The L2 as Language of Instruction: Teachers Explore the Competing Tensions

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Introduction

Primary, if not exclusive, use of the second language (L2) has long been considered a foundational principle of second language pedagogy due, in part, to the influence of the communicative approach, the emphasis on proficiency-oriented instruction, and research on the role of input in the language acquisition process. Though many instructors support L2 use on a theoretical level, some find its implementation in daily classroom practice to be challenging, particularly in beginning- and intermediate-level classes.

Given the many undergraduates who must complete a language requirement and what Cross and Goldenberg (2002) describe as a general lack of tenured faculty interest in lower-level courses, non-tenure track faculty play a particularly central role in foreign and second language programs. The ever-growing number of adjunct[1] instructors in university classrooms has drawn attention to their significant role in the undergraduate educational experience (Norton 2001), perhaps especially at large, research-oriented universities. Concern has been voiced over the quality of instruction imparted by these non-tenure track faculty (Gilbert 1998) due to the challenges of their work environment (Brand 2002, Sullivan 1999). Recognizing these challenges as well as adjuncts' contribution to undergraduate education, some universities have taken steps to foster their professional development (Burnstad 2002) and improve their conditions of employment by creating long-term positions with benefits and "reasonable salaries" (Brand 2002, 19).

Though Truby (2003), a lecturer herself, describes non-tenure track faculty's professional joys and frustrations, few studies have focused on their pedagogical beliefs. The present study, based primarily on individual interviews with adjunct instructors, explores their beliefs about various aspects of language teaching such as the use of collaborative work, the teaching of grammar, and the language used for instruction. Their observations raise particularly important issues about L1/L2 use that are relevant to a variety of language teaching contexts. Their insightful and realistic observations highlight the need for additional research to explore the impact of teachers' L1 use in the L2 classroom. Finally, this study affirms the potential benefits of making teachers and their concerns a central, driving force in research on language learning and teaching.

Review of Previous Research

The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (National Standards 1999), developed through the collaborative efforts of a number of professional organizations dedicated to foreign language teaching, address the knowledge and skills that language learners need to be successful. As such, they have implications for foreign language methodology and daily classroom practice; and, for that reason, teachers' familiarity with and beliefs about these standards have been the object of recent investigation (Allen 2002).

One issue addressed by the standards is the positive relationship between the predominant use of the second or target language (TL) and effective language instruction. The first standard, Communication, is described as preparing students to "communicate in languages other than English" (National Standards 1999). This communication includes interpretive skills such as listening, as indicated in Standard 1.2: "students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics." Use of the L1 as the predominant language of instruction would slow, if not limit, the development of these skills.

This emphasis on teaching primarily in L2 is also reflected in current research, for instance, analyses of the quantity of L1 and L2 actually used in language classrooms (Duff and Polio 1990; Polio and Duff 1994; Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie 2002; Levine 2003). Research conducted within the framework of sociocultural theory has explored the role of L1 (Brooks and Donato 1994; Antón and DiCamilla 1998; Swain and Lapkin 2000). From the sociocultural perspective "language is understood as a mediating tool in all forms of higher-order mental processing" (Swain and Lapkin 2000, p. 253). Working together to carry out L2 tasks, learners socially construct knowledge that later becomes the building block for further individual L2 development. Brooks and Donato (1994), for example, found that student pairs involved in a two-way information gap activity used English for metatalk, "metacognition 'out loud' " (p. 267). While the researchers do not encourage L1 use, they note that "it is a normal psycholinguistic process that facilitates L2 production" (p. 268).

In their analysis of learner performance on a collaborative task, Swain and Lapkin (2000) attributed even greater significance to L1 use. They noted that the L1 helped students carry out the task effectively, enabling them to better understand the exercise, and to focus on language form, vocabulary, and organization as well as to negotiate their own collaboration. Ultimately, they maintain that "judicious use of the L1 can indeed support L2 learning and use" (Swain and Lapkin 2000, p. 268).

Antón and DiCamilla (1998) also analyze learners' performance on collaborative tasks and identify specific functions of the L1. The L1 fulfills interpsychological functions by providing scaffolded help that enables learners to access L2 linguistic forms and facilitates the construction of intersubjectivity or "a shared perspective on the task" (p. 240). The L1 also fulfills an intrapsychological function in private speech, that is, the externalization of language that reveals an individual's cognitive processing. Noting the importance of the L1 in collaborative activities, Antón and DiCamilla (1998) conclude:

> To prohibit the use of L1 in the classroom situations we have described removes, in effect, two powerful tools for learning: the L1 and effective collaboration, which depends, as our study shows, on students' freedom to deploy this critical psychological tool to meet the demands of the task learning a second language (p. 245).

While these studies provide insight into and support students' L1 use, specifically in collaborative contexts, they do not directly address teachers' use of the L1.

Cook (2001) tackles the issue of the L1 as a language of instruction, claiming that "it is time to open a door that has been firmly shut in language teaching for over 100 years, namely the systematic use of the first language" (p. 403). Although cur-

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rent teaching methodologies are based on avoidance of L1, teachers do use it and, in fact, may experience considerable guilt for doing so. Cook (2001) suggests that this guilt be alleviated by "licensing" teachers to use L1 and looking for ways to employ the L1 more positively, such as when it improves efficiency, enhances L2 learning, helps participants feel more comfortable with certain topics or functions, or prepares students for functions outside the classroom. Cook (1999) also identifies L1 use as one factor that steers L2 teaching toward "helping people use L2s, not imitate native speakers" (p. 204).

L1 use has also been explored from a sociolinguistic perspective. Blyth (1995) argues that the L2 classroom should be viewed as a multilingual speech community. As such, he maintains that students are multilingual nonnative speakers and supports multiple language use as reflective of the linguistic diversity in the L2 classroom. Learners' identity within this community is complex, and Belz (2003) examines the association between L1 or multiple language use and the conceptualization of learners as deficient, rather than multicompetent, language users. Finally, Chavez (2003) reports that students in her research "clearly viewed their speech community, the classroom, as diglossic. This functional divide generally apportioned the most pressing and genuine communicative purposes to the L1" (p. 193). She adds, "Without a concomitant increase in L2 proficiency, the enforced exclusive use of the L1 will mean that certain language functions will have to be reduced in scope or eliminated altogether" (p. 194).

While acknowledging the potential role of L1, others, however, express concern over teachers' excessive reliance on students' native language; in fact, the "guilt" teachers experience according to Cook (2001) is viewed by others as "positive pressures" that "[encourage] them to speak as much TL as possible" (Turnbull 2001, p. 537). The reasons teachers give for not teaching in the target language can also be framed in less neutral terms as "problems" or excuses (Franklin 1990).

The present analysis, then, considers the issue of teachers' language use from the perspective of several adjunct instructors. How do they describe their own L1/L2 use and how do they view or frame the L2 as a language of instruction?

Participants

The limited number of participants[2] in the present study reflects its preliminary, exploratory nature. Its aim is not to provide statistically significant generalizations but rather a close-up look at several individuals whose experiences reflect the diversity of the adjunct population.

This study focuses on adjunct instructors for several reasons. Given their non-tenured status, adjuncts typically have less authority with which to question departmental and professional expectations. Second, they often represent a diverse group in terms of age, professional training, teaching background, and life experience. Furthermore, as universities confront inadequate funds and limited tenure lines, the role of adjunct instructors becomes even more significant and controversial. Finally, because most adjuncts in language departments are hired primarily to teach language courses, as opposed to courses in literature, culture, or linguistics, their sense of professional identity may be particularly tied to this responsibility. Consequently, their views of language teaching, and of themselves as teachers, are likely centered around first- and second- year courses in which the issue of the language of instruction is particularly relevant.

The participants in the present study teach first- and second-year language courses at a mid-sized public university. Of these six adjuncts, two have a Masters degree in applied linguistics, two have a Masters degree in literature in their respective languages, and two have advanced degrees not specifically related to language. Three of the six participants are native speakers of the languages they teach. Their teaching experience varies from one semester to ten years at institutions ranging from pre-schools to universities. (Participants' demographic information is summarized in Appendix A).

Data Collection

These data, part of a larger study focused on adjuncts' beliefs about a variety of pedagogical topics, were collected through written questionnaires and individual interviews (Appendix B). The written questionnaire consisted of a brief demographic component and the Foreign Language Education Questionnaire (FLEQ) (Allen 2002) in its entirety. The interviews further explored the topics highlighted in the questionnaire. All participants responded to the questionnaires in English, but two native speakers opted to be interviewed in their native language(s). All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed in full, and all data were translated to English for this analysis.

Data Analysis

The analysis compares participants' responses to the questionnaire item that addresses L1/L2 use with their comments on the same issue during the individual interviews. The following research question guided the qualitative data analysis: How do these adjuncts describe use of the L2 as the language of instruction in the L2 classroom? First, all remarks related to teachers' use of the L2 were highlighted. All participants made comments supportive of their questionnaire responses, that is, acknowledging the value of L2 use; however, they also noted several challenges. Specifically, they referred to strategies that make a predominantly L2 approach possible, obstacles that complicate L2 use, and personal discomfort with learners' incomplete understanding of L2 communication. These descriptions were used to further categorize the data and classify each participant's overall perspective on the L2 as the language of instruction. In short, participants referred to these factors in one of two ways: they referred to them in passing while describing their experience teaching in the L2, or, focused on these factors and never moved on to discuss L2 use as a reality.

The findings of this study are limited to these teachers' beliefs, or more specifically, what they claim to believe; the accuracy with which teachers can truly identify their own beliefs and articulate them is uncertain. Also uncertain is whether these adjuncts' reported that their beliefs correspond to their actual teaching practices. The relationship between what teachers claim to believe or do and what they actually do is an important topic for future research (see Graden 1996).

Findings and Discussion

The six adjuncts who participated in the present study unanimously agreed with the standard that the target language be used as the primary language of instruction. Specifically, two of them agreed, and four strongly agreed, with statement #6 from the FLEQ: "The effective foreign language teacher uses the foreign language as the dominant language of instruction."

Though participants agreed on an ideal level that the L2 should theoretically be the dominant language of instruction, they referred to the possibility of reaching this goal in different ways. Statements of support for L2 use were interwoven with references to complicating factors. Some participants cast these factors in realistic terms and focused on strategies for its successful implementation. Others, however, did not refer to L2 use as realistic but rather emphasized the obstacles associated with it.

The L2 as the Language of Instruction: Challenging but Realistic. In their individual interviews, three of the six adjunct

participants framed target language use as both realistic and integral to the language learning experience:

> I think it [L2 use] is definitely realistic. I've taught [levels] one, two, and three now and have used the target language in all three. — Rose

> … if you stick to words and expressions that you know that they know and you give the right reinforcements, you can teach most of the class in the target language. — Diane

> I agree with this, with this concept, this theory [L2 as the language of instruction] because, um, it is the only way that the students go along grasping each thing. And that is what language teaching is, right? — Olivia

Though their remarks all support the L2 as the language of instruction, these adjuncts have different ideas about what constitutes dominant use. Rose, whose background is in applied linguistics and communicative language teaching, strongly supports L2 use and claimed to employ the L2 almost exclusively. She believes the L2 should constitute approximately "90%-95%" of teachers' language use in early levels and that by the end of the second year of instruction, it should constitute "100%."

In contrast, while Diane and Olivia also supported teachers' L2 use as the norm, they relegated a much larger role to English in first-year classes than did Rose. Diane, also trained in communicative teaching and applied linguistics, claimed, for example, that L2 use should be between "60-75%" for first year language courses, adding that "maybe that's not as high as most people would like it to be, but I try to really use as much as possible." Olivia also claimed, "I think it is necessary that we use it. One has to use it because they don't understand anything." She then specified, "If we're going to talk about a 101 level I think it has to be 50 and 50 [50% L1 and 50% L2]. 102 the same." She later noted that L2 use should increase substantially as students advance. The percentages offered by Diane and Olivia are notably lower than the minimum standards (95% and 75% respectively) employed in previous research (Calman and Daniel 1998, Shapson, Kaufman, and Durward 1978). Clearly the notion of predominant use can be interpreted in many ways.

These adjuncts also identified specific challenges of using the L2 for instruction. For example, Rose qualified one's success teaching in the L2:

> But you have to have a lot of supplemental materials to help you along, pictures and the board and acting. You become, you know, you're part of a theatre up there, and I find myself exhausted after class from jumping off of tables or whatever I'm doing to try to make my point, but I think it's definitely doable.

Though Rose clearly described her view of L2 use as realistic, the "but" in her position reveals conditions under which she views success as more likely; she implies that teacher L2 use does not miraculously translate into student learning. Rose referred to intervening factors such as the need for supplemental materials, energy (she finds herself "exhausted"), and even theatrics ("jumping off of tables"). Her comments suggest that effective L2 use requires effort and perhaps training in specific pedagogical techniques.

Diane also described steps that teachers must take to ensure that instruction given in the L2 is effective. She noted the importance of modeling directions when students cannot understand them in the L2 and establishing L2 use as the norm on the very first day of class. She also confirmed Rose's observation that special effort is required:

> I think that every language teacher, especially in the beginning levels, should have somewhat of a mental dictionary of all the words that students know. … I think you know gesticulation, synonyms, circumlocution, you should try doing all that first before succumbing to using the native language.

According to Diane, teachers cannot simply speak in the L2 without considering the words they use. Even when conscious of learners' vocabulary, teachers must utilize nonverbal resources and other communicative strategies to get their point across. Like Rose, Diane does not describe successful L2 use in unqualified terms. Though her strong support for the L2 does not preclude L1 use, she describes competing tensions, reflected in her use of the word "succumb;" for Diane, reverting to the L1 may be necessary but is, in a sense, a sign of weakness or failure.

Olivia also described techniques that facilitate L2 use while, at the same time, acknowledged the challenges of such instruction. She admitted that students' lack of understanding prompts frustration, despite her efforts to speak slowly and use gestures:

> They get frustrated and I get frustrated because I don't want to translate for them. In fact, I always tell them, I make a joke out of it. I tell them that I'm going to cut a piece of tongue off of the person who translates for me! No, I get frustrated but I try to find another way. … I change … the focus of what I'm doing.

Olivia did not describe her experience with the L2 use in idealistic terms but identified problems she encounters. She referred specifically to the competing tension between the need to help students understand and her belief that translation is a pedagogical strategy to be avoided. On one hand, she does not leave students stranded in frustration ("I try to find another way", "I change the focus of what I'm doing") but, on the other, is reportedly unwilling to eliminate frustration at any cost.

Rose also acknowledged students' frustration over her extensive L2 use. At first they got really intimidated and I remember in the first few days of class in all semesters I've taught it was kind of, ' I can't believe you're doing this to us. We'll never get it.' And now when they understand and they kind of feel good about themselves and you see the smiles on their face when I say something, and I'm like oh they knew I said a joke or. And so I think it's a real confidence builder once they do start to understand.

Rather than framing students' lack of comprehension as an insurmountable obstacle or quickly taking action, such as using the L1, to "fix" the problem, Rose described the gratification students derive from overcoming the obstacle. Though neither Rose nor Olivia related their approach to their pedagogical training, it may have played a role; both resisted the strong and natural impulse to simply remove the source of irritation.

In sum, all three of these adjuncts described teachers' L2 use in realistic, yet not black-and-white, terms. They claimed that language teachers should speak primarily in the target language, though Diane and Olivia attributed a much greater role to the L1, particularly at beginning levels. They all noted potential obstacles to L2 use, such as learners' lack of understanding and the need for extra effort and special techniques, but did not frame those challenges as overwhelming.

The L2 as the Language of Instruction: Challenging and Unrealistic. The three remaining participants also identified the challenges of using the L2 as the language of instruction, but they framed those challenges as obstacles. Though they claimed to use the L2 in their own classrooms, their references to it were closely associated with ideal circumstances for language teaching and learning:

> The best way [to learn a second language] would be to have smaller classes and being able to speak the language as much as possible. . . . Ideal would be just L2, in the ideal situation. — Mary

> [Teaching in the L2] would be great, it would be great. — Barbara

> I came in with a rather, sort of, you know, idealistic view of it. … And I came in with this idea that I was only going to speak in [the L2]. — Joe

These teachers' observations referred to L2 use as "ideal," and by implication, somewhat unrealistic. Mary, for instance, coupled exclusive L2 use with smaller classes, a factor beyond her control; Barbara referred to it hypothetically; and Joe associated it with the naivete of his first teaching experience. Interestingly, Joe's original belief, as a new teacher, that he could and would teach his class entirely in the L2 was not motivated by professional standards but rather a "commonsense," intuitive approach to instruction. He spoke of the benefits both of immersion and of learning a second language in a non-classroom context and at one point during the interview confessed, "To be absolutely honest, I have absolutely no idea what the profession says I should be doing."

In spite of their belief that using the L2 as the dominant language of instruction is more idealistic than realistic, these participants did claim to use it in their classrooms. Though Mary did not describe her own L2 use in terms of percentages and Barbara gave contradictory information[3], Joe indicated that his L2 use had increased from approximately "20%-30%" at the beginning of the semester to "70%-80%" by the end. However, more prominent in the interviews than references to their own L2 use were descriptions of obstacles to using the L2 as the primary language of instruction.

These adjuncts described specific obstacles to teaching in the L2 including articulation between levels within a language program, grammar skills needed to pass exams, limited class time, and personal discomfort with students' lack of comprehension. Observations about the challenges of articulation within a language program echo the feedback of teacher participants in other research (Franklin 1990) who identified ability mix as a reason for using English in the L2 classroom. Joe and Mary highlighted the complications caused by students who are placed at an inappropriate level or pass lower-level courses without mastering the material. Mary reported competing tensions:

> They come in all different levels, and then you have to choose whether to just go on and leave like half of the class behind you or wait for the others to pick up. … Ideal would be just [L2] in the ideal situation which we talked about where the students are placed in the right class. … In this case maybe you could have 90% [L2] and 10% English.

Mary perceived her options as both limited and negative: she can either "leave," that is confuse, half of the class by pressing ahead or she can wait for them to "pick up," presumably boring the half of the class that is prepared. She concluded by once again referring to use of the L2 as the language of instruction under ideal conditions.

Joe shared Mary's concern about inadequately-prepared students and framed this matter as a moral issue that he, as a teacher, must address. (See Buzzelli and Johnston 2002 and Johnston 2003 for an exploration of moral issues in language teaching.)

> [Some of these students] should never have passed [Level One]. And then it becomes an issue of if you teach the way you should in completely target language, I know that everybody in my class would fail and it becomes sort of this moral issue where I say, 'Is it worth following the rules and failing everybody?' Or is it worth saying, 'Well, let's just get them out of [Level One] so they never have to take it again and make sure they can pass their grammar and vocabulary and get the ones out that don't want to be there'?

Joe believes that teachers "should" teach completely in the target language, equating the practice with "following the rules." He explained, however, that the challenge of teaching students whose previous coursework is inadequate affects his ability to teach in the target language, and in fact, claimed that students would fail if he did. From Joe's perspective, he is morally pressured on at least two sides; he either "breaks the profession's rules" by using the L1 or contributes to his students' failure by using the L2.

Incidentally, given Joe's non-permanent status as an adjunct, his choice of the language of instruction may also affect his job security. Because dominant L2 use is valued by the language teaching profession, frequent L1 use may be interpreted as an indication of poor teaching and may have negative consequences if noted during classroom observations.

The dualistic manner in which Joe frames his dilemma simplifies the moral issues involved. First, while he did not advocate "passing" students who have not adequately mastered the material, the idea of hurriedly or half-heartedly imparting the basic grammar and vocabulary those students need to "get through" the course does not reflect a strong belief in all students' ability to learn nor an understanding of the teacher's role as motivator. Second, his comment raises the controversial issue of requiring students to study another language. While teachers should be effective motivators and it is true that learners often appreciate their education after the fact, Joe's reported struggle highlights the difficulty, and calls into question the value, of working with students who do not want to learn what one is teaching. Forcing language study on learners seems contrary to the communicative, humanistic goals of language teaching and may create a less than ideal classroom atmosphere for those students who truly want to learn, yet, on the other hand, the benefits of learning a second language are undisputed. Clearly, Joe's remark shows that what may appears to be one simple decision to use the L1 or the L2 actually is saturated in morality and inseparably interwoven with a variety of other complex issues.

Finally, Joe's status as a new teacher with no teaching experience or formal pedagogical training should not invalidate or marginalize his perspective on L2 use. Though he represents an extreme case that contrasts with the many qualified adjuncts in the language teaching profession, universities do, on occasion, hire individuals who have outstanding, perhaps native, language skills but little or no pedagogical preparation. Joe's views will certainly change as he gains experience and receives training; in the meantime, he represents a real segment, albeit a small one, of the adjunct population.

The need to equip students to do well on exams, particularly in regard to grammar skills, is a second factor that, according to Mary, makes dominant use of the L2 unrealistic. Polio and Duff (1994) made a similar observation, noting that all of the teachers in their study used English to some extent for explaining grammar. Mary described the blank expressions she sometimes receives when giving grammatical examples and added, "There is no way that I can let that go if they don't understand me well, then they're going to get a very bad grade in the next test, so I have to go back to English. I wish I didn't have to." Mary, like Joe, framed her belief in moral terms. Her statement "there is no way that I can let that go" seems to convey a personal commitment to her students and a sense of obligation. Whether motivated by sincere

interest in her students' linguistic well-being, preoccupation with her reputation as an instructor, or concern over the impact of student performance on her own job security, Mary is correct in acknowledging her responsibility to prepare students adequately for exams.

These adjuncts' view that preparing students for exams is incompatible with teaching in the L2 can be interpreted in several ways. It is possible, for instance, that the assessment measures used in their classes do not reinforce communicative goals. That is, the exam format may dictate, rather than reflect, their pedagogy. However, because the first group of adjunct participants did not describe grammar teaching as an obstacle to L2 use, it is also possible that the second group needs pedagogical training in this area.

It is important to note that all of these adjuncts use departmental exams, an area about which four of the six participants expressed explicit concern. They reported interest in collaborating on the creation of exams and in determining which concepts are tested. Ironically, the faculty member who creates the exams for one of the languages represented in this study invited all instructors to give feedback on any aspect of the exams, from the nature of questions to the correction of typographical errors. Nevertheless, these adjuncts' comments suggest that they feel a lack of control both over the means by which their students are evaluated and the content for which students are accountable. This perceived lack of control reportedly influences their L2 use and may keep them from contributing to exams even when given the opportunity.[4]

Mary highlighted a third source of competing tensions: large classes and limited class time. She claimed that the best situation "would be to have smaller classes and being able to speak the language as much as possible, which right now you don't. You don't have that time." She argued that in large classes, the range of abilities is greater; consequently,

> You have to repeat the same things in different ways using different words 100 times. There are still going to be some of them that don't understand so you have to go back to English. I mean I do a lot of body language, I do a lot of gestures and everything but still when you see [makes a face] that look, well then, especially if you're trying to teach some grammar points or something you really have to go back to English. What are you going to do?

While her rationale most directly points to the need for students to understand the course material, limited class time is a complicating factor. She argues that there is not enough time during the class period to accommodate students' varying ability levels by repeating and rephrasing L2 communication until everyone understands. The effort required to communicate effectively to a large number of students representing many abilities is time-consuming and eventually, according to Mary, necessitates L1 use. Though she referred to specific strategies that facilitate communication, she did not describe them as successful. Her focus, once again, centered around the challenges of L2 use.

Mary's comments present another perspective on Turnbull's (2001) observations about target language contact. He noted that "it is crucial for teachers to use the TL as much as possible in contexts in which students spend only short periods of time in class on a daily basis, and when they have little contact with the TL outside the classroom" (535). While Turnbull (2001) argued that limited time makes L2 use more crucial, Mary claimed that it indirectly makes L2 use more difficult.

Finally, Barbara, a native speaker of the language she teaches, raises the issue of personal comfort with L2 use:

> Now, I have a personal experience that when I learned English, I never heard [my L1]. It was totally, 100 percent English, the homework, everything, and there you understood or you didn't understand. I had a classmate next to me who spoke [my L1] that I asked the page, because I didn't understand anything. And it was tough. … I think that it is very recommendable actually. … But I don't do it that way because I feel that it's like if I'm more, I feel that I need them [her students] to understand what I'm talking about.

While Barbara's personal experience as an ESL student seems to support predominant L2 use in the language classroom (i.e., she learned English and even described the technique as "very recommendable"), it is not part of her own teaching practice. There are several possible explanations. Perhaps the affective experience of Barbara, the learner, was painful, and she associates embarrassment or insecurity with teachers' L2 use. It is also possible that Barbara, the teacher, lacks the pedagogical training to implement the L2 successfully and comfortably. Regardless of the motive, her statements echo the other adjuncts' mixed support for predominant L2 use; it is beneficial but is not unproblematic.

The issues that these adjuncts raised can be categorized in a variety of ways (Duff and Polio 1990; Franklin 1990), but what these factors have in common is that they are beyond teachers' control, or are perceived as such. That is, teachers have no control over their students' previous preparation, the length of class sessions, or in the case of some of these adjuncts' perceptions, the content and format of exams. In Barbara's case, she associates L2 use with a lack of control over learner comprehension. Focus on these uncontrollable variables presents the language of instruction as an issue whose scope extends beyond the classroom to departmental and administrative levels as well.

These adjuncts did describe taking control of what they could. Diane stated that "you yourself have to see if [a certain pedagogical practice] … works for the population you're teaching and that only comes with experience." Barbara also claimed, "The objective is to teach them, now the means is in your hands. As long as one does not lose the objective of teaching, the means is always flexible." Even Rose, the ardent supporter of L2 use, suggested that her own experience eventually came to supercede the pedagogical training she received as a graduate assistant:

> And it was don't ever speak a word of English, don't teach any grammar, and I really took it very seriously. … and so as time went on, I started to see what worked and what didn't. … And, so I think it's part of experience and what works best for you.

All of these adjuncts mentioned relying more on personal teaching experience than anything else, including professional standards, when making pedagogical decisions. Furthermore, several of them referred to the standards as too extreme and noted, in Rose's words, that reality is "not quite as black and white" as the standards suggest.

Conclusions

Some may interpret these findings as indicative of a need for adjuncts, particularly those like Mary, Joe, and Barbara, to receive more pedagogical training. For instance, as Polio and Duff (1994, p. 324) note, many teachers "have some sense, then, that using the TL as much as possible is important; however, they may not have figured out how to do so." Certainly, the views of these adjuncts were influenced by their own pedagogical backgrounds: for Rose and Diane, training in communicative language teaching, and for the others, either preparation in more traditional methodologies or no preparation at all. Though ideally, all language teachers are well-trained professionals, the diverse backgrounds of these participants are quite representative of the

adjunct population, especially in the case of languages for which there is a teacher shortage.

While all teachers, regardless of their experience or training, can benefit from professional development opportunities, pedagogical training is only one factor. Diane, highly-trained in applied linguistics, claimed that 60%-75% of L2 use is appropriate for beginning language classes, a position in clear contrast to the 95% offered as a standard in previous research (Calman and Daniel 1998). Diane herself acknowledged that her standard may not be "as high as most people would like" but added, "I try to really use [the L2] as much as possible." Rather than discounting perspectives that deviate from current standards, I would argue that Diane's observations, especially in light of her pedagogical training, highlight the need to listen to teachers and examine the classroom realities they describe as obstacles to L2 use.

While research now supports learners' on-task use of the L1 in collaborative work, thereby confirming many learners' intuitive desire to use the L1 in the L2 learning process, teachers' L1 use is still, in the majority of cases, attributed to poor pedagogy; furthermore, attempts to explain or justify their practices are often interpreted as excuses. While the goal of future research should not be to affirm, a priori, many teachers' perceived need for L1 use, it should, nevertheless, investigate their perceptions.

It is important to keep in mind the competing tensions these adjuncts described. They combined support for the L2 with practical concerns but never advocated extreme positions such as the abandonment of the L2. As Belz notes, L1 and L2 use are not mutually exclusive:

> [L1 use] does not imply a de-emphasis on second language (L2) competence or the sanctioning of a linguistic free-for-all in the language classroom; instead, it pedagogically translates into didacticized examination and judicious use of the languages available in the learners' linguistic repertoire at some points in the course of L2 instruction (Belz 2003, p. 210).

While none of the adjuncts interviewed for this study implied support for a "linguistic free-for-all", they did not refer to L1 use as a product of careful examination and thoughtful practice. Such an examination would provide rich material for future research.

The goal of this study, then, was not to elicit adjuncts' beliefs about L1/L2 use to, in turn, influence their pedagogy but rather to argue that the potential for influence is not, nor should it be, unidirectional. Inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and current standards should drive research agendas and prompt re-evaluation of recommended practices. Future research on L1 use that explores the impact of teachers', not just learners', L1 use will provide a context for understanding the competing tensions these adjuncts described and perhaps enrich the repertoire of effective classroom practices.

Notes:

1. I use the term "adjunct" to refer to lecturers as well as part-time instructors who are hired on an as-needed basis.
2. All participants are referred to by pseudonyms.
3. Barbara's estimate that she used the L2 as the language of instruction "70%" of the time contradicted her claim to rely heavily on the L1 in the classroom.
4. The adjuncts who, though given the opportunity, did not comment on the exams never explained their reasoning. One possibility is discomfort with criticizing or "correcting" the work of a supervisor; another is not having time, or not wanting to spend the time necessary, to give feedback.

Appendix A

Participant Profiles: Demographic Information

Name	NS of language s/he teaches?	Area of Training	Highest Degree Earned	Teaching Experience	Contexts of Teaching Experience
Barbara	Yes	non-language	Professional	3 years	K-8, university
Diane	No	linguistics	M.A.	8 years	high school, university
Joe	No	non-language	M.A.	1 semester	university
Mary	Yes	literature	M.A.	10 years	preschool, university, business
Olivia	Yes	literature	M.A.	3 years	university
Rose	No	linguistics	M.A.	3 years	K-12, university

Appendix B

Interview Questions

The questionnaire explored your beliefs about language teaching. During this interview we'll look at how those beliefs are put into practice in your L2 classroom.

1. Please tell me something about what you believe is the best way to learn and teach a foreign language.
2. The language teaching profession recommends that language classes be taught in the target language. Do you feel that that practice is realistic? Explain.
3. Do you feel equally comfortable speaking English and the L2? Explain.
4. What is your perception of your students' L2 abilities?
5. When you speak the L2, how well do you think your students understand you?
6. Do you feel that it is necessary to use English in your L2 classes? Why or why not?
7. What is your opinion on how much English and how much L2 should be used when you teach? By the students?
8. Our profession also suggests that the majority of class time be dedicated to communicative activities. Grammar should, supposedly, be studied at home and class time used for practicing grammatical structures. Do you feel that that practice is realistic? Explain.
9. What is your perception of your students' grammatical ability in the L2?

10. Do you feel that it is necessary to teach grammar explicitly in your L2 classes? Why or why not?

11. How do you believe grammar should be taught in L2 classes?

12. Do you feel that there is a role for communicative activities in L2 classes? If so, what?

13. Our profession also highly values the use of group work in language classes. Do you feel that that practice is realistic? What is your opinion of group/collaborative work?

14. How do you feel about following the standards established by our field? Do you find tension between your own personal beliefs about teaching and the expectations or standards set by the field? (for instance, in regard to the use of L2/L1, grammar teaching, group work)

14. Do you feel the freedom to follow your beliefs when they differ from the standards/ expectations established by our field? Why or why not? Explain.

15. Describe your feelings about being an adjunct. For example, what are the positive and negative aspects of being an adjunct? Are there any challenges particular to that position? Explain.

16. Would you do anything differently if you weren't an adjunct? In other words, if you were a professor in a tenure-track position, would that change your teaching or feelings about what you do? If so, explain.

Adapted from Duff, Patricia A. and Charlene G. Polio. 1990. How much foreign language is there in the foreign language classroom? *Modern Language Journal 74*, 154-166.

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