</i>)	93
Table 8	Student beliefs about first language use in the English classroom (<i>General English and university bridging participants</i>)	94
Table 9	When I am in my English classroom, I translate to and from my first language ... (<i>General English participants</i>)	96
Table 10	When I am in my English classroom, I translate to and from my first language ... (<i>University bridging participants</i>)	96
Table 11	Other reasons for using the first language in the English classroom (<i>both General English and University bridging participants</i>)	97
Table 12	Do you agree or disagree with these statements? (<i>General English i.e. 17 international participants</i>)	98
Table 13	Do you agree or disagree with these statements? (<i>University bridging courses i.e 21 international students</i>)	98

Table 14	Do you agree or disagree with these statements? <i>(University bridging courses i.e. 7 New Zealand students)</i>	99
Table 15	Student beliefs about first language use in the English classroom <i>(General English participants)</i>	101
Table 16	Student beliefs about first language use in the English classroom <i>(University bridging participants)</i>	101
Table 17	Reasons for using English in the classroom <i>(both General English and university bridging students)</i>	102

List of abbreviations/acronyms

ELT	English Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
TL	Target language
L1	First language
L2	Second language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System