

The use of Japanese by Native English-Speaking Teachers: The Student's Perspective

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To what extent, if any, should one use Japanese in the classroom? This is a question that many a Native English-Speaking Teacher (NEST) has probably thought about at some time. As a NEST with reasonable proficiency in Japanese, the author has used the first language (L1) to varying degrees during his career. His first job in Japan was teaching English to under 5s; faced with screaming infants, the little Japanese he knew served as a means of placation and a way to compensate for a lack of formal training in teaching children. In contrast to the mayhem of his EFL initiation was a class of highly motivated learners at the British Council. A single utterance in Japanese was met with disapproving frowns from these students, and the author quickly realized that they expected only English to be used. Teaching university students now, he employs Japanese not out of desperation, but because he considers its judicious use to be a valuable pedagogical aid.

The author was interested to ascertain what students felt about their NEST using Japanese in the L2 (the target language, i.e. English) classroom. A questionnaire was designed to find out their opinion on this matter. The study was originally conducted as a piece of personal action research, but the results should be of interest to other English teachers, both NEST and non-NEST.

Reexamining the English-only classroom

It was with the appearance of the Direct Method around the end of the 19th century that the idea of refraining from using the mother tongue in language teaching began to gain prevalence. The superiority of the English-only classroom is now taken as read. When the author took a widely recognized TEFL course in the UK at the start of his career, no mention was made of whether there was a role for L1. It must be said that at that time the author, and probably most of his fellow trainees, was monolingual (the British have notoriously low levels of foreign language acquisition) and many were destined to teach multilingual classes in an ESL (English as a Second Language) environment. There was, therefore, a necessity for teachers to be trained in pedagogic methods that did not require use of the L1. Indeed, it is the growth of a British-based teacher training movement, of which the author was a recipient, that has, according to Harbord (1992) "served to reinforce the strategy of mother tongue avoidance" (350).

Another factor that has strengthened the case for the English-only classroom in Japan is the perceived failure of the grammar-translation method. Because Japanese college freshmen often had little to show in terms of oral communication after six years of English study, it was considered that their *bunpou yakudoku hou* (grammar-translation method)-centered English education had failed them. Weschler (1997, 2) outlines the four main objections to the grammar-translation method and, by extension, to the use of Japanese generally in the English classroom:

1. Thinking in Japanese inhibits thinking directly in the target language.
2. Japanese serves as a crutch which hinders student's improvement in English.
3. Relying too much on the L1 will cause the fossilization of an interlanguage with its concomitant "hilarious Japlish".
4. Using Japanese is a waste of precious class time, which should be devoted to teaching the target language.

Weschler, however, considers that blaming the grammar-translation method is a case of misdiagnosing Japan's English education problem. He responds to the above objections by reinterpreting each one into a different, more positive metaphor. For example, rather than regarding the L1 as a crutch, it can instead be viewed as a "necessary scaffolding" that can be progressively removed. Regarding the "time on task argument" (objection 4), Weschler asserts that the real waste of time comes from a teacher who "limits input to incomprehensible messages"(3) in the target language. Rather than banishing L1 from the classroom, Weschler proposes a method of translation (the Functional-Translation method) that focuses on the social or functional meaning of the complete, intended message.

Wilson (1997) poses a question that may be of relevance to NESTs who switch their L1 abilities over to 'saver mode' when teaching English: "Is it really acceptable to dismiss an awareness of...profound systematic differences between English and Japanese as irrelevant to the EFL classroom?"(8). He points out that the "highly sophisticated assumptions about language", gained by the student in the process of acquiring their mother tongue, can be drawn on when learning the target language. The importance of making "meaningful connections" (9) between the target language and the L1 by both students and teachers would seem to suggest a place for Japanese in the EFL classroom.

Reexamination of the English-only classroom has also come from the ESL community. Commenting on

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the roots of monolingual ESL instruction in the United States, Auerbach (1993) writes: “[it] has as much to do with politics as pedagogy” (29). She encourages ESL teachers to start with the L1 because it “provides a sense of security and validates the learners’ lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves” (19). The situation of learners in Japan is of course very different from that of newly arrived immigrants or refugees learning English in the United States. While these people may feel their “identity threatened” if encourage to ignore their native language (Piasecka in Hopkins, 1988:18), once outside the classroom Japanese students are back on their own territory. Nevertheless, some of the student’s comments introduced later in this paper suggest the use of the L1 by a NEST can serve to lessen some of the social distance that invariably exists between *sensei* and student in Japan and thus help to create an environment that may be more conducive to language learning.

In the literature examining mother tongue use in the classroom, the voice of the language learner seems to have been under represented. Schweers(1999), conducting research on use of the L1 in monolingual classes in Puerto Rico, did question learners. His study found 88.7% of the student participants felt that Spanish should be used by teachers in their English classes. In another study, more relevant to those teaching in Japan, Okamura (2004) examined the variables that were related to student’s preference for the use of the L1 by the teacher. One of his main findings was that the more students expose themselves to ELT, the less they tend to prefer their teachers to use the L1.

The present study examines the general attitude of Japanese university students toward a NEST’s use of Japanese in the English language classroom. It also compares the attitude of students who were receiving their English lessons from a Japanese- Speaking, Native English-Speaking Teacher (JS-NEST) with those being taught by a non Japanese- Speaking, Native English- Speaking Teacher(NNEST).

Method

A questionnaire was distributed to a total of 169 students during the last 15~20 minutes of a 90-minute English class (refer to Appendix 1 for the Japanese original and Appendix 2 for the English translation). Of these students, 126 were in seven classes taught by a JS-NEST who uses the L1 in class. The remaining 43 students were taught by a NNEST who, by his own admission, speaks only rudimentary Japanese and utilizes only the L2 when teaching.

The participants of this study were university freshmen taking English communication classes as part of their general education course. They belonged to a total of 5 departments. A breakdown of the number of

respondents is as follows:

JS- NEST

Economics (45 students)

Medical (15)

Pharmacy (21)

Intercultural studies (17)

Social studies (28)

NNEST

Economics (43)

The questionnaire was completed in the tenth week of the second semester. All the students, apart from those studying medicine and pharmacy, had been taught by the same JS-NEST or NNEST during the preceding semester. In total, they had received approximately twenty-four lessons from their respective teachers prior to answering the questionnaire. The medical and pharmaceutical students had been taught by the JS-NEST only since the beginning of the second semester.

The questionnaire was in Japanese and, although not specifically instructed to, all students completed it in Japanese. In addition to closed questions, open-ended questions were also included. Although more difficult to analyze, such questions provide respondents with the opportunity for free expression and are more likely to yield unexpected, and potentially more interesting, data (Wallace 2001:135).

Analysis

Data from the closed questions was entered into SPSS, a statistical analysis software. The subsequent analysis calculated the following:

1. The responses of the whole sample (JS-NEST+NNEST).
2. Whether there was a significant difference in student's data depending on whether they were taught by a JS-NEST or NNEST.
3. Whether there was a significant difference in student's data depending on their self-evaluated English level. Question 8B asks for students to provide a self-evaluation of their English level on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being "high" and 5 "low"). Data from Question 8B was used to divide the group into Higher Level students (1~3 on the scale) and Lower Level students (4 or 5 on the scale).

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Pearson's chi-square test was carried out in order to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the groups in 2 and 3 above.

Student's responses to the open-ended questions (5, 6 and 7) were read and major themes and points of interest noted. Furthermore, comments made in question 7(Q7) (*What do you think about native English teachers using Japanese during class? Whatever your opinion, positive or negative, please write what you feel.*) were classified and analyzed quantitatively.

Results and Discussion

Closed questions

Tables showing results from the analysis of the closed questions is printed in appendix 1. Below, the results of the closed questions (questions 1~4) are discussed with reference to the student's comments in Q7. (JS-NEST or NNEST after a quote indicates which teacher the respondent was taught by).

Q 1. How often does your native English teacher use Japanese in class?

81.5% of students in the JS-NEST's class responded that their teacher used Japanese "often" or "very often". On the other hand, 93% of respondents in the NNEST's classes confirmed that their teacher "never" used the L1 in class.

Q 2. For what purpose does your native English teacher use Japanese in class?

The students considered the main use of L1 by their JS-NEST was "to translate vocabulary" (94.9%) followed by "to explain English text" (54.1%).

Q 3. How do you feel about the amount of Japanese your teacher uses?

81.7% of students in the JS-NEST class felt the amount of Japanese to be "just right" while 5.6% responded that "a little too much" was used. 46.3% of students taught by the NNEST indicated that the teacher "should use Japanese a little more". Although the total number of JS-NEST students who ticked "a little too much" or "too much" was small (9 people), Higher Level students were significantly more likely to choose these items than those with a low self-evaluation (Lower Level students).

Q4 a) In order to improve my English it is better if the native English teacher does not speak Japanese

32.6% of students in the NNEST's classes agreed with the above statement. The corresponding figure for the JS-NEST was only 1.6%. Comments from Q7 give an insight into why some students consider the use of the L1 to be deleterious to the acquisition of the target language. Several respondents wrote that using Japanese in class causes students to become *amae* (spoiled and dependent) on its use. In addition, while

many of the comments in Q7 positively evaluated the use of L1 as making the lesson *wakariyasui* (easy to understand), a response from a NNEST student indicated an attitude of “no pain; no gain”:

大学に入って初めて英語の授業で日本語を全く使わない授業を受けました。初めは少し抵抗があって、日本語で言ってくれた方が楽なのに。。。と思ったりしましたが、今では一生懸命聞けばだいたい何をいっているかわかるし、わかろうと努力することは大事なことだと思います。 It was only after entering university that I had my first English lesson taught without the use of Japanese. Initially, I wasn't so keen and thought it would be easier if the teacher spoke to us in Japanese. However, now, if I really concentrate, I can understand most of what my teacher says. I think making the effort to understand is really important. (NNEST)

b) It deepens my understanding of English when a native English teacher speaks Japanese

88.1% of students taught by the JS-NEST ticked that they “agree” or “agree to some extent” with this statement. The equivalent figure for the NNEST was 55.9%. The difference between the two groups was statistically significant. An opinion expressed in many of the comments was that particularly difficult aspects of the lesson could be made more comprehensible by the use of L1; for example:

英語で理解しにくいところは日本語でフォローしてくれると助かる。 It is helpful when things which are difficult in English to understand are followed up in Japanese. (JS-NEST)

微妙なニュアンスの違いを教える上で欠かせないこと

[Japanese] is essential when teaching about subtle differences in nuance. (JS-NEST)

c) It is good for the atmosphere of the class if the native English teacher speaks Japanese

In the JS-NEST's group, 86.5% of students responded to the above statement with “agree” or “agree to some extent”. The figure for the NNEST's students was 39.6%. There was a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Comments in Q7 reveal that many students consider that the NEST's use of L1 gives certain affective benefits. These include promoting a feeling of *anshin* (ease), creating a sense of *shinkinkan* (closeness or familiarity) between teacher and students, and making the class become more *nagomu* (friendly) and *attohoomu* (comfortable).

The use of L1 may be conducive to a good class atmosphere because students feel less inhibited to “think in Japanese”. Weschler (1997) has argued that “just because the teacher doesn't see or hear the mental

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gears of translation churning doesn't mean it's not going on" and warns that trying to suppress "this natural tendency" for learners to decode the L2 into the first language only raises the affective filter of students even higher(3). It is unclear whether students in the NNEST class felt inhibited to think in Japanese just because their teacher did not speak it; however, some students, as the following comment shows, do not relish the idea of an English-only class:

日本人だからどうしても英語だけだと一歩後退してしまう気持ちになってしまう。 Because I'm Japanese, I can't help but feel but feel daunted in an English only class. (JS-NEST)

It is conceivable that before entering university this student had never been in an English lesson in which at least some Japanese was not used. His negative feelings are therefore likely to be based on preconceptions that would likely fall away on experiencing the NNEST's class. Nevertheless, the large number of comments that describe the emotional benefits of L1, support the findings of a number of studies showing that using the L1 "reduces anxiety and enhances the affective environment for learning..."(Auerbach 1993,21). A look at some more of the comments taken from Q7 provide an insight into how L1 use by the JS-NEST promoted this enhancement:

I . Change in student's perception of the teacher

厳格な感じ、印象をうけなくなる。 [By using Japanese] the teacher seems less stern. (JS-NEST)

II . Imperfect mastery of L1 promotes empathy with the teacher who is perceived also to be a learner

日本語を使うことで安心するということはある。間違った日本語でも話してくれるとこっちも間違っているけど積極的に話そうという気持ちになる。 [The teacher] using Japanese makes me feel at ease. When he speaks to me in mistaken Japanese, I become more motivated to speak [in English], even if I make mistakes. (JS-NEST)

外国人の先生が日本語をつかってくれると嬉しいし、安心する。自分たちも勉強しているし、先生も勉強しているという気がして嬉しい。 It makes me happy and at ease when the foreign teacher uses Japanese. I get the feeling that we are studying and the teacher is studying too. (JS-NEST)

III . It is enjoyable hearing a foreigner speak one's mother tongue

英語のイントネーションが残った日本語になることが多いので、聞いていて面白い。 It's fun listening to Japanese with an English intonation. (JS-NEST)

IV. L1 use is interpreted by the students as an indication of the NEST's interest in their country's culture. Students may identify more with such a teacher

日本語を使うことで、外国人も日本の文化を理解してくれていると思うので、日本人としては嬉しい。 As a Japanese person, I feel pleased when a foreigner speaks Japanese because it shows they have an understanding of our culture. (JS-NEST)

その人が日本人と触れ合おうと努力しているが感じられるので。 [Foreign teachers should use Japanese] because I sense they are making an effort to communicate with Japanese people. (JS-NEST)

There was one comment, from a NEST student, which provides a different perspective from those seen hitherto in this section:

先生が日本語を使用しないことによりプレッシャーはむしろ良い効果をもたらす。 The pressure that comes from a teacher not using Japanese has, if anything, a good effect. (N-NEST)

d) A native teacher who speaks Japanese well is a good role model of a language learner and can therefore teach English well

A lesson that I have taught for a number of years involves students describing the qualities of a teacher whom they respected in high school. It has often been the case that when describing their former non-NEST (Japanese) English teachers, students express more confidence in, and respect for, those teachers who were highly competent in the L2. This questionnaire item sought to find out if a NEST's ability to use the L1 similarly raised their standing in the eyes of the learners. It was found that 81% of JS-NEST's students marked "agree" or "agree to some extent". The comparative figure for the NNEST's group was 51.1%. There was a statistical difference between the two groups at the 1% level of significance. In Q7, one comment was directly relevant to this item:

日本語を話せると尊敬する気持ちがより深まる。 When (the teacher) uses Japanese my feeling of respect (towards the teacher) deepens. (JS-NEST)

In the same way as a non-NEST can provide a "perfect learner model" (Medgyes, 1994:52) for the student, the following comment suggests that JS-NESTs can similarly provide an exemplar of a successful learner:

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外国の人が日本語を扱えるようになるなら自分にだって英語を扱えるようになれるという自信になる。 If someone from another country can learn to use Japanese, I feel more confident that I will also be able to learn English. (JS-NEST)

e) A native English teacher should not use Japanese if their level of Japanese is low

A majority (78.2%) of respondents indicated that they “disagree to some extent” or “disagree” with this statement. As was suggested by the student's quotes in section D, less than perfect Japanese spoken by the NEST may be positively evaluated. To use the L1 directly as an effective pedagogical tool usually requires a rather high level of language competence, but even a spattering of words in the student's mother tongue could have subtle yet positive effects on class atmosphere and teacher-student rapport. However, as this quote from the Q7 suggests, not all students were so forgiving of their NEST's foreign language ability:

大体正しい日本語なら使ってくれたほうがわかりやすいと思う。 Using Japanese makes the lesson easier to understand-as long as the Japanese is basically correct. (JS-NEST)

f) A foreign teacher using Japanese in class is somehow disagreeable

Iya na kimochi in the Japanese questionnaire has been translated as “disagreeable”, although a sense of “bad” or “strange” is also implied by this phrase. Only 1.6% of the respondents marked “agree” or “agree to some extent” suggesting, perhaps, that objections to a NEST's use of the L1 are well-reasoned opinions rather than visceral reactions.

g) Japanese teachers of English and native speakers of English have different roles

81.7% of respondents indicated that they “agree” or “agree to some extent” with this statement. This item was supplemented by an open-ended question (Q6) which asked students to write what they considered to be the respective role(s) of non-NEST and NEST. Table 1 summarizes the main ideas expressed in their responses.

Table 1. Perceived roles of non-NEST and NEST

Student's views on the role of non-NEST	Student's views on the role of NEST
To teach grammar. We understand grammar when it's taught in Japanese and it's easier to ask about grammar in our first language.	To teach speaking and conversation. To teach us tips for communicating like a native speaker.
To teach <i>juken eigo</i> (English for university entrance examinations). To teach us written English.	To teach us practical English that is used in daily life. To give us a chance to experience "real English".
To teach us grammar and <i>komakai koto</i> (the details of English).	To teach us broad concepts and generalizations about the language.
To teach <i>dokkai</i> (reading comprehension) and English- Japanese translation.	To teach listening. To help us improve our listening skills by providing an opportunity to hear natural English.
To teach <i>katai hyougen</i> (formal expressions) and academic English.	To explain about the nuance of words and teach us which expressions are appropriate for specific situations.
To teach us the joy of English from the point of view of someone who has learnt it as a second language; a non-NEST can empathize with us and understand learning English from our perspective. To teach us about cross-cultural experiences from the viewpoint of a Japanese person.	To teach us about cross cultural differences. Because the NEST is from a different background, we can get an insight into how foreigners think.
To teach us from the textbook.	To teach us things that are not in the textbook.
To point out the common pitfalls in learning English and typical mistakes of Japanese learners.	To point out common mistakes we make. NESTs can do this because they know what sounds strange in English.
	To create an atmosphere in which we are more inclined to think in English. To help us get used to communicating with foreigners.
To explain things which cannot be adequately explained in English.	To teach us things that only a native speaker knows (e.g. jokes).
To teach us about English.	To teaches us about the world through English.
To teaches the basics to beginners.	

Overall, the student's comments revealed that there is a definite consensus regarding the NEST's primary job: it is to teach speaking/conversation and expose learners to a kind of English that many respondents called *ikita eigo* (living English), *honmono eigo* (real English) or *tsukaeru eigo* (practical English). With

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such a clearly defined role for the NEST, it is likely that their use of Japanese will be negatively perceived by some students as playing out of or negating the role of foreign teacher. There are in fact two comments, recorded in Q7, that suggest this is the case:

せっかく外国人の先生に教えていただくのに、日本語を使うのなら、発音のいい日本人に教えてもらうのと同じだと思います。 After having gone to all the trouble to get a native teacher to teach us, if that teacher then uses Japanese, we might just as well be taught by a Japanese person with good English pronunciation. (NNEST)

外国人の先生は外国での言い回しとかを教えたりする人で、日本語をつかってわかりやすく説明したりしていたら、わざわざ外国人の先生である意味がないと思います。 A foreign teacher is someone who paraphrases and uses other ways to teach a language. If they explain things in Japanese then there's no point in having a foreign teacher. (NNEST)

This student, however, did not see a need to restrict L1 use on the basis of native or non-native status:

外国人とか日本人とか関係なく、両方の言語が話せたほうが、理解しやすいに決まっている。 Whether Japanese or a foreigner, it is obvious that [a lesson] is easier to understand if the teacher can speak both languages. (JS-NEST)

Another student stated why she enjoyed her class to be entirely in English:

外国語だけ聞いたほうが留学気分になるので。 When there's no Japanese spoken I feel like I'm studying abroad. (NNEST)

It may not only be the absence of the mother tongue that is necessary to induce this *ryuugaku kibun* (feeling like one is studying abroad), but also the very presence of a person from another culture who looks and acts different. Being different, or at least someone who can be perceived as such, is arguably one important role of the NEST.

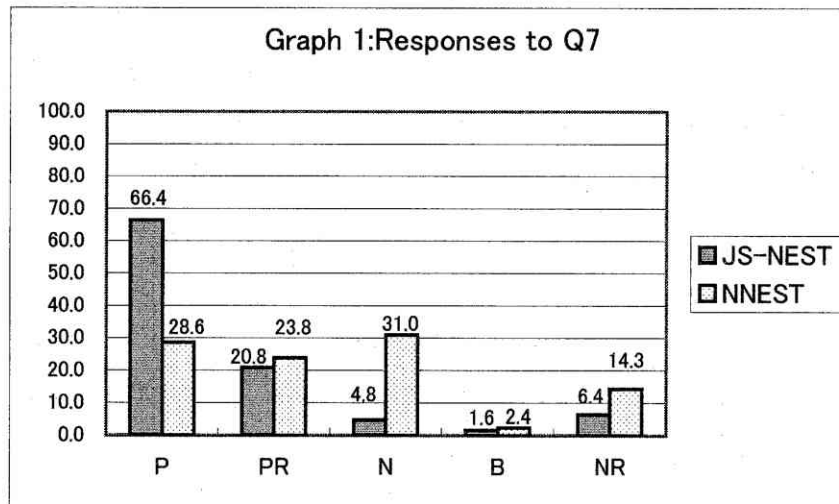
Open-ended question (Q7)

What do you think about native English teachers using Japanese during class? Whatever your opinion, positive or negative, please write what you feel.

Answers to Q7 were read by the author as well as a native Japanese speaker and each response was classified according to whether it expressed a positive or negative attitude towards the use of the L1 by a NEST. By the end of this process, each questionnaire had been placed into one of five categories:

1. P: positive attitude
2. PR: a positive attitude, but one which is qualified in some way
3. N: negative attitude
4. B: an ambivalent, don't- mind- either-way- attitude
5. NR: no response

Graph 1. the percentage of responses in each category



A number of quotes from Q7 were used earlier to illuminate the data from the closed questions. This section will introduce a selection of comments that represent ideas and views that have not been introduced hitherto. Within each category the comments have been subcategorized.

“P” category

1. The use of L1 makes the lesson easier to understand

- a) 全部英語だと理解できないことがたくさんあるので、難しいことは日本語を使ってほしい。

If only English is used, there will be many things we won't understand, so I'd like Japanese to be used for difficult parts of the lesson. (JS-NEST)

- b) 日本語で説明してくれると、ぱっと分かる。 When it's explained to me in Japanese, I get it immediately. (JS-NEST)

- c) 外国語を和訳する時は辞書をつかってでもできるけど、授業で先生が和訳して言ってくれた単語は覚えていることが多い。 Although we can look up the Japanese in a dictionary, when the

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teacher translates it for us, the word tends to stick. (JS-NEST)

- d) 難しい単語でも教えてもらうことができる。 [Using Japanese] makes it possible to teach us even difficult words. (JS-NEST)
- e) 補足説明などに使うのはよい。 It's good to use Japanese for supplementary explanations. (JS-NEST)
- f) 単語などで他の英語で言い換えてもわからないものは日本語でいってもらえるとわかりやすい。 There are things we don't get even if they are paraphrased; the teacher's use of Japanese makes such things easier to understand. (JS-NEST)

2. The use of L1 allows more to be communicated

- a) それ《＝日本語:筆者注》もコミュニケーションの一つだし英語だけでは生徒に伝わらない部分もあるので。 Japanese is also a means of communication; there are things that cannot be conveyed to the class if only English is used. (JS-NEST)
- b) 文化的な違いからどうしても伝わるのが難しい問題についての説明の際に。 Because of cultural differences, there are some things that are just really difficult to convey in English. [Japanese should be used] on these occasions. (JS-NEST)

3. It reduces the chance of students falling behind and thus maintains their motivation

- a) 英語だけで進められても、訳が分からなくなってしまうし、やる気がなくなってしまう。 If only English is used, I won't know what's going on and I'll lose motivation. (JS-NEST)
- b) 分からない単語や英文があった時など自分で辞書を引いていると授業に遅れしまうけど、先生が日本語で説明してくれると遅れずについていくことができ、疑問もその場で解決できる。 If I have to look up a word in the dictionary, I'll get left behind. If the teacher tells me the meaning in Japanese I can understand there and then. (JS-NEST)
- c) 曖昧な理解のまま進んでいくよりよいと思う。 It's better for the teacher to use Japanese then for the lesson to steam ahead with the students having only a vague understanding. (JS-NEST)

4. Injecting some L1 into the lesson adds variety, makes the lesson more enjoyable, and keeps students alert

- a) 日本語を交えると面白い。 It's interesting when some Japanese is used. (JS-NEST)
- b) 英語を話していて、突然ボンと日本語が入るのは、注意が高まる。 It raises my level of concentration when the teacher suddenly throws in some Japanese into the English he's speaking. (JS-NEST)

5. It facilitates communication between teacher and student

- a) 日本語を使っただけだと、自分のいっていることがつたない英語でも理解してもらえるのではと感じる。 If the teacher uses Japanese, I have a feeling he will more easily understand what

I'm saying in my poor English. (JS-NEST)

- b) 日本にいと外国人と話す機会がほとんどないのでいいと思う。 In Japan there are few opportunities to speak with foreigners, so I think it's good [for the teacher to speak Japanese]. (JS-NEST)

Comment 5a concurs with a point made by Yamamoto-Wilson (1997) that a knowledge of Japanese can teachers to understand the "intended meaning of certain non-grammatical utterances made in English by Japanese students" (7). Comment 5b implies that for this student, the chance for communication with a foreigner, regardless of the language used to achieve this, is in itself valuable.

6. The class is considered to run better

- a) 授業をスムーズに進められる。 The lesson is able to proceed smoothly [when Japanese is used]. (JS-NEST)

PR category

Responses in this category either evaluated the NEST's use of L1 positively, but qualified their comments in some way, or regarded its use as unavoidable.

1. L1 use is beneficial, providing it is not excessive

Aru teido (to a certain extent), *teki tou ni* (appropriately), *hodo hodo* (in moderation) and *tama ni* (occasionally) were some of the words students used when qualifying the role of L1 in the class room:

- a) 日本語を使つての説明があつたほうが理解が深まる気がする。しかし、聞き取つて理解する力もつけたいので、あまり日本語が多過ぎないほうがいい。 I think having explanations in Japanese deepens our understanding. However, I want to improve my listening, so it should not be used excessively. (JS-NEST)

2. It would be better that L1 was not used, but it is necessary

- a) なるべく使わないほうが良いとは思ふのだが、やはり英語のみだと集中が持たない。 I think it's best not to use Japanese, but I just don't think we can concentrate for long if the lesson was all in English. (JS-NEST)

3. The use of L1 is unavoidable

- a) やむ得ない。生徒のほとんどが日本語でないと英語の意味を理解できない人なので。 It's unavoidable because without Japanese most of the students wouldn't understand the English. (JS-NEST)
- b) さまざまなレベルの生徒が集まっているので、たまに日本語を使うのも仕方がない。 The use of Japanese can't be helped because the class is made up of students of different levels. (JS-NEST)

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- c) 理想的は日本語を全く使わずに意思疎通できることだけれど、実際には日本語なしだと、英語力、特にコミュニケーション能力が足りなすぎて授業にならないと思う。コミュニケーションを軽視してきた教育方針にかなり問題があると、この授業を受けて初めて実感することができた。 It would be ideal if we could understand each other without Japanese, but the reality is that our English ability, in particular our communication ability, is too low. Taking this class has made me realize the problem of an education policy that has neglected communication. (JS-NEST)

N category**1. A NEST's use of L1 is a wasted opportunity**

- a) 英語に触れられる機会がなかなかないので、できれば日本語は使わずにずっと英語で話してほしい。 We don't get many chances to use English, so, if possible, I'd like only English to be used. (NNEST)

2. A NEST's use of L1 makes students feel less compelled to speak English

- a) 先生が日本語を話すと、生徒の方も日本語使っているのかなと思ってしまって怠慢になる。 If the teacher speaks Japanese, the students also think it's OK to speak it and they become lazy. (JS-NEST)

Comment 2a. backs the views of Atkinson (1987:426) who warns that the excessive dependency on the teacher's use of L1 may result in students speaking to the teacher in their mother tongue as a matter of course, even when they are often quite capable of expressing what they mean in the target language.

3. It is detrimental to the atmosphere for learning a foreign language

せっかくの機会と言語を学ぶためには、やはりできるだけその雰囲気と環境を作してほしい。 As far as possible, I'd like to create a classroom environment that allows us to benefit from this valuable chance to learn a language. (JS-NEST)

4. It is not necessary

- a) 別に日本語を使わなくても不自由はしていません。 We can cope fine without the teacher using Japanese. (NNEST)
- b) 大学生である私たちは中学高校で英語を勉強しているのでだいたいの文法は分かっていると思う。 We are university students and studied English through junior high and high school; we understand most points of English grammar. (NNEST)

5. The teacher can use other ways besides speaking Japanese

- a) なるべく簡単な単語で説明するなどの工夫をして、授業中は全て英語だけで話すべき。 The teacher should think of ways such as paraphrasing in simple English. The whole lesson should be in

English. (NNEST)

- b) 単語をさらに英語で説明してもらうのも、勉強だと思います。 Listening to explanations in English is also learning. (NNEST)

6) People do not speak to you in Japanese abroad

- a) 外国では日本語を知っている人は少ないわけだから、本当に英語を学ぶのであれば、全て英語でもいいと思います。 If you go abroad there are not many people who speak Japanese. If you really want to learn English, it's good for the lesson to be all in English. (JS-NEST)
- b) 外国にいったら、みんな英語で話して日本語で教えてくれることなんてないから。 If you go to other countries, everybody speaks English and nobody's going to answer you in Japanese. (JS-NEST)

Reasons for attitudinal differences between the JS-NEST and NNEST groups

Taken as a whole sample, a majority (78.5%) of the 169 respondents viewed a NEST's use of the L1 either positively or positively but with qualification. However, comparing the JS-NEST and NNEST groups, it is evident that those students taught by the JS-NEST had a more positive attitude towards the use of the L1 and the NNEST's a more negative one (refer to graph 1). There are several factors which could explain this difference:

1. Language ability

Learners whose level is higher may be expected to be more adverse to the use of L1. However, since no placement test had been taken by students and classes were not streamed, levels can be assumed to have been comparative (although one cannot discount a significant improvement in one of the groups over the lessons taken prior to completing the questionnaire). In addition, no significant difference was found between the groups in their extra-curricular attendance, past or present, at an English conversation school.

2. Liking for English lessons

There was no significant difference between the groups in response to the question "Do you like your English conversation lessons?". The majority of students in both groups indicated a positive attitude towards their lessons (73.2% of JS-NEST students indicated that they like English "a lot" or "quite like" it. The comparative number for the NNEST classes was 69.8 %).

3. Difficulty of the English used by the NEST

No comparison was made of way the JS-NEST and NNEST taught their classes, but it is conceivable that the NNEST, without the option of reverting to the L1, had become accustomed to teaching the target language with simple English at a slower rate of speech. Therefore, it is possible that students in the NNEST class felt less of a need for Japanese. On the other hand, the JS-NEST could have used more

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difficult English vocabulary and grammar, and employed a faster speech rate in the knowledge that the L1 was there as a backup to augment the student's understanding. Consequently, students in this class may have considered there to be more of a need for Japanese.

4. Lesson content

While the NNEST's lesson was taught around a relatively easy textbook (Firsthand book 1; aimed at false-beginners), the JS-NEST had no set textbook and incorporated authentic material such as newspaper articles. The use of L1 may therefore have been considered more of a necessity to teach the JS-NEST's lesson.

5. The NEST's personality

Although the wording of Q7 asked more for a general opinion, the point of reference for many students when responding to this question was likely to have been the specific NEST who taught them. If this was so, then in the case of the JS-NEST, where Japanese is weaved into to the teacher's "performance", it could have been difficult for students to disentangle L1 use from the whole pedagogic package. In addition, it is possible that, influenced by their respective teacher's personalities, students felt empathy with the teaching methods employed, including the use or non-use of L1.

6. Preconceptions

For some students in the JS-NEST class the image of a lesson devoid of Japanese could have been daunting. They simply may not have experienced being taught by someone able to make an all-English class fully comprehensible and enjoyable. On the other hand, possible previous experience of grammar-translation type lessons, conducted mostly in Japanese and with little opportunity to actually speak English, is likely to have influenced how some students in the NNEST classes interpreted what was implied by their teacher "using Japanese in class" (Q7). Actually experiencing Japanese being employed in highly communicative and practical English lessons may explain the more positive attitude of the JS-NEST's group toward L1 use.

For this study students had no opportunity to compare the two teachers. It is possible that a questionnaire taken after being taught a number of lessons by each teacher could have produced different results. The ideal design for a future study would have the JS-NEST teach two classes comprised of students taken from the same population (for example, freshmen in the economics department) and avoid completely the use of L1 in only one of the classes.

Conclusion

The author has talked with several teachers about the tendency for Japanese to creep into their classroom

language. The word “creep” is appropriate because it is a tendency that teachers are not always conscious of or happy about. However, if tangible benefits are derived from the L1, should a JS-NEST feel obliged to repress this tool? In answering this question one must look at the motivation for using Japanese in class. Most would consider that the classroom is not a place for a NEST to practice their Japanese on the students (although an improvement in the teacher’s L1 competence may be a consequence of employing it in the lesson). While Cook (2001) suggests that the L1 can provide a valuable “...short-cut for giving instructions and explanations where the cost of the L2 is too great” (418), Harbord (1992:355) warns against the use of the mother tongue as “a device to be used to save time for more useful activities...[or as a way] ... to make life easier for the teacher or the students”. Perhaps each NEST who speaks Japanese in class would benefit from reflecting on their reasons for using it.

Teachers whose use of the L1 seems to “go down well” with the class could also think about why their students respond positively. While some learners will consider it a valuable supplement to help develop awareness of mother tongue and target language interaction, it can also let less motivated or *eigogirai* (English-hating) students avoid making a plunge into the deep- end of real-life communication.

In conclusion, while this study suggests that many learners positively evaluate their teacher’s use of Japanese, it should be remembered that the data gathered was from a single JS-NEST. Other teachers are likely to use Japanese in different ways, which may be more or less pedagogically effective. The extrapolation, therefore, of these results to justify the use of the L1 in other EFL classes is not recommended. Every JS-NEST could benefit from conducting their own research into this contentious area of language teaching.

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Appendix 1: Results of analysis of questions 2-4 (Apart from the "total" column, all numbers are percentages)

a. The ways in which the JS-NEST used Japanese

Q2	vocabulary	grammar	English text	cultural background	discipline	joke	other
	93	22	53	33	5	45	4
%	94.9	22.7	54.1	34.4	5.1	45.9	4.1

b. Attitude toward L1 use according to self-evaluated L2 ability (JS-NEST+NNEST)

Q3	too much	a little too much	just right	should use a little more	NR	Total (student)
High level	1.0	6.3	79.2	12.5	1.0	96
Low level	1.4	1.4	65.2	31.9	0.0	69

c. Comparison of responses to question 4

Q4		agree	agree to some extent	disagree to some extent	disagree	Total (student)
Q4A **	JS-NEST	1.6	27.8	55.6	15.1	126
	NNEST	32.6	37.2	20.9	9.3	43
Q4B **	JS-NEST	32.5	55.6	10.3	1.6	126
	NNEST	14.0	41.9	32.6	11.6	43
Q4C **	JS-NEST	34.9	51.6	10.3	3.2	126
	NNEST	14.0	25.6	32.6	27.9	43
Q4D **	JS-NEST	39.2	42.4	13.6	4.8	125
	NNEST	20.9	30.2	32.6	16.3	43
Q4E *	JS-NEST	3.2	16.0	61.6	19.2	125
	NNEST	14.3	14.3	42.9	28.6	43
Q4F *	JS-NEST	0.0	0.0	19.8	80.2	126
	NNEST	2.3	2.3	30.2	65.1	43
Q4G	JS-NEST	46.8	33.3	13.5	6.3	126
	NNEST	58.1	27.9	9.3	4.7	43

Appendix 2: The questionnaire used for this survey (reformatted to save space)

外国人英語教師の日本語利用に関する意識調査

2004年12月

アンケートにご協力くださる学生さんへ

このアンケートは、外国人の英語の先生が授業中に用いる日本語に対し、学生のみなさんがどのような意識を持っているのかをお伺いするためのものです。今受けた英語の授業を担当する先生について、質問に答えてください。

このアンケートは統計的に処理されるため、あなたのお答えが他人に知られることはありません。思ったままを書いてください。

年末のお忙しいところ、大変に恐縮ですが、学術的に貴重なデータとなるものですので、ぜひご協力をお願い申し上げます。

問1 外国人の英語の先生は、授業中にどの程度、日本語を使いますか。あてはまる数字にひとつだけ○をつけてください。

非常によく使う よく使う 時々使う ほとんど使わない 全く使わない

1 2 3 4 5

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問2 外国人の英語の先生は、授業中のどのような場面で日本語を使いますか。あてはまる項目にいくつでも○をつけてください。

- ☐ 単語の意味を説明するとき
- ☐ 文法について説明するとき
- ☐ 英文の意味について説明するとき
- ☐ 英語の背景にある文化について説明するとき
- ☐ 生徒をしかるとき
- ☐ ジョークをいったり、おもしろい話をするとき
- ☐ それ以外（具体的に： _____）

問3 あなたは外国人の英語の先生が、日本語を使うことに対してどのように感じますか。あてはまる数字にひとつだけ○をつけてください。

使いすぎだ 少し使いすぎだ ちょうどいい もう少し使ってほしい
1 2 3 4

問4 次の意見に対してあなたはどのように思いますか。AからGまでのそれぞれについて、あてはまる数字にひとつだけ○をつけてください。

- | | やや
あてはまる | あまり
あてはまらない |
|---|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| A. 生徒の英語力を伸ばすためには、外国人の先生は日本語を話さないほうがいい | 1 2 3 4 | |
| B. 外国人の先生が日本語で説明してくれると理解が深まるからよい | 1 2 3 4 | |
| C. 外国人の先生が日本語を話すと、クラスの雰囲気が硬くならないのでよい | 1 2 3 4 | |
| D. 外国人の先生が日本語を話せるということは、外国語を習得できたということなので、その人は上手に英語を教えられると思う。 | 1 2 3 4 | |
| E. 日本語レベルが低い場合は、使わない方がよい | 1 2 3 4 | |
| F. 外国人の先生が授業中に日本語を使うとなんとなく嫌な気持ちになる | 1 2 3 4 | |
| G. 日本人の英語の先生と、外国人の英語の先生は、違う役割を持っていると思う。 | 1 2 3 4 | |

- 問5 「なんとなく嫌な気持ちになる」で「1」もしくは「2」と答えた方に伺います。
どうしてそのような気持ちになると思いますか？自由に書いてください。
- 問6 「日本人の英語の先生と外国人の英語の先生は違う役割をもっている」で「1」もしくは「2」と答えた方に伺います。それぞれがどのような役割をもっていると思いますか。自由に書いてください。
- 問7 最後に、あなたは外国人の先生が授業において日本語を使うことをどのように感じますか。肯定的な意見でも、否定的な意見でも結構ですので、思いつくことを自由に書いてください。
- 問8 最後にあなた自身のことについて伺います。
- A. あなたは英語の授業が好きですか。あてはまる数字にひとつだけ○をつけてください。
とても好き まあまあ好き あまり好きではない 好きではない
1 2 3 4
- B. あなたの英語のレベルはどのくらいだと思いますか。あてはまる数字にひとつだけ○をつけてください。
高い やや高い 普通 やや低い 低い
1 2 3 4 5
- C. あなたは英会話の学校にいったことがありますか。あてはまる数字にひとつだけ○をつけてください。
現在通っている 過去に通ったことがある 通ったことはない
1 2 3
- D. あなたは英語圏に行ったことがありますか。あてはまる数字にすべて○をつけてください
1. 両親の仕事の都合で、英語圏に住んでいたことがある
2. 1年程度の語学留学をしたことがある
3. 1ヶ月程度の語学留学をしたことがある
4. 短期間の旅行をしたことがある
5. 英語圏にいったことはない
- E. あなたの性別を教えてください。 1. 男 2. 女
- F. さしつかえなければあなたの年齢を教えてください。 歳

Appendix 3: English translation of questionnaire (reformatted to save space)

This questionnaire is about the language used by the NATIVE English teacher that has taught you in this lesson

1. How often does your native English teacher use Japanese in class? Circle the appropriate number.

very often often sometimes rarely never
1 2 3 4 5

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2. For what purpose does your native English teacher use Japanese in class?

Tick (✓) the appropriate boxes (you can choose as many as you want).

- ☐ To translate vocabulary
- ☐ To explain grammar
- ☐ To explain English text
- ☐ To explain about the cultural background to English
- ☐ To discipline students
- ☐ To make jokes or tell funny stories
- ☐ Other (please be specific:

3. How do you feel about the amount of Japanese your teacher uses?

too much *a little too much* *just right* *should use a little more*
 1 2 3 4

4. In questions 3-9 tick the column with the heading that best summarizes your reaction to each statement.

agree *agree to some extent* *disagree to some extent* *disagree*
 1 2 3 4

A. In order to improve my English it is better if the native English teacher does not speak Japanese.

B. It deepens my understanding of English when a native English teacher speaks Japanese.

C. It is good for the atmosphere of the class if the native English teacher speaks Japanese.

D. A native teacher who speaks Japanese well is a good role model of a language learner and can therefore teach English well.

E. A native English teacher should not use Japanese if their level of Japanese is low.

F. I just don't like it when a native English speaker uses Japanese in class.

G. Japanese teachers of English and native speakers of English have different roles.

5. If you answered "1" or "2" to question F, please explain why.

6. If you answered "1" or "2" to question G, please explain why.

7. What do you think about native English teachers using Japanese during class? Whatever your opinion, positive or negative, please write what you feel below:

8. Finally, some questions about you.

A. Do you like your English conversation lessons? Please circle the appropriate number

like a lot *quite like* *don't really like* *don't like*
1 2 3 4

B. How would you rate your English level? Please circle the appropriate number

high *quite high* *average* *below average* *low*
1 2 3 4 5

C. Have you ever taken classes at a language school? Please circle the appropriate number.

I'm attending one at present *I Have attended one in the past* *I Have never attended one*
1 2 3

D. Have you ever been to an English speaking country? Please circle the appropriate number.

1. Have lived in one due to family circumstances (e.g. parent's job).
2. Have studied in one for about a year.
3. Have studied in one for about a month.
4. Have traveled to one on holiday.
5. Have never been to one.

E. Sex: 1. Male 2. Female

F. If you do not mind, please write your age: