Language Teachers as Models of Bilingual Speech

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Abstract

The present study contributes to the limited body of work that examines teacher code-switching as a linguistic phenomenon and adds to the discussion on the language of instruction in the L2 classroom by exploring the notion of the L2 teacher as a model of bilingual speech. An analysis of the discourse of three French as a foreign language secondary school teachers revealed that their speech included code-switching, an alternation between the L2 and the L1. Seventy-one percent of their code-switches occurred during form-oriented discourse (overt information about the lexical and grammatical aspects of the language) in which an L2 lexeme was embedded within an otherwise L1 sentence, or an L1 lexeme was embedded within an otherwise L2 sentence. This practice has been found by prior research (Gearon, 1997) neither to provide true L2 input nor facilitate the development of students’ communicative competence. The remaining 29% of the teachers’ code-switches occurred during meaning-bearing discourse (L2 input that conveys a message and recognized as essential to language acquisition). The code-switches found within the teachers’ meaning-bearing discourse parallel the patterns identified in the professional literature on bilingual discourse and provide some support to the notion of the L2 teacher as a model of bilingual speech. The study calls for future research that examines code-switching during meaning-bearing discourse as a means of enhancing input.

Introduction

In the field of second language (L2) acquisition it is agreed that language learners need L2 input in order to develop proficiency. In the classroom setting
it is generally accepted that the teacher is the most likely source of input. There is, however, a lack of consensus as to whether or not teachers should use the L2 exclusively, with no allowance for the students’ first language (L1). Those who hold a virtual position maintain that when teachers revert to the L1 they are depriving their students of essential input and are, in fact, undermining the benefits of teaching in the L2 (Macaro, 2009). Advocates of the maximal position believe that exclusive use of the L2 can be sustained only in perfect teaching/learning conditions, which do not exist in reality (Macaro, 2009). Proponents of the optimal position see the L1 as a tool for enhancing L2 learning and encourage the development of pedagogical principles and guidelines for a justifiable role for the L1 (Macaro, 2009).

Another position being advanced is that of the L2 classroom as a bilingual or multilingual speech community and the L2 teacher as a model of bilingual speech (Blyth, 1995; Chavez, 2003; Cummins, 2007). Within this paradigm, students are seen as legitimate L2 users (Cook, 1999; Pavlenko, 2003), or developing bilinguals (Levine, 2011), and switching between the L1 and L2 is understood to be a worthy and appropriate behavior (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain, 2005). Advocates of this paradigm recognize the need for L2 input, but they see no incongruity between providing input and their vision of the L2 classroom as a bilingual space.

The study described here was undertaken to explore the notion of the L2 teacher as a model of bilingual speech. The purpose was not to question the need for input or to promote an indiscriminate use of the L1. The researcher analyzed the classroom discourse of three secondary school French as a foreign language teachers in order to discover the ways in which they code-switched between the L2 (French) and the L1 (English). The patterns of their code-switching were examined in light of the functional distribution of their discourse in order to determine the extent to which the patterns parallel those found in non-classroom bilingual discourse and adhere to laws of constraint.

**Definition of terms**

The simultaneous or early bilingual, as defined by Bullock and Toribio (2009) is an individual whose exposure to two languages began at birth or early childhood and who has ongoing contact with monolingual speakers of both languages. The teachers in the present study cannot be classified as bilinguals in this sense. However, they are bilingual in the sense defined by Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) as “people who possess sufficient skills in a second language to be able to carry out at least part of their social and intellectual activities in that language” (p. 217).

Code-switching has been defined as “the mixing of phonologically distinctive elements into a single utterance” (MacSwan, 2009, p. 309), or more broadly speaking, “the ability on the part of bilinguals to alternate effortlessly between their two languages” (Bullock & Toribio, 2009, p. 1). The practice of code-switching is considered to be a positive communication strategy, not an indication of the bilingual’s lack of proficiency in either or any of the languages spoken. Zentella (1997) refers to code-switching as “a conversational activity via which speakers negotiate meaning with each other” (p. 113). Given the importance of negotiation
of meaning in the development of language proficiency, Zentella’s definition is especially applicable to the practice of code-switching in L2 classrooms.

Definitions of several linguistic terms will facilitate the reading of the present study. A morpheme is “any of the minimal grammatical units of a language, each constituting a word or meaningful part of a word that cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts, such as the, write, or the -ed of waited” (morpheme, 2010). A bound morpheme is one that “occurs only as part of a larger construction” (bound morpheme, 2008), such as the –ed of waited. Adding a bound morpheme from one language to a morpheme from the other language is a contravention of Poplack’s (1980) free morpheme constraint, which states, “codes may be switched after any constituent in discourse provided that the constituent is not a bound morpheme” (p. 585). Examples of violations of the free morpheme constraint would be adding the English suffix –ed to the French word vend (sell) resulting in the ill-formed word vended (sold) or adding the Spanish bound morpheme -iendo (-ing) to the English morpheme eat to form the unacceptable word eatiendo (eating) (Poplack, 1980). The equivalence of structure constraint is also pertinent to the present study:

Code-switches will tend to occur at points in discourse where juxtaposition of L1 and L2 elements does not violate a syntactic rule of either language, i.e. at points around which the surface structures of the two languages map onto each other. According to this simple constraint, a switch is inhibited from occurring within a constituent generated by a rule from one language which is not shared by the other” (Poplack, 1980, p. 586).

Poplack (1980) illustrates the equivalence of structure constraint with the sentence “El MAN que CAME ayer WANTS JOHN comprar A CAR nuevo (the man who came yesterday wants John to buy a new car)” (p. 587). The violations occur where the infinitive form of the verb comprar is correct in English grammar, but not in Spanish, where the subjunctive compre would be appropriate, and the position of the adjective nuevo where its position in the sentence is not common to both languages.

Review of the literature

The purposes of prior research conducted on the L2 teacher’s language of instruction were to: (1) determine an L2/L1 ratio (de la Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Duff & Polio, 1990; Leeman Guthrie, 1987; Macaro, 2001; Turnbull, 1999; Wing, 1987), (2) examine teachers’ beliefs about L1 use in L2 instruction (Allen, 2012; Bateman, 2008; Kim & Elder, 2008; Levine, 2003; Zéphir & Chirol, 1993); and (3) identify the purposes or functions for which L2 teachers use the L1, such as explaining grammar, building rapport with students, managing discipline, giving complex directions, and saving time (Crawford, 2004; Macaro, 2001; Polio & Duff, 1994; Rolin-Ianziti & Brownlie, 2002).

A few studies examined the code-switching purposes of L2 students and found them to parallel those that occur in bilingual social settings, such as filling a lexical gap, setting off an aside, providing contextual cues, summarizing a narrative, shifting topics, attracting attention, demarcating quotations, and organizing turn-
Performance + Proficiency = Possibilities

taking (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2005; Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain, 2005). However, only two studies examined L2 teachers’ code-switching and categorized the code-switches based on frameworks from the field of linguistics.

In the first of the studies, Gearon (1997) analyzed the discourse of six teachers of French as a foreign language in secondary schools in Australia in order to determine the position of the code-switches (inter-sentential, occurring between sentences, or intra-sentential, occurring within a sentence), the purposes of the code-switches, the potential contribution of code-switching on the development of students’ communicative competence, and the adherence of the code-switches to laws of constraint, specifically the free morpheme and the equivalence of structure constraints (Poplack, 1980). The results revealed intra-sentential code-switches in which French lexemes, (minimal lexical units, such as words or idiomatic expressions) (lexeme, 2010) pronounced phonetically in French, were embedded within English phrases for the purposes of stressing numbers, presenting vocabulary, checking students’ comprehension of lexical items, and pointing out grammar rule, as illustrated in Example 1.

**Example 1**

So now if you open à la page cinquante-sept and listen to the song…

So now if you open to page fifty seven and listen to the song… (Gearon 1997, p. 469)

Gearon (1997) concluded that this pattern of code-switching is a teaching strategy, not a communication strategy, and does not contribute to the development of communicative competence because such instances do not supply true L2 input. Nor do they allow students to make hypotheses about the language, create a need to communicate, or make a close connection between the spoken word and the content taught in the L2, requisites for optimal conditions for classroom acquisition (Clyne, Jenkins, Chen, Tsokalidou, & Wallner, 1995).

Gearon (1997) found instances of code-switching that violated the free morpheme constraint (Poplack, 1980). Code-switching an L1 bound morpheme – ’s to the L2 morpheme l’éclair is not supported.

**Example 2**

… in fact for this one I’ll put un because l’éclair — ’s not going to make much good to me either (Gearon, 1997, p. 470). Gearon does not provide the context for this sentence. L’éclair could be lightning or a pastry.

Gearon (1997) also found violations of the equivalence of structure constraint. In Example 3 below, the expectation is that the infinitive ouvrir (to open) would be used instead of the imperative ouvrez (open) because infinitives are used after modal verbs (pouvoir/can).

**Example 3**

… you can all ouvrez vos livres à la page à la page soixante-et-un et ouvrez vos feuilles à la page quarante-deux… (Gearon, 1997, p. 471). You can all open your books to page to page 61 and open your papers to page 42.
Jingxia (2010) conducted the second study that examined code-switching as a linguistic phenomenon in an L2 classroom setting. The interest of the study was in both the code-switching beliefs and the practices of Chinese university instructors of English as a foreign language (EFL). Data were collected by means of a questionnaire and eight audio-recorded 50-minute classes, each taught by a different instructor. Results of the questionnaire found that 80% of the teachers believe code-switching is beneficial, and 85% are sometimes or occasionally aware of when they switch from the L2 (English) to the L1 (Chinese).

An analysis of the transcriptions of the recorded classes determined that the eight instructors code-switched between 21 and 55 times within one 50-minute class period. The functional uses of their code-switches support prior research on the purposes or functions for which teachers use the L1, to: translate unknown vocabulary, explain grammar, manage the class, emphasize certain points, express empathy or solidarity, and facilitate understanding.

Jingxia (2010) categorized the Chinese instructors’ code-switches using Poplack’s (1980) tripartite typological framework and found all three of the patterns identified by Poplack, inter-sentential, intra-sentential and tag, or “the insertion of a formulaic expression from language B (e.g., so, well, d’accord?) into an utterance in language A, primarily for pragmatic effect” (Bullock & Toribio, 2009, p. 4). Unlike Gearon (1997), Jingxia found that the major pattern was inter-sentential switches (with an average of 18.1 times in all eight classes combined), followed by intra-sentential (12.4 average) and then tag code-switches (5.9 average). Jingxia concluded that other patterns of code-switching, in addition to the three explored in the study, may be found in foreign language classrooms.

Methodology of the present study

The study followed a non-participant observation methodological approach that “entails the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for the study” (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 79). The interest was in identifying the extent to which the code-switches in the teacher participants’ discourse paralleled the patterns identified in the professional literature on bilingual speech and to determine if their code-switches adhered to laws of constraint, as defined by Poplack (1980). The study went beyond prior research on L2 teacher code-switching in two important ways. First, whereas Gearon (1997) analyzed the code-switches in the teachers’ form-oriented discourse only, the present study analyzed both form-oriented and meaning-bearing discourse. Secondly, the present study hypothesized that the patterns and purposes of the code-switches are contingent upon the functional distribution of the teachers’ discourse.

Participants

Three secondary school teachers of French as a foreign language in the United States participated in the study. They did not know that the focus of the study was on code-switching. They were told that the researcher was interested in best practices. The teachers, Valerie, Terri and Anne (pseudonyms) were white female citizens
of the United States and native speakers of English. Their teaching experiences ranged from 27 to 16 to 3 years, respectively. All had had limited experiences in a French-speaking country. Their students were white, native speakers of English, with the exception of one student in Terri’s class, who was a recent immigrant from Bosnia.

**Procedures**

The data were collected through non-participant observations (Marshall & Rossman, 1989) of 27 classes for a combined total of approximately 25 hours. A summary of the number of observations, the level of the students, and the time involved is provided in Table 1. The observations took place with the same three groups of students throughout the collection period: Terri’s and Anne’s second year French classes, and Valerie’s fourth year class. The teachers wore a wireless microphone during the observations so that their discourse could be audio-recorded. In addition to the observations, periodic interviews were conducted throughout the data collection time frame. Data from the interviews not included.

**Table 1. Description of Observations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Valerie</th>
<th>Terri</th>
<th>Anne</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class level observed</td>
<td>4th year</td>
<td>2nd year</td>
<td>2nd year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of classes observed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total minutes observed</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>1516</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Analysis**

The data analyses occurred in several stages. First, I transcribed the audiotapes from the 1516 minutes of classroom observations, which yielded 213 pages of data. Next, using functions in Microsoft Word, I counted the number of words in each language and then determined a ratio of L2 to L1 for each teacher in order to gain an overall perspective of their language use. The ensuing stages were guided by a structural approach to the study of code-switching (Bullock & Toribio, 2009) and by procedures for content analysis (Berg, 2009).

A structural approach to the study of code-switching is concerned with morphological and syntactic patterns and grammatical aspects of code-switches within sentences (MacSwan, 2012). Therefore, I decided to examine only intra-sentential code-switches. Two other factors influenced this decision. First, Gearon (1997) analyzed only the intra-sentential code-switches found in the teachers’ discourse. Following her lead would facilitate comparisons between the results in Gearon and the present study. Secondly, Bullock and Toribio (2009) assert that “inter-sentential switching requires an advanced level of bilingual proficiency” (p. 3); the teachers in the study were not advanced bilinguals.

The procedures taken in the content analysis (Berg, 2009) included identifying the intra-sentential code-switches through repeated readings of the full transcripts and classifying each instance as occurring in form-oriented (overt information about the language itself, including both grammar and vocabulary) or meaning-
bearing (conveying a message) discourse. I tallied the number of code-switches in both types of discourses and determined a percentage for each function. The code-switches found in the teachers’ form-oriented discourse were not subjected to further analysis. Through iterative sorting, I categorized the code-switches found in the teachers’ meaning-bearing discourse based on patterns and examples from the professional literature on bilingual discourse (Backus & Dorleijn, 2009; Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Cantone, 2007).

**Results**

*Ratio of French (L2) in the teachers’ discourse*

The purpose of presenting the findings in Table 2 is to provide a snapshot of the teachers’ overall language use. The table illustrates that all three teachers’ L2 use was, on average, below the 90% recommended by ACTFL (2010), although Valerie did exceed the goal on at least one day. The percentages demonstrate that both languages – French (L2) and English (L1) – were present in each teacher’s instructional discourse.

**Table 2. Range and Average of Total Number of Words (L1 and L2) and Ratio of L2 Words Per Class Observed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Valerie</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Terri</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Anne</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total words</td>
<td>L2%</td>
<td>Total words</td>
<td>L2%</td>
<td>Total words</td>
<td>L2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>3,767 - 5,088</td>
<td>96% - 86%</td>
<td>3,885 - 656</td>
<td>37% - 9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2,530</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>4,471</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>2,282</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Code-switches in form-oriented discourse*

The content analysis resulted in 564 sentences that contained a code-switch between French (L2) and English (L1). The total code-switches occurring in form-oriented instruction was 403 (214 in grammar instruction, 189 in vocabulary). This represents 71% of the total number of code-switches. Example 4 illustrates code-switching during a grammar lesson. Terri is distinguishing between the two possible auxiliary verbs in the past tense.

**Example 4**

You’ve got to be real careful with your pronunciation. Because *on a arrivé* is *avoir*. On *est arrivé* is *être*. You have to be very precise when you say those. Because it’s going to be wrong if you say *on a arrivé* (Terri, observation 2).

In code-switches during vocabulary instruction, it was typical for the teacher to ask either for a translation, as in Example 5 below, or provide the translation herself, as in Example 6. The former requests typically began with “how do you say, what is, or do you know”; the latter usually consisted of the targeted word followed by “is, means, or *en anglais*” (in English).
Example 5
What is a coeur? (Terri, observation 1)

Example 6
A hunchback en anglais c’est un bossu. (Valerie, observation 3)

Code-switches in meaning-bearing discourse

Of the 564 sentences identified in the data analysis as containing a code-switch, 161 instances (29%) occurred in meaning-bearing discourse. As illustrated in Example 7, the focus of meaning-bearing discourse is on conveying a message, not on explaining language form.

Example 7
On va commencer avec le livre, où vous avez lu les pages de reading comprehension et après avoir fait ça, on va commencer avec l’imparfait. (Valerie, observation 1). We'll begin with the book, where you read the reading comprehension pages and after that, we’ll begin with the imperfect.

In this study the teachers were observed engaging in meaning-bearing discourse when: speaking to students during a warm-up period, establishing a background before beginning an interpretive text, discussing an interpretive text after having read it, giving directions for activities, and assigning homework.

Categorization of code-switches in meaning-bearing discourse

The 161 code-switches observed in the teachers’ meaning-bearing discourse (L2 input that conveys a message) were grouped as either “insertions” or “alternations”, the two classes of code-switches most commonly found in the professional literature on bilingual discourse (Muysken, 2000). The analysis yielded 86 instances of insertions and 75 of alternations. Insertion “involves the embedding of a constituent – usually a word or a phrase – in a nested A – B – A structure” (Bullock & Toribio, 2009, p. 3), where A and B refer to languages. Example 8 below is an illustration of insertion from the literature.

Example 8
This morning mi hermano y yo fuimos a comprar some milk.
This morning my brother and I went to buy some milk. (MacSwan, 2012, p. 323)

The 86 sentences identified as containing an insertion were further grouped based on shared characteristics or on subcategories of insertion from the literature. These categories, along with examples and frequency counts, are illustrated in Table 3. Code-switches that exemplify classical insertions, as defined by Bullock and Toribio (2009) were grouped in category 8a. Sentences in categories 8b through 8e are insertions, but the code-switches in each category have distinguishing characteristics or purposes, such providing a translation (8b) or eliciting a response (8c). Two asides (8d) and one lexical change (8e), both subcategories of insertions,
Table 3. Insertions in Meaning-Bearing Discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Shared characteristics and examples of categories</th>
<th>Number of insertions per category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Valerie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Classical insertion of L1 word(s) within an otherwise L2 sentence (or vice-versa).</td>
<td>C’est une bonne idée de faire les flash cards avec une photo d’un côté et le mot de l’autre côté. [A2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>L1 translation immediately inserted after the L2 word(s) (or vice-versa).</td>
<td>Et tout d’un coup, all of a sudden, je me suis rendu compte. [T3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c</td>
<td>L1 word inserted as a means of eliciting a response from a student.</td>
<td>Et… um… Lise, c’était blank de François Premier. [T1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8d</td>
<td>L1 inserted as an aside.</td>
<td>Trouvez quelqu’un qui s’est, the next one is written rather poorly, qui s’est levé tôt. (T5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8e</td>
<td>L1 word inserted is a lexical change.</td>
<td>Pas comme un businessman aujourd’hui. [T9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asides occur when speakers “mark off ‘parenthetic’ parts of their utterances by a change of voice—in English often to a lower pitch” (Gardner-Chloros, Charles, & Cheshire, 2000, p. 1317). A lexical change occurs when “the use of words or morphemes, or morpheme combinations, from the lending language, becomes entrenched as conventional usage and/or combinations in the receiving language lexicon” (Backus & Dorleijn, 2009, p. 77). That is to say, “businessman” in 8e, is accepted in the L2 vernacular.

The second most common type of code-switching is alternation “in which the two languages present in the clause remain relatively separate. It can be represented as in A – B” (Muysken, 2000, p. 96), where A and B are languages. As illustrated
in Example 9 below, alternation typically appears at the periphery of an utterance.

**Example 9**

Sometimes I’ll start a sentence in Spanish *y termino en español* [sic] Sometimes I’ll start a sentence in Spanish and finish in Spanish. (Poplack, 1980)

The data analysis in the present study yielded 75 instances of alternations in the teachers’ meaning-bearing discourse. They were grouped into four categories based on shared distinctive characteristics. Examples and frequency counts are provided in Table 4.

**Table 4. Alternations in Meaning-Bearing Discourse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Shared characteristics and examples of categories</th>
<th>Number of alternations per category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9a</td>
<td>Classical alternation in which the sentence begins in one of the languages and ends in the other language. Oui, je crois que ce sont pour les serviettes, <em>like napkin rings, or holders, maybe.</em> (A1)</td>
<td>Valerie: 15  Terri: 27  Anne: 10  Totals: 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b</td>
<td>The alternation is a translation of the first part of the sentence. So my friend became a star, <em>devenu un star.</em> (T3)</td>
<td>Valerie: 7  Terri: 6  Anne: 4  Totals: 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9c</td>
<td>The alternation is a discourse marker. <em>Okay now il faut lire un peu en avance, n’est-ce pas?</em> (V5)</td>
<td>Valerie: 3  Terri: 1  Anne: 1  Totals: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9d</td>
<td>The alternation is a nonce loan. So he was <em>imparfaiting.</em> (V5)</td>
<td>Valerie: 1  Terri: 0  Anne: 0  Totals: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>Valerie: 26  Terri: 34  Anne: 15  Totals: 75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The code-switch in sentence 9b is similar to that in 8b in that both code-switches are translations of L2 words appearing in the sentence. The difference is the position that the code-switches occupy in the sentence. The alternation in 9c represents a discourse marker, defined as a “non-propositional linguistic items whose primary function is connective and whose scope is variable” (Hansen, 1998, p. 73). Valerie’s tongue-in-cheek novel invention of the word “imparfaiting”, in 9d, is an example of a nonce loan. The definition of nonce loan is “elements borrowed on the spur of the moment” (Muysken, 1995, p. 190) that are “restricted to a single speaker in a specific context, and not recognizable by monolingual speakers” (van Dulm, 2007, p. 10).
Violations to the laws of constraints on code-switching

In the descriptive literature on code-switching the notion of constraint refers to the phenomenon that “some code-switched constructions are well-formed and others are ill-formed” (MacSwan, 2012, p. 325). In a study that explores the notion of the L2 teacher as a model of bilingual speech, it is essential to include an analysis of contraventions of these constraints that may have occurred in the teachers’ discourse. L2 learners build implicit linguistic systems based on the L2 input to which they are exposed (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Input that includes ill-formed code-switches is likely to influence the learners’ emerging system negatively, in the same manner as input that contains grammatical errors. If teachers are to model bilingual speech they must model well-formed code-switches just as they must model structurally correct language.

In the present study, violations to both the free morpheme and the equivalence of structure constraints were found in the data. Example 9d in Table 4, Valerie’s invention of the word *imparfaiting*, was classified as a nonce loan. It could also be considered a violation of the free morpheme constraint, in that the word is a combination of the French *imparfait* and the English bound morpheme -’ing. However, according to Poplack (1987), it is possible to circumvent the free-morpheme constraint through the mechanism of a nonce loan.

Another example of a contradiction of the free morpheme constraint is found in Example 10, where the English bound morpheme -’s was attached to the French morpheme *vouloir*.

**Example 10**

Yeah, *vouloir’s* one of those strange verbs that if you use it in *passé composé* [simple past tense], it means that you tried to do that, rather than you just wanted to at a particular moment. (Valerie, observation 5)

Even though the grammatical structure of *vouloir’s* models the English contraction of *is* and not an instance of possessive -’s, I contend that it is unlikely L2 learners will make the distinction. A code-switch involving the English -’s in L2 input, regardless as to whether it is a contraction or a possessive, may be encoded in the learners’ developing system as possessive. This contention is conjecture based on several decades of teaching experience. At this point, there simply is no empirical evidence on the impact of code-switching and contradictions of constraints of code-switching on learners’ emerging implicit linguistic system.

Example 11 is a violation of the equivalence of structure constraint. Including a definite article before a noun is a syntactic rule in French, but not in English. Whereas in French the definite article *le* is required here, in English including the word *the* is not appropriate in this context.

**Example 11**

*Mais il faut savoir que j’avais quatre ans, n’est-ce pas, en entrant dans le kindergarten pour comprendre ça.* But you must know that I was four years old, right, going into kindergarten. (Valerie, observation 2)
Other occurrences of violations to the equivalence of structure constraint in the teachers’ discourse, although not numerous, were similar to that in Example 11, where a definite or indefinite article in French preceded an English word that did not require an article. Including the French morpheme *le* (or other structurally similar words) may exacerbate or facilitate L2 learners’ acquisition of grammatical gender and noun/article agreement in French. It is beyond the scope of the present study to draw a conclusion regarding the impact of adherence or contradiction of constraints on code-switching.

**Discussion**

*Form-oriented discourse*

The code-switches in the teachers’ form-oriented discourse, as illustrated in Examples 4, 5, and 6 above, were easily expressed because of congruent lexicalization (Muysken, 2000, p. 3). This pattern refers to “a situation where the two languages share a grammatical structure which can be filled lexically with elements from either language [and] are inserted more or less randomly” (Muysken, 2000, p. 6-8). Because the basic sentence structure in both French and English follows a subject-verb-object pattern, nouns can be exchanged between the languages in a straightforward fashion. Thus, the French/English language code-switching observed in the teachers’ form-oriented discourse may have served as a teaching technique used to simplify the delivery of overt information about the L2.

However, in the literature on communicative language teaching, form-oriented instruction that consists of explanations about the structure and lexicon of the language is not recognized as a source of meaningful L2 input (Lee & VanPatten, 2013; Wong, 2005). The code-switches illustrated in the form-oriented discourse in the present study, in addition to the less than 90% plus recommended L2 use (ACTFL, 2010), as noted in Table 2, may facilitate students’ understanding of how the language works. But code-switches cannot enhance the amount and quality of L2 input in the absence of discourse that provides meaningful L2 input. Form-oriented discourse, such as that observed in the present study, with or without the inclusion of code-switches, does not facilitate the learners’ development of communicative competence because it is not a source of L2 input and does not provide the requisites for classroom L2 acquisition, as detailed in Clyne et al. (1995).

*Meaning-bearing discourse*

Whereas prior research (Gearon, 1997) noted the absence of long segments of L2 input in the classrooms observed, in the present study there were periods of time during which all three teachers engaged in extended L2 meaning-bearing discourse. As mentioned in the results section above, this discourse occurred when the teachers talked informally with the students during the first few minutes of class time, established background knowledge prior to reading or listening activities, discussed reading passages, gave directions for interpersonal communication activities, and assigned homework. During these periods, the teachers’ discourse included code-switches that parallel the patterns of those identified in the literature.
on non-classroom bilingual speech (Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2005; MacSwan, 2009). The teachers used code-switches that have been characterized as worthy and appropriate bilingual behavior (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain, 2005): classical insertions, asides, lexical changes, classical alternations, discourse markers, and nonce loans. The teachers’ meaning-bearing discourse also included common contraventions to code-switching principles – the free morpheme constraint and the equivalence of structure constraint.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of the present study was to explore the notion of the L2 teacher as a model of bilingual speech. Towards that end, the code-switches found in the teachers’ meaning-bearing discourse were compared to examples of code-switches identified in the professional literature on bilingual discourse (Backus & Dorleijn, 2009; Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Cantone, 2007). From a structural approach, one that examines the morphological and syntactic patterns and grammatical aspects of code-switches within sentences (MacSwan, 2012), the teachers did model bilingual speech. Whereas an examination of the cognitive mechanisms that underlie the teachers’ code-switching practices (a psycholinguistic approach) and an investigation of the social factors (power, prestige, etc.) that impact their code-switching (a sociolinguistic approach) would provide a fuller account of the teachers’ code-switching practices, they are beyond the scope of the present study. The methodologies of the three approaches are incompatible and psycholinguistic studies are typically conducted in laboratory settings (Bullock & Toribio, 2009).

A second purpose of the study was to examine the hypothesis that the patterns and purposes of the code-switches are contingent upon the functional distribution of the teachers’ discourse. The preceding discussion on the code-switches found in form-oriented discourse vis-à-vis those found in meaning-bearing discourse provide support for the hypothesis. The patterns in form-oriented discourse were dependent upon congruent lexicalization and the code-switches served as a teaching technique rather than a communication strategy. Those in the teachers’ meaning-bearing discourse modeled bilingual behavior that occurs in authentic contexts between or among individuals who share two languages.

Although the presence or absence of the conditions needed for the development of learners’ linguistic system and language proficiency is observable, the impact of code-switching on L2 learners’ development remains to be seen. Only empirical, quantitative studies in which the many variables in classroom L2 teaching and learning are controlled can determine the actual benefits or detriments of teacher code-switching.

Beyond adding to the limited body of work that examines teacher code-switching as a linguistic phenomenon, the present study contributes to the larger discussion on the language of instruction. Had the teachers taken an approach in which their instruction on form was embedded within contextualized, meaningful input, they would have used a greater percentage of L2, and the results of the study may have been different. A larger number of code-switches that parallel those found in bilingual discourse may have been found. The conclusion, however,
would have been the same. Teachers can be models of bilingual speech only when their discourse is embedded in meaningful L2 input.

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