

L1 in the L2 Classroom: Framing EFL teacher beliefs and practices

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Abstract

While English Language Teaching (ELT) teacher practice of excluding or ignoring the L1 is widespread, research points to the benefits of both teachers and students using the L1 as an effective tool in the L2 learning process. The proposed study aims to explore the issue of why teachers include, exclude or ignore the L1 from all classroom practice (student/teacher use) when the academic community has provided ample evidence of its benefits. Additionally, the study will contrast native English-speaking (NES) teacher beliefs and practices with those of non-native English-speaking (NNES) teachers. Particular attention will be paid to both students' and NNES teachers' perceptions of NES/NNES teaching proficiency and any connection to L1/TL practice. The proposed study ultimately aims to make connections between NES/NNES teacher belief formation, pedagogical practice and the market demand surrounding L1/TL use. The proposed research is unique in providing a comparative perspective on NNES and NES teachers from separate private EFL schools in homogeneous (FL) L1 classroom contexts.

Two case studies of different teaching environments will be used to engage various participants and yield maximum results. The two sites are distinct, private EFL schools in São Luis, Maranhao, Brazil. Through analysis of these two different teaching/learning environments, a cross-case analysis will be carried out over a period of approximately eight weeks. The collection and analysis of data will be based on a triangulation of data approach: an online teacher survey, limited classroom observation, comprehensive interviews with NES/NNES teachers from each school (slightly modified for administrator-teachers), teacher focus groups, an online student survey regarding L1/TL classroom expectations and practices, and document analysis (web marketing and policy documents). The comprehensive teacher interviews and teacher focus groups will be the primary tools for descriptive data collection concerning the variables affecting belief formation while classroom observation will potentially reveal any discrepancies between reported and actual teacher practice. Interviews will also provide information regarding perceptions of NNES/NES teacher proficiency. The online student survey will add to data collected from interviews with teachers, teacher administrators, and an analysis of web marketing and policy documents to provide information on NES/NNES teacher practice and its relation to EFL market demand in Brazil.

Introduction

Unspoken English-only policies are widespread in the adult EFL classroom. Years of employment in institutions that actively espouse or institutionally facilitate these policies have inspired me to seek some definitive data as to the motivation behind this policy and teaching approach. As a multilingual ESL/EFL teacher, I have used the L1 in my classrooms for several purposes, with both cognitive and affective benefits for students. As a NES teacher in both SL and FL contexts, however, I was certainly in the minority in using L1 inside the adult classroom. I was struck by the consistently negative attitude of institutions and many teachers within these schools towards L1 incorporation, and was conflicted about my supposed ‘improper’ practice. Indeed, at times, I regulated against my better judgment and banned the L1 from the classroom altogether. Several factors—teacher education, institutional policy, and pedagogical effectiveness—influenced my beliefs and my approach to L1 inclusion. The proposed study aims to expand on this list of factors and to investigate related variables influencing teacher beliefs and practices, including student and teacher perceptions of L1/TL use and NES/NNES teacher practice in the adult EFL classroom

This paper outlines a proposal for my MA thesis research, including research questions, rationale, theoretical framework/literature review and methodology. Commencing with the central and sub-questions to be researched, this proposal gives a rationale for the necessary, timely investigation of these questions, situated within a theoretical framework and related to previously done research in the area. Next, a brief overview of the research methodology precedes a discussion of the contributions, implications and limitations of the proposed research project.

Research Questions

The main research question guiding the proposed study is: Why do teachers include, ignore or exclude the L1 from adult EFL classroom practice (teacher/student use)? Sub-questions include: What are the factors contributing to teachers' belief formation regarding TL/L1 use? Do these teacher beliefs match practice? Are there differences between NES (monolingual/bilingual) and NNES teachers in terms of beliefs and practices? How is student demand for TL use related to NES/NNES teacher practice?

Rationale

The ELT profession has, for far too long, promoted L1 exclusionary practice. The proposed study aims to clarify why this is so by investigating the factors affecting teacher belief formation and practice. Through a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods, carried out in a dual case-study format, this proposed study can serve a variety of purposes: 1) Provide insight into the gap between the academic debate and teacher practices regarding TL/L1 use, 2) Allow a greater understanding of the variables that contribute to teachers' positioning regarding TL/L1 use, and 3) Highlight any differences between monolingual/ bilingual NES and NNES teacher beliefs and practices in homogeneous EFL contexts. Additionally, and perhaps most significantly, dissemination of findings could affect a policy shift in teacher education at private Brazilian teacher education institutions.

The proposed study is unique in that it will address gaps in previous research into teacher' belief formation regarding L1 inclusion/exclusion. Duff and Polio (1994) find certain factors important in teacher L1 inclusion/exclusion: teacher proficiency in target language, social status of target language, teachers' educational backgrounds, and departmental policy towards L1 use. The proposed study aims to expand on this list and highlight any differences between

NES and NNES teacher beliefs, including an exploration of the beliefs and practices of NES bilingual teachers, a group of teachers that has traditionally been ignored in previous research on the topic. The proposed research is a response to calls by Turnbull (2002) and Macaro (2005), to name just two, for more research into teacher beliefs surrounding the TL/L1 issue in order to gain further understanding of how these beliefs are influenced by the “complex inter-relating and intra-relating web of factors linked to the individual teacher, his or her students and the classroom, school and community context where he/she teachers” (Arnett and Turnbull, in press).

Theoretical Framework/Literature Review

The following section situates the rationale for the proposed research questions in a specific theoretical framework by reviewing the literature surrounding L1 inclusion/exclusion, including teacher beliefs and practices. Before reviewing the literature on L1 inclusion/exclusion and teacher beliefs and practices, however, it is useful to approach the issues at hand with a historical lens.

“Evolution” of ELT methods: Monolingual Domination

Monolingual instruction has been the norm since the end of the 19th century, when the Direct Method (based on first language acquisition) usurped the Grammar-Translation Method (based on translation between first and foreign languages) as the predominant approach to language teaching (Yu, 2000). The appearance of the Direct Method contributed greatly to the consolidation of the idea that all L1s should be excluded from the classroom. During the past century, few have challenged the superiority of the Direct Method principle: language can be learnt through the target language (intralingual) as opposed to comparing and contrasting it with the learner’s L1 (interlingual) (Stern, 1983). The past 30 years have seen a mixture of

monolingual approaches fused together under the banner of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). CLT, with its focus on speaking, has enjoyed incomparable success in the ELT world, with both ESL and EFL institutions claiming to employ its use. Although more recent methods such as the Communicative Method and the Task-based Approach do not overtly exclude the L1 from the classroom, the L1 is only mentioned when describing avoidance of its use (Cook, 2001). Overall, ELT has evolved over the past hundred or more years under the explicit and implicit assumption that the L1 has little or no place in the classroom (Howard, 1984; Cook, 2001). A brief look at neocolonial British language teaching policy and its influence on pedagogy is helpful in understanding the pervasive nature of teacher beliefs regarding a monolingual approach.

Ideology in ELT: Linguistic Imperialism

The English language and ELT has spread as a tool to aid British and, more recently, American hegemony (Pennycook, 1994). The spread of English and ELT in the 20th and 21st centuries has led to the flourishing of private language teaching institutions, like those that will be analyzed in the proposed study. Robert Phillipson's (1992) monolingual (English is best taught strictly using the target language) and native speaker (English is best taught by a native English speaker) fallacies are instructive in laying a foundation for explanation of the continued acceptance of these principles in ELT. The monolingual fallacy is especially relevant in an EFL context as such a theory rejects learners' "most intense existential experience" by excluding the L1 from the classroom (p. 189). Phillipson emphatically states that when the L1 is excluded from the classroom, teaching leads to "alienation of the learners, deprives them of their cultural identity, and leads to acculturation rather than increased intercultural communicative competence" (p. 193).

The monolingual tenet has not only social, but also economic consequences (Canagarajah, 1999; Phillipson, 1992; Phillipson, 1996; Pennycook, 1994). It legitimizes the idea of a global professional group of language teaching professionals who are, in essence equally qualified for employment anywhere there is demand for ELT. This creates jobs for monolingual centre professionals while subordinating and excluding such jobs for periphery professionals (Phillipson, 1992, p. 193). Additionally, this tenet allows for a monopoly on the production of teaching materials by the centre, for consumption by mainly periphery sources that in turn “reinforces anglocentricity and the hold of ELT professionalism” (p. 193). For the purposes of this study, this tenet is important in demonstrating, first, the strength of the monolingual fallacy in relation to modern day language teachers’ beliefs and practices, and, second, the basis on which unequal power relations exist in the ELT profession.

NNES teachers in ELT

The idea that English is best taught monolingually leads to the obvious conclusion that the best teacher of the language would then be a native speaker. This assumption has produced an unequal power dynamic among teachers of both EFL and ESL and has been questioned by many who feel, indeed, the opposite is true (Auerbach, 1993; Atkinson, 1987; Canagarajah, 1999; Cook, 2001). In a recent action research study, Rajagopalan (2005) opens with the statement, “NNSTs are typically treated as second class citizens in the world of language teaching. The problem is especially acute in the realm of teaching EFL” (p. 283). Although Rajagopalan is known for his problematization and critique of Phillipson’s notion of linguistic imperialism, the author cannot deny that in his home country of Brazil the differential treatment of NES and NNES teachers is obvious and produces a situation in which “many NNSTs need to be re-educated so as to recognize that many of their job-related woes are actually the result of a

well-orchestrated program designed to guarantee privileged status for certain groups of people to the detriment of others” (p. 293). Continuing from a political economy perspective, Canagarajah (1999) underscores the political and economic consequences stemming from the NES/NNES dichotomy, including the unequal pay, unequal opportunity, and manufactured consent created by an industry moved by the “force of the economic and political interests behind the ESL enterprise that even basic linguistic notions may be suppressed or distorted to support these ulterior motives” (p. 81). As illustrated by a review of the empirical evidence in the next section, the effectiveness of L1 in L2 classrooms is indeed one of these basic linguistic notions.

L1 in the L2 Classroom

The ascent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), an approach introduced in Great Britain in the 1960s, has had a significant impact on teachers’ beliefs as to L1 use in the EFL classroom. CLT proposes exclusive use of the target language, providing an authentic, “student-centered” learning experience (Long, 1991). Indeed CLT embodies a method that includes the three main arguments for excluding or ignoring the L1 in the language classroom: 1) The learning of an L2 should model the learning of an L1 (through maximum exposure to the L2); 2) Successful learning involves the separation and distinction of L1 and L2; and 3) Students should be shown the importance of the L2 through its continual use (Cook, 2001, p. 412). These three categories of argument have little empirical evidence to support them, but have nevertheless remained pervasive in the ELT profession. Research on L1 inclusion, however, tells a different story.

Cognitive Benefits

From the field of bilingualism, Cummins’ *Interdependence Principle* is instructive in that it provides evidence of a “common underlying proficiency” that enables cross-linguistic transfer

of academic/cognitive literacy skills (Cummins, 1981). This principle seems to fly in the face of any theory that purports the superiority or correctness of separating languages from one another in the learning process. Anton and DiCamilla (1998), in a study particularly relevant to the beginner/intermediate adult FL classroom, find further cognitive benefits from an incorporation of L1 in the language classroom. Their findings point to the benefits of students using the L1 as a scaffold to help peer learning, clearly demonstrating the positive role the L1 can play in carrying out collaborative tasks and thereby creating opportunities to use and learn the L2. Swain and Lapkin (2000) further the cognitive benefit argument for L1 use by suggesting denial of student access to the L1 while completing collaborative tasks is denying an “invaluable” cognitive tool (p. 254). Results from their study show that students used the L1 for a variety of reasons, including increasing efficiency, focusing attention, and facilitating interpersonal interactions.

Affective Benefits

A study by Schweers (1999) finds that 88.7% of Spanish-speaking Puerto Rican adult students studying English wanted L1 used in the class because it facilitates learning. Students also desired up to 39% of class time to be spent in L1 (p. 7). This study demonstrates not only student demand for teacher L1 use, but also for teaching pedagogy that allows the L1 to be “respected” on an even plane with English in the FL classroom (p. 12).

Auerbach (1993), a fierce critic of exclusive TL use in the adult SL classroom, attacks a monolingual approach for being “rooted in a particular ideological perspective, being largely unexamined and reinforcing societal inequities” (p. 9). Auerbach’s research findings point to significant affective benefits of L1 incorporation in the adult ESL classroom. Her study of beginner level ESL learners, mostly of Spanish-speaking origins, shows the significant affective benefits of L1 use: it “reduces anxiety and enhances the affective environment for

learning... facilitates incorporation of learners' life experiences, and allows for learner-centered curriculum development" (p. 20). She goes on to assert that the most important benefit of L1 incorporation is that it allows for "language to be used as a meaning-making tool and for language learning to become a means of communicating ideas rather than an end in itself" (p. 20).

EFL: Homogeneous L1 context

The EFL classroom is seen by many as the ideal site for inclusion of the L1. Atkinson (1987) cites a variety of purposes for L1 inclusion in the FL classroom: negotiation of the syllabus and lesson (teacher-student), classroom management, scene setting, language analysis, presentations of rules governing grammar, phonology, morphology, spelling, discussion of cross-cultural issues, instructions or prompts, explanation of errors and assessment of comprehension (p. 241). Obviously, Atkinson's list includes both outcome and affective-based reasons for incorporating the L1. Atkinson further believes that more attention and research should be focused on the L1 as a positive resource for teachers. Cook (2001) advances his own list of advisable instances for L1 incorporation: conveying meaning or concepts, explaining grammar, organizing the class or specific tasks, maintaining discipline, establishing a closer relationship with students, peer translation, and bilingual dictionaries (p. 415). Based on four criteria (efficiency, learning outcome, naturalness, and external relevance), Cook argues for principled teacher L1 use in the FL classroom. Efficiency is seen as paramount in the FL classroom as students generally have limited time to use the TL (p. 413). However, rather than arguing for absolute adherence to the TL due to limited exposure, many see this as more reason to use the L1 in order to facilitate transitions to important TL usage opportunities/activities (Butzkamm, 2005; Atkinson, 1987; Cook 2001).

Codeswitching

Codeswitching, defined by Coste (1997) as “alternating rapidly between two languages in either oral or written expression”, strongly indicates both cognitive and affective benefits of this bilingual instructional mode (Macaro, 1997; Macaro, 2005; Cook, 2001). In his review of positive L1 modalities, Cook (2001) asserts that teaching methods involving code-switching, where the teacher uses the L1 and TL concurrently for certain tasks, creates an especially authentic learning environment for FL learners. The importance of codeswitching as a pedagogical resource for bilingual teachers in homogeneous classrooms cannot be overstated yet remains an under-researched area in EFL. It seems apparent that codeswitching is an invaluable resource for bilingual/multilingual teachers working with heterogeneous students, a resource simply unavailable to the monolingual teacher.

The findings of this review of literature on the inclusion/exclusion of the L1 in SL/FL classrooms are twofold. First, there is little empirical evidence to support a monolingual approach to SL/FL teaching. Second, evidence points to significant benefits of including the L1 in the L2 learning process.

Teacher Beliefs & Practices: L1/TL Use in the FL classroom

A review of literature on teacher beliefs was difficult because of differing terminology with respect to what signifies beliefs. For the purposes of the proposed study, I will employ Borg’s (2003) definition, “ teachers’ pedagogic beliefs or those beliefs of relevance to an individual’s teaching” (p. 82). Additionally, the proposed study will operate under the assumption that, as Richards (1996) posits, teachers’ decisions and actions can be conceptualized by looking at the “working principles or maxims which teachers consciously or unconsciously refer to as they teach” (p. 282). Further studies confirming the accepted idea that theoretical

beliefs heavily influence teacher practice have motivated SLA researchers to investigate these beliefs more closely in order to inform the field of second and foreign language teacher education (Johnson, 1994; Pajares, 1992; Turnbull, 2001).

Although most research into teacher beliefs and practices regarding L1/TL use in adult classrooms is from a University FL classroom setting (Barcelos, 2003; Duff & Polio, 1990; Polio & Duff, 1994; Guthrie, 1987; Macaro, 2001; Wing, 1987), it is assumed that these studies can be directly related to any FL teaching/learning context, including that of private EFL institutions. Turnbull (2001) in an investigation of pre-service teacher candidates' beliefs and attitudes about TL/L1 use found that students had well-formed notions about teachers' optimum L2 use, a belief that did not change significantly throughout the practicum. In another large-scale investigation of teachers' beliefs and attitudes, Macaro (1997) found that teachers, although seeing L2 use as important, view strict adherence to the TL as impossible and undesirable, with student proficiency in the L2 as the main factor prompting teacher L1 use. The possibility that teacher education does not always affect teacher beliefs regarding L1 use is important and opens the door for further investigation into what other factors might affect such belief formation (Turnbull, 2002). Duff and Polio (1994), in a study of FL teachers' beliefs and practices, found certain factors, including teacher proficiency in the target language, institutional policy towards L1 use, and social status of the target language to be influential. In a recent study of ESL teachers in Australia, Ellis (2006) found teachers' language learning history to be a strong influence on teacher beliefs. Clearly, there is no definitive list of factors influencing teacher beliefs. Indeed, Turnbull (2007) goes as far as stating that a definitive answer is impossible because of a complex web of factors influencing beliefs. The proposed study does not aim to

solve the teacher belief riddle, but rather strives to untangle the web in order to highlight factors specific to a Brazilian adult EFL classroom context.

Research on the disparity between beliefs and practices is more interesting still. That NES and NNES teachers have different beliefs and practices regarding L1 use is not surprising, but that these beliefs do not always result in practice reflecting such beliefs is telling. Teachers whose practices do not mesh with their beliefs are either unaware of their L1 use or affected by other factors (Duff & Polio 1994; Turnbull, 2005). NNES teachers who feel guilty about their L1 inclusionary practices can be seen as an indication of possible external factors, such as pressure to follow explicit or implicit institutional policy towards L1/Tl use (Mitchell, 1988; Macaro, 2005). Teacher education and institutional policy are two variables high on the list of possible factors influencing teacher practices regarding TL/L1 use.

This brief review of literature clearly demonstrates the necessity of further studies into both teacher beliefs and practices regarding TL/L1 use. This study aims to add to this field, with a major focus on what factors influence teacher beliefs and a minor focus on whether or not these beliefs match practice.

Methodology

Participants

For reasons of confidentiality, institutions participating in the proposed research will be referred to by the pseudonyms School A and B until such time that each institution chooses its preferred pseudonym. School A is a cultural exchange organization based in northeastern Brazil with branches offering English language courses throughout north and northeastern Brazil, including Sao Luis where the proposed study will take place. School A is owned by a husband and wife team who function as teacher-administrators. School A employs approximately 15

teachers, has approximately 100 adult students at various levels and runs its own teacher training program.

School B is a chain of language schools based in southeastern Brazil with over 300 branches throughout the country, including Sao Luis. School B is, like School A, owned by a husband and wife team who function as teacher-administrators. The school employs approximately 30 teachers, has approximately 250 adult students at various levels and runs its own teacher training program.

The main participants of the proposed study will be NES and NNES teachers of adults from School A and B. The goal is to have six NES and ten NNES participants total, as evenly distributed as possible between the two schools. Ideally, the two administrator-teachers from each school will participate (for a total of four administrator-teachers). Other study participants will include adult students from both schools who volunteer to fill out an online survey. Each data collection tool is described in further detail below.

Research Tools

Collecting data from a number of sources will allow for triangulation. The data collected will include: an online teacher survey, limited classroom observation, comprehensive interviews with teachers (NES/NNES) from each school (slightly modified for teacher-administrators), teacher focus groups, an online student survey regarding L1 classroom expectations and practices, and document analysis (web marketing and policy documents). The comprehensive teacher interviews and teacher focus groups will be the primary tools of data collection for the variables surrounding NES/NNES teacher belief formation regarding L1/TL use. Classroom observation will be used to reveal any discrepancies between reported and actual teacher practice. The online student survey will add to data collected from interviews with teacher-

administrators. Analysis of web marketing and policy documents will provide information on NES/NNES teacher practice and its relation to EFL market demand in Brazil. Each data collection tool is described in further detail below.

Online Teacher Survey

Quantitative survey design and analysis software Survey Wizard 2 will be used to design both the student and teacher survey-questionnaires. Survey Wizard allows for design of an online survey providing access to participants through a link. Upon completion of the survey by participants, responses are stored and exported to SPSS or Excel. The researcher has access to participant responses.

The 20-30 minute survey-questionnaire will be in English and questions (multiple choice, rating, and fill-in-the-blank) will concern teachers' backgrounds, preferred TL/L1 practices, and other pedagogical preferences. Two questions will directly address the central issue of TL/L1 use. This survey-questionnaire will serve three main functions in this study. First, it provides quantitative data regarding background information, including, but not limited to: NES/NNES self-identification, age, prior teaching experience, and self-rated English proficiency. Second, using Likert-scale questions, it provides a relatively simple way to identify teachers with strong opinions about TL/L1 use. These teachers are the desired participants for semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Finally, the survey-questionnaire identifies the participants willing to participate in further data collection. The survey questionnaire will be distributed by email to potential participants (all EFL teachers of adults at each school) approximately two weeks before the researcher's arrival at the research sites. Upon arrival on-site, the researcher will provide a final opportunity to potentially interested participants to fill-out the survey-questionnaire before scheduling observation and interview sessions with research participants.

Observation

Observation sessions will be limited to one 45-60 minute period for each participant. Time considerations and the focus on interviews and focus groups as the main data gathering tools make these sessions necessarily brief. The researcher will be an “observer”; students and teachers will be informed that the researcher will not take part in class activities but rather observe silently. The researcher will use both a tape recorder and written record to note L1 use/utterances by both teachers and students. Teachers’ reactions to student L1 utterances will be noted, as well. If permission cannot be obtained to use a tape recorder, a written record will suffice. Teacher and student use/exclusion/ignorance of L1 will be compared to information provided by the participant on the survey-questionnaire and during the semi-structured interview. Upon completion of the observation, the researcher and teacher will agree upon a time for a semi-structured interview that will take place (at the request of the participant) either at the school or a neutral location, such as a quiet café.

Interview

The main data collection tool in the proposed study is that of a semi-structured 45-60 minute interview (minimum) with NES/NNES teachers and, in a slightly modified form, with teacher-administrators. Interviews will consist of questions surrounding the TL-L1 issue and its relationship to NES/NNES teacher practice. Questions, while pre-determined, will be flexible enough to take into account NES/NNES identification, participant responses on the online survey-questionnaire and issues arising from observation. Questions will range from simple verification of survey information to in-depth questions related to teacher and student TL-L1 use. Participants will be encouraged to expand on questions of interest. Though a preference for English as the interview language will be stressed, in the case of a lack of proficiency,

nervousness or anxiety, participants will be allowed to express themselves in Portuguese. The researcher's advanced level of aural/oral proficiency in Portuguese will facilitate any such interactions.

The content of teacher-administrator interviews will be modified slightly. Questions concerning influence of institutional policy on teacher TL/L1 beliefs and practices will be framed in such a way that interviewees speak to their perceived influence on teacher TL/L1 practices. These administrators are still instructors, though, so many of the interview questions will remain the same.

Focus Group

One 60-90 minute focus group will be carried out at each school, ideally with six teachers (four NNES, two NES). Participants will be selected on the basis of their survey-questionnaire and interview responses, with preference given to those holding polemic views (L1 inclusionary/L1 exclusionary). Focus group questions will be shaped by information collected through the survey-questionnaire, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. Following an introductory phase, participants will speak to their prior teaching experience and TL proficiency levels. Next, statements regarding TL/L1 use and its connection to NES/NNES teacher practice will be read aloud (rotating among participants) in order to precipitate a discussion. The researcher will not participate in the discussion except to help moderate and facilitate a productive exchange of ideas.

Document Analysis

A document analysis of each school will be carried out that will include data collection from the school websites, posters, and classroom walls. The website will be analyzed for signs of official preference for TL/L1 use and/or NES/NNES teachers. Website analysis will be carried

out prior to researcher arrival on-site and will inform teacher-administrator interview questions. Posters and signs will similarly be analyzed in terms of expressing institutional and individual teacher preference for TL-only use or L1 inclusion. Analysis of on-site posters and classroom signs may produce additional teacher interview questions.

Online Student Survey

The final research tool will be an online student survey-questionnaire regarding his/her expectations as to teacher and student TL/L1 use in the adult EFL classroom. Questions will concern student opinions as to any linguistic/cultural consequences of L1 inclusion/exclusion. Additional questions will be aimed at eliciting student preferences/opinions about NES versus NNES teachers and their practice. As is the case with the teacher survey, the student survey-questionnaire will be sent to students via email along with a consent form explaining the voluntary nature of participation and the absolute anonymity of participants. This tool will provide information regarding the issue of student expectations, market demand and teacher practice as well as perceived teacher/student TL/L1 use (thus highlighting any disparity between student and teacher perceptions). The survey-questionnaire will be administered in English or Portuguese (student choice) with the aim of accommodating adult learners of all English proficiency levels.

Data Analysis

Beginning with document analysis (school websites) one month before arrival on-site. Tools will be modified relative to the efficacy of each technique in each phase of data collection. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be analyzed.

Data collected from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups will constitute the main data for analysis. Transcription and coding of interviews and focus group discussions will

provide the basis for analysis and a rich description of teacher and teacher-administrator attitudes towards TL-L1 use in the adult classroom and associated issues. Analysis of the online student survey-questionnaire will be juxtaposed with teachers' perceptions of their own practice and what they perceive as student expectations to be with the explicit aim of highlighting any connections between student demand and teacher practice. Analysis of the survey-questionnaires will be aided by Survey Wizard 2, a software program containing an interface for designing and managing surveys and exporting data for analysis using SPSS.

Contributions, Implications & Limitations

The proposed study has the potential to make several critical contributions to the field, including but not restricted to 1) adding to the limited but emerging literature regarding teacher beliefs and TL/L1 use in the FL classroom; 2) highlighting differences between NES and NNES teacher beliefs and practices; 3) adding to the emerging literature on NNES teacher practice and giving voice to this group; and 4) adding to an understanding of how L1/TL use/exclusion is linked to monolingual versus bilingual teacher practice and the resulting implications for NNES teachers in the political economy of ELT.

There are two potential implications stemming from the dissemination of the results of the proposed study: 1) a minor policy shift in private Brazilian teacher education programs and 2) increased self-reflection regarding teacher practice and TL/L1 use at Schools A and B and, potentially, their affiliates throughout Brazil.

The proposed study is not without its limitations. First, and foremost, observation time is limited, making it difficult to verify with confidence a match between stated teacher beliefs (survey-questionnaire) and teacher practice. Due to time constraints and multiple research goals, this is a necessary evil. The researcher is cognizant, however, that the mismatch between teacher

beliefs and practices is a topic in need of further attention, particularly in private EFL school contexts. Second, a possible pitfall is the lack of NES teachers available to participate in the proposed study. If there are not enough willing participants at the schools A and B, NES teachers will have to be recruited from other cities around the country, in which case they would only participate in the survey and interview phases. The final study limitation is the possible potentially negative perception of the researcher by participating teachers. Being labeled an “outsider” could result in teachers (especially NNEST ones) being less than forthcoming with their responses in the semi-structured interviews. However, with the cooperation of the administrators and head teachers, such anxieties should be able to be diffused.

Conclusion

Empirical evidence clearly supports the inclusion of the L1 in L2 classrooms. The proposed study aims to investigate questions relating to the possible discord between SLA theory and ELT practice. The proposed study is both timely and relevant. It will provide significant contributions to both SLA research and ELT practice and have meaningful implications ranging from improved teacher reflectivity and practice to a potential policy shift in Brazilian EFL teacher education programs.

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