
Behind Classroom Code Switching: Layering and Language Choice in L2 Learner Interaction

Behind Classroom Code Switching: Layering and Language Choice in L2 Learner Interaction

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This article examines the code switching that goes on during group work in language classes in which the learners share an L1. The author argues that the discourse produced in these circumstances is layered as a result of the participants' oscillating between a literal and a nonliteral frame (Goffman, 1974). Discourse produced in the literal frame is termed *off-record* and is concerned with negotiation between the learners. Discourse in the literal frame is *on-record* and is performed to be overheard by a referee (a potential L2 audience). The author suggests that the significance of language choice behaviour differs across these two levels, and teachers concerned with increasing the quantity and quality of L2 production in group work must take this difference into account.

There has been much interest in recent years in the interaction that goes on between learners when they are asked to work unsupervised in pairs or groups during a language lesson. The issue is of some importance, because "many ESL educators agree that in order to promote communicative competence, learners must get practice in speaking in communicative exchanges in the classroom" (Porter, 1986, p. 202). Given that many language classes in the world are too large to allow the teacher to interact with each learner individually to provide this practice, group work is the only alternative.

However, many teachers justifiably worry about the quality of the language practice that group work provides. There is, for example, the question of whether the learners teach each other errors. Many researchers have suggested that they do not. Long and Porter (1985), for example, suggest that group work does not compromise accuracy significantly and claim that it has important benefits from both pedagogical and psycholinguistic perspectives. It is beyond the scope of this article to review and discuss such claims in detail; instead I take it as given

that talking can play an important part in learning, even when the interlocutor is a fellow learner with the same L1.

Most research on classroom interaction has been concerned with teacher-learner interaction. Of the more limited research on learner-learner interaction, most has focused on learners from different language backgrounds. Gass and Varonis (1984), for example, claim that negotiation between learners is an important benefit of group work. Their study involved dyads of learners with different native languages who could therefore not use those languages to negotiate. However, a possibly more common situation is one in which the learners in a class share a native language. In such circumstances, that language is always available for any negotiation that becomes necessary. In fact, such learners could conduct a group task entirely in their native language. In such contexts it is important to investigate the language choice behaviour of participants in group work to see how much of the target language they actually use, what the quality of that language is, and what the possibilities are for improving both the quantity and the quality of their target language use.

This article reports the findings of an investigation into the language choice behaviour of pairs of learners with a shared language background involved in language learning tasks in the classroom. I suggest that the discourse produced in this situation is layered in the manner described by Goffman (1974, 1981) and that language choice norms vary across these layers. In particular, it seems that in this context, discourse oscillates between a layer in which individuals wish to signal their in-group status to one another and an additional layer in which they defer to an out-group listener. I also argue that on different occasions when learners select the L2, it is of varying quality depending on the *footing* (Goffman, 1981) or alignment the speaker adopts. I identify and contrast two particular qualities of language use, namely, *cited* and *recited* language.

The remainder of this article is divided into three sections. First, I describe the context and method of the study. Following that is a section detailing the theoretical background to the study. In the final section I present an analysis of the data, including a detailed classification and description of the characteristic features in each of the layers in the discourse.

CONTEXT AND DATA

The data for this study consist of two sets of recordings of learners attending an intensive summer course at a private English language school in Madrid. The two preintermediate classes, called *A* and *B* here,

each consisted of 18 learners ranging in age from 14 to 17 years. The first set of recordings was made 2 weeks into the month-long course, and the second set was made at the end of the course. The recordings are of learners performing tasks in pairs without teacher supervision in an area isolated from the rest of the class. I collected the two sets of data under slightly different conditions, which may explain some interesting differences highlighted in the analysis.

The task for the first set of recordings was to perform a role play in a restaurant in which one learner was a waiter and the other a customer. The only cue for the role play was a menu. The teacher briefly explained the task before recording began, but the participants were not given preparation time. In the first set of recordings, the participants were paired with classmates of their own choosing.

The task for the second set of recordings was to perform a role play set in a guesthouse with one participant cast as landlady and the other as a guest. A set of instructions provided guidance on what to talk about, and participants were given a few minutes to study it before beginning. In the second recording, participants worked with a partner from the other class, so each pair consisted of a learner from Class A and a learner from Class B. The only opportunity these partners had to get to know each other was the preparation time they were allowed.

The part of the corpus that was transcribed for analysis consists of 42 minutes of taped interaction—21 minutes from each set of recordings. This figure represents the total of the first 1½ minutes of every usable recorded performance, that length of time being the minimum length of the performances. There are 14 role-play performances in each set.

The recordings constituted part of the learners' oral assessment for the course, and this is the reason they were given for making the recording. In parts of the recording the participants display an awareness of this. Most of the participants were probably not used to being recorded, and particularly in the first set of recordings there is evidence that it carries some novelty value.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

To discuss the layering in the discourse, I use the concept of *frame* outlined by Goffman (1974). Frames are speakers' definitions of the kind of activity they are engaged in. For example, a speaker who is joking communicates this fact as a metamessage (Tannen, 1993). For the purposes of this study, a useful simplification is to distinguish two frames that the participants oscillate between: a *literal frame* and a *nonliteral frame* (Goffman, 1974). In the literal frame, the subjects are behaving as their normal selves, whereas in the nonliteral frame they are role-playing.

In each frame, the participants invoke a different set of role relationships. In the literal frame, they align to one another as in-group equals. They do not regard anyone who might overhear what they say as a ratified participant. In the nonliteral frame they adopt different roles and a different definition of whom they regard as a ratified participant. For when these learners are speaking English with one another, it is a performance, which implies an audience. That is, whoever might overhear is meant to overhear. Under the observation of a teacher or a researcher's microphone, this third participant is a palpable reality. I suggest, however, that even when two learners are speaking to one another in private, a third participant is implied when the two select the L2—an idealised native speaker of the L2 or the teacher perhaps. Following Bell (1990), I call this absent but salient audience a *referee*, and I call those aspects of a performance targeted at the referee *referee design*. One could say that referee design makes group work viable in the monolingual language class because the teacher cannot monitor everyone all the time.

In this study, in which the learners were asked to do a role play in English, the L2 discourse is a performance, the product of collaboration between the two learners. That collaboration itself is the literal frame in the situation; the performance is the nonliteral frame. The discourse produced in the literal frame is labelled here as *off-record* to reflect the fact that it is not intended as part of the performance, and the discourse produced in the nonliteral frame is labelled as *on-record*. These two labels become particularly apt when the interaction is being tape-recorded because the participants try to keep their off-record discourse off the tape recording by whispering or at least lowering their volume. Thus volume of delivery becomes a contextualization cue (Gumperz, 1982), that is, a sign of the participants' metamessage.

Along with volume, code choice can be regarded as a contextualization cue (Auer, 1995). These two contextualization cues result in a redundancy that is serendipitous for the analyst in that it "provides methodological access to the conversational functions of one cue" (p. 124). In the data, there is a strong tendency for low volume and the L1 to co-occur, combining to signal the literal frame. Thus it is possible to identify the L1 as the *unmarked code* in off-record discourse. Code marking here is discussed in terms of the theory of markedness presented in Myers-Scotton (1983), where code choice symbolises what the speaker wishes to be the rights and obligations set in force in a given exchange. The unmarked code choice is that which symbolises the set of rights and obligations established by precedent.

I suggest that the unmarked code is different in the two layers of the discourse. Whereas the unmarked code in the off-record layer is the L1, in the on-record layer it is the L2. With the unmarked code thus

established, the participants can use the marked code to mark disconformity to the rights and obligations set they perceive to be in operation. In the analysis to follow, I discuss examples of marked language choice. In one important case, however, English (the L2) may be unmarked in the off-record layer: when English is presented as a model or a response to a *How do you say X in English?*-type question. It is English as artefact rather than as language in use, and I call it *cited* English. A peculiar quality of cited English is that it is not taken as a challenge of Participant A's code nomination if A asks, "How do you say X in English?" in Spanish and B supplies X in English.

The phenomenon of cited language may be discussed in terms of Goffman's (1981) concept of *footing*, the alignment that participants in interaction take with regard to one another. Traditionally, these alignments have only been two: speaker or hearer. In his work on footing, Goffman suggests that the picture is much more complex. He attacks the notion of *speaker* as being oversimplified, saying that various roles are embodied in what has been traditionally called *speaker*. There is the actual utterer, or *animator*; the composer of the wording, or *author*; and the one responsible for the message, or *principal*. The combination of these roles adopted by a speaker in a given turn is termed the *production format*. In normal conversation, the speaker may embody all three roles so that the production format may be said to be complete. But in cited language, in which the focus is on wording, not message, the speaker does not take on the role of principal, and the production format is incomplete.

I argue in the analysis that L2 use in the on-record layer is also often characterised by an incomplete production format. For example, in some cases a speaker reads or repeats a line, sometimes without understanding it. Such a speaker does not embody the role of author and, in the case of nonunderstanding, embodies neither author nor principal. When one of these conditions seems to be the case, I call it *recited* English.

Examples of both cited and recited language can be seen in Extract 1, taken from the data.¹

¹ Transcription conventions are based on those in Schiffrin (1994), with two important exceptions: Low-volume or whispered utterances indicated by underlining, and subordinate exchanges are boxed. The concept of *subordinate exchange*, from Hoey (1993), is equivalent to what Jefferson (1972) calls *side sequences*, essentially segments of talk outside the main flow of the discourse. Low-volume utterances and subordinate exchanges are indicated in this way to make them salient in the transcripts because they help delimit the layers in the discourse and the markedness of the language produced. Laughter is indicated in the transcripts for the same reason.

There is no absolute division between normal and low-volume talk, and the terms are relative to one another, so that one person's low volume might be louder than another person's

1.

1	Ev	<u>que digo</u> [what shall I say]
2	Er	{ anything else?
3	Ev	anything else?

In Line 2, the English is cited; in Line 3, it is recited. The cited line is produced in the literal frame as assistance to the other participant, who in this case does not know what to say next. The recited line is produced in the nonliteral frame, in this case as a turn attributable to the waiter whom Ev is role-playing. The line is recited in that Ev did not author it; she merely repeated it. This example is discussed in more detail in the next section.

ANALYSIS: A TWO-LAYERED PATTERN OF DISCOURSE

In the transcripts, the on-record discourse (outside the boxes) can be read straight through and makes sense as a dialogue even if the reader ignores the off-record (boxed) segments. It is this dialogue that the participants are offering as the product of their efforts. The off-record discourse represents what the participants have had to do in the process of creating this product. It cannot be interpreted without reference to

normal volume. Inevitably, then, there is some subjectivity in the transcription regarding underlining.

A difficulty in the transcription was distinguishing the indefinite article from hesitation; indeed, in some cases an utterance might be both simultaneously. Similarly, it is not always possible to say if the word *no* is Spanish or English. In the analysis, however, little depends on these distinctions.

The transcription conventions are as follows:

..	short pause
...	1-second pause; additional dots each represent 1 second
:	lengthened word
{	start of an overlap/interruption
()	not clearly audible
CAPS	emphatic stress
<i>italics</i>	Spanish
?	rising intonation
~	continuing intonation
.	falling intonation
!	animated tone
<u>underlining</u>	whispered or lower volume than surrounding talk
[laugh]	laughter
[]	translations and editorial comment (e.g., tone of voice)
B	marginal comment; boundary exchange
*	marginal comment; Spanish joke or insertion
[]	subordinate exchange

the on-record discourse. The off-record exchanges therefore include subordinate exchanges. Here is an example from the data:

2.

1	M	forty-nine pounds.
2	B	eh <u>cara como se dice</u> [how do you say expensive]
3	M	<u>expensive</u>
4	B	is very expec- expensive eh?

In Extract 2, M (the waiter) tells B (the customer) how much the bill is, and B responds. But embedded in this segment of the exchange is a subordinated exchange in which B asks how to say a word and M supplies the answer.

Apart from subordinate exchanges embedded within the discourse, off-record discourse also includes *boundary exchanges* (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975), that is, discourse at the very beginning and end of the performance that brackets it. Boxes that contain boundary exchanges are indicated with a (B) in the margin to distinguish them from subordinate exchanges.

It is striking that most of the whispered or low-volume discourse occurs in the subordinate exchanges. There are 63 such exchanges in the data, and of these, only 6 contain discourse at normal volume (these exceptions are discussed in the analysis that follows). There is virtually no whispering or low volume in the on-record discourse, setting up a strong expectation that subordinate exchanges will be whispered or low volume. However, the patterning is not so clear for boundary exchanges. Of the 15 boundary exchange boxes in the data, 4 contain whispered or low-volume discourse, 4 normal-volume, and 7 a bit of both. The tendency to low-volume delivery is much less pronounced, then, in boundary exchanges, suggesting that for many speakers the record does not really begin until the first on-record turn and ends at the last one.

Making boundary exchanges in the L1 seems almost obligatory. The force of this obligation is illustrated well by the result of an experimental teaching activity I informally trialled called *role-playing role-playing*. The example also serves to illustrate the layered quality of learner discourse.

I played the recording of one of the restaurant role plays to an advanced class and asked the students to perform it in reverse, imagining they were English-speaking learners of Spanish. Thus they performed off-record discourse in English and on-record discourse in Spanish. I then asked the learners to do the whole role play in English, including the off-record discourse. I recorded one pair doing this activity and

found two boundary exchanges, one low volume and in Spanish and the other theatrically whispered in English. Thus there were now three layers: on-record, pseudo off-record (hence the theatrical whispering), and the real off-record, or literal footing, still intact despite my tampering. This layering stands as a clear, if engineered, example of what Goffman (1981) calls *laminated talk*, where footings are embedded and reembedded. One can easily imagine further embedding in an activity that could be called *role-playing role-playing role-playing*, and so on ad infinitum. The pedagogical implications of this activity are that learners may be made more aware of the layering in their discourse and potentially in the longer term do more of their off-record negotiation in the target language. In the short term, as illustrated in the example above, at least they can laminate their L2 production more.

The particular language learning context that forms the subject of the present study has, I argue, produced a pronounced two-layered patterning in the learners' discourse. I also suggest that markedness of code choice and the quality of language produced vary across these layers. To give a closer view of how this variety is manifested in the actual discourse, I describe the characteristic features of each layer in the order, top to bottom, in which they appear in Figure 1. In the figure, the higher order classifications are on the left, and the lower order subclassifications are on the right.

Features of Off-Record Discourse

The unmarked code for off-record discourse in the present data is Spanish or cited English. Virtually all the off-record discourse in the data is unmarked. The two cases in which the activity is announced, as if the participants are entitling it, are marked. For example, one participant says "in a restaurant" and marks it by speaking loudly and close into the microphone. The only other exception is described below at Extract 13.

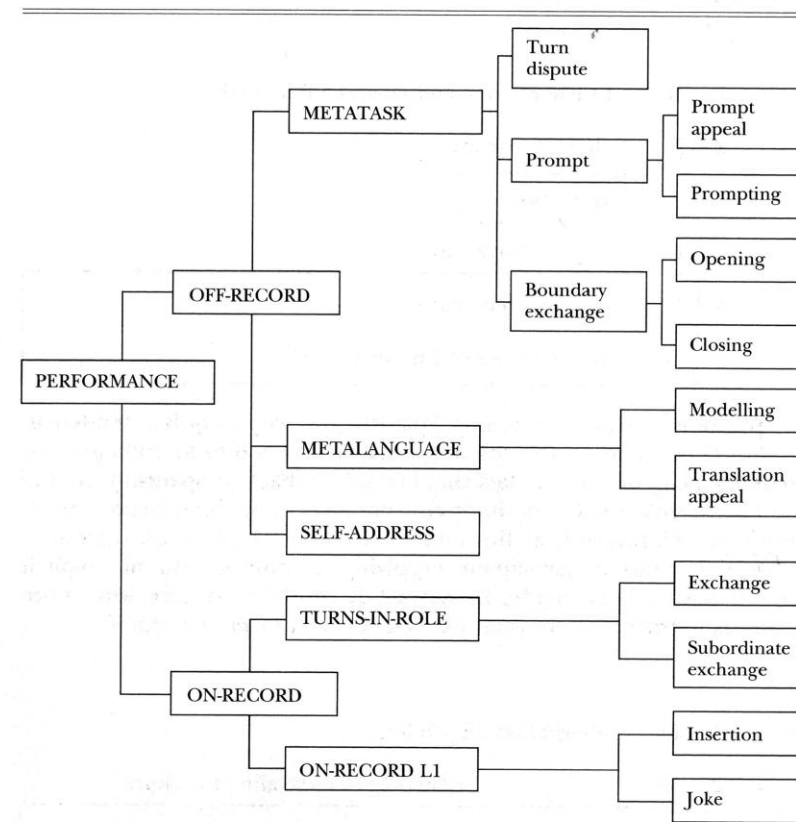
Off-record discourse broadly divides into discourse about the task (*metatask*) and discourse about the language (*metalinguage*), though the distinction is not always clear. There is a third, less common category in the data that I have called *self-address*, in which the participant appears to be talking to himself or herself.

Metatask Discourse

Metatask discourse includes establishing who should say what when. Extract 3 shows an example, which I call a *turn dispute*.

FIGURE 1

Features of Off-Record and On-Record Discourse



3.

1 G do you like to have a shower?

2 MM yes please . . .

3 *eso lo preguntava yo* [I was going to ask that]

4 G *no*

5 MM *es para mi* [it's for me]

6 can I have a shower?

In Extract 4, J prompts G to proceed to the next cue on the role card, an example of *prompting*.

4.

1 G I I like eh toast and eh and a little milk.

2 J eh: here you are . . .

taza [cup]

3 G {thank you.

4 J taza, taza [cup cup]

5 G ah! oi, no, sorry, I'm sorry . . . really.

J prompts G with low-volume Spanish; the word *cup* is intended to remind G of a cue on the role card that instructs him to apologise for breaking a cup of tea. The fact that J translates back to Spanish from the cue on the role card is perhaps convergence to his interlocutor. In so doing, he reinforces it as the unmarked code for metatask discourse. Excerpt 4 shows a participant supplying a prompt with no explicit request having been made. In Extract 1, reproduced here with more cotext as Extract 5, there is an explicit request, or *prompt appeal*.

5.

1 Ev eh what would you like?

2 Er {[laugh] . . . I like ahm: fruit juice.

3 Ev que digo. [what shall I say]

4 Er {anything else?

5 Ev anything else?

6 Er [laugh] ehm yes, eh I like eh: a tomato salad.

Er provides a prompt in English of what Ev should say (which I call *prompting*). Er's model is cited English and thus the unmarked code, but it is marked by not being low volume. Goffman's (1981) speaker roles in the production format, discussed above, may help to explain what this markedness amounts to. When a speaker performs a prompt off-record

by whispering, the prompted speaker is able to sustain the impression, in the on-record layer, that he or she personally composed the message and thus includes the role of author in his or her production format. But a prompt performed at full volume intrudes into the on-record layer so that the prompted speaker cannot then seriously retain author status. Instead, the prompter has stolen this role, leaving the prompted to limply parrot. The recited nature of Ev's contribution is plainly exposed to the referee. A similar point is made about prompting in Schiffrin (1993, p. 245). The comic effect of the recited speech is perhaps the cause of Er's subsequent laughter.

The prompting in Excerpt 5 could be alternatively analyzed as the metalinguistic category *modelling* (see below), because one cannot be sure whether it is the idea or its verbalisation that Ev is seeking.

The metatask discourse includes planning the performance and distributing roles as well as closing the task off at the end with a comment such as "We've finished," termed a *boundary exchange*. The following two extracts are examples of opening and closing boundary exchanges. As mentioned above, they exhibit no strong co-occurrence of low-volume discourse and boundary exchanges, but Spanish appears to be the unmarked code.

6.

B 1 A eh yo soy . . . yo s eh no o sea tu eres el que lea el menu y todo eso y yo soy el otro. [eh I'm eh no I mean you're the one that reads the menu and I'm I'm the other]

2 JM vale pues ya esta. [right, well that's it]

3 A empiezo yo? [do I start?]

7.

1 C eh ok thank you very much, bye.

2 S bye.

B 3 C si pues ya esta. [yes, well that's it]

The opening boundary exchange may perhaps be discontinuous, as appears to be the case in one transcript; one of the participants launches into on-record discourse, apparently has second thoughts, and returns to boundary-type talk.

Metalinguistic Discourse

Metalinguistic discourse includes asking for and providing translations both to and from the L2. When one participant tells the other how to say something in the L2, this is termed *modelling*. Modelling and prompting, as noted earlier, may not always be unambiguously distinguished, and between them they account for all the cited English in the present data.

When seeking a model or a translation back to the L1, a participant produces a *translation appeal*. In Extract 8, JL's first line is an explicit translation appeal:

- 8.
- | | | |
|---|----|---|
| 1 | J | eh do you want another blanket? |
| 2 | JL | <u>que?</u> [what?] |
| 3 | J | <u>es si quieres otra manta.</u> [it's if you want another blanket] |
| 4 | JL | mm no no, that's ok. |

In other examples, translation is provided without an explicit appeal, in response to hesitation or faulty readback as in Extract 9:

- 9.
- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | A | you should- no, you have to eh eh pay? the the food. |
| 2 | JM | <u>la fruta.</u> [the fruit] |
| 3 | A | <u>que no es que tienes que pagar la comida.</u> [no, it's that you have to pay for the food.] |

Self-Address

Self-address, the final subcategory of off-record discourse, is common when participants in the restaurant role play are calculating the bill. Extract 10 shows a different kind of example; here it seems that F is checking to himself the meaning of the word *food*.

- 10.
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | L | [laugh] ehm what do you fo- food like? |
| 2 | F | <u>food comida</u> [food] ... ehm:
my food ehm: ... I don- I don't know, I eat always. |

F's self-address allows for the possibility that L will overhear and correct him if he is wrong.

The selection of the L1 for off-record discourse might be largely a matter of default. That is, in the absence of any explicit directive to use the L2, it would not occur to the participant to do so. Perhaps, then, many learners would be receptive to the idea of attempting to convert their off-record discourse into English once they recognise that it exists at all. I suspect this could not be said for the L1 use found in on-record discourse, as I argue below.

Features of On-Record Discourse

The unmarked code for on-record discourse in the data is English. The learners use English to produce *turns-in-role*; that is, turns attributable to the characters they are role-playing. When Spanish is used, there are usually signs that the participants consider its use illicit. On-record Spanish can be subdivided into two categories: *insertions* and *jokes*. Their distribution across the data does not appear to be random, as I show later.

Turns-in-Role

In Extract 11, T is a waiter and L is a customer.

- 11.
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | T | eh well eh what: do you: what do you: want for dinner please. |
| 2 | L | well I'll start with a: a soup. |
| 3 | T | a soup eh: a soup |

In this *exchange*, the participants produce a very plausible initiation-response-feedback structure. There is nothing to suggest that the speakers do not embody all the roles in the production format. However, in Extract 12 it is patently obvious that the production format is more limited.

- 12.
- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | G | ok, would you like another blanket? |
| 2 | MM | no thanks . . [laugh] |
| 3 | | <u>que es eso</u> [what's that] |
| 4 | G | {[laugh] . . . [laugh] <u>yo que se</u> [who knows]
[laugh] |

Here, neither G nor MM knows the meaning of the word *blanket* on the page of prompts. They nevertheless attempt to perform the exchange without comprehension just for the record. They are caught out because MM interprets the pause after his response as an indication that his response was inappropriate, so that he laughs and makes a translation appeal. G then has to admit that he does not know what the word means either. This is a clear example of recited English, in which the speaker's production format is restricted to the role of animator. It is probable that much recited language is never exposed as it is in Extract 12 and that it succeeds in tricking both audience and referee. One might expect that as learners' L2 proficiency improves, their reliance on recitation will decrease. I argue below that the teacher's choice and setting up of tasks may also influence the amount of recitation.

Metalinguistic discourse is normally found off-record in *subordinate exchanges*. Thus, when correction is performed, the speaker moves from the nonliteral to the literal frame. Goffman (1974) calls such shifting from one frame to another *breaking frame*. However, in one place in the data, reproduced as Extract 13, correction could be interpreted as being on-record.

13.

1 A eh waiter waiter. [laugh]

2 P yes yes? [laugh]

3 A eh hello ehm:

4 P {waitRESS

5 A waitress.

The boxed exchange contains a correction performed at full volume, which gives the effect that P is speaking in role as the waitress and thus in the nonliteral frame. If the exchange is interpreted this way, then P is breaking frame without shifting back to the literal frame, resulting in another frame embedded in the nonliteral frame. There are no other examples of this in the present data, but one might expect such lamination in on-record discourse to occur more frequently as the speaker's L2 proficiency increases. The activity called *role-playing role-playing* described above shows how advanced learners are capable of laminating their L2 discourse.

On-Record L1

The first type of on-record use of Spanish consists of a word or short phrase, which I call an *insertion* (Extract 14).

14. *MI that's *ochenta* [eighty] pounds [laugh] eighteen pounds.

MI's use of Spanish here seems unintentional. In retrospect he perhaps recognises the marked violation of co-occurrence expectations and laughs, then attempts to reiterate in English, albeit wrongly. The juxtaposition of the two languages produces the effect of mixing the literal and nonliteral frames. Hoyle (1993) has suggested that frame mixing can produce a humorous effect, which might explain MI's laughter.

Insertions can be used strategically to fill a lexical gap, as seems to be the case in Extract 15.

15. *B eh ... ah ... eh I ... I want a ... a soup ... and ... chicken. and the ... the ... *de postre* [for dessert] [laugh] and the [laugh] and the fruit ehm banana.

Again, the markedness is perceived, and B laughs, then makes what may have been an attempt to reiterate in English using *fruit* as a hyponym.

The second category of on-record Spanish is *jokes*. Particularly popular in the restaurant role play were indignant comments about the bill, as, for example, in Extract 2. In Extract 16 Spanish is used to ensure that the interlocutor appreciates the intended nuances and perhaps to exploit the humorous effect of frame mixing.

16.

1 J the tomato salads are ... seventy-five p, the chicken and the fish are two pounds sixty-five,

2 *JL *no me jodas, que caro eres* [don't fuck me, how expensive you are]

3 *J [laugh] and for de [laugh] desse the ehm ice cream are cost ... is cost *mejor* [better] eh eighty p and do you want a *copita* of *licor*: [glass [diminutive] of liqueur]

For JL, making the joke takes priority over avoiding divergence from the referee in his language choice. His use of an "improper" word might be in pursuit of intimacy (Jefferson, Sachs, & Schegloff, 1987) with his interlocutor. If so, it is a form of convergence that demands some

response, and J's subsequent laugh could be an appreciation. The laugh could also be at the joke, the markedness of its code, or perhaps his own plight in having to continue his turn despite the humorous interruption. However, he goes on to make some unmitigated (not acknowledged by hesitation, laughter, or attempted self-repair) insertions of Spanish himself, exploiting if not escalating the slightly mischievous atmosphere that JL has established. His use of the diminutive *copita* seems to want to capture a slightly conspiratorial nuance that an English word such as *glass* could not be guaranteed to convey. There is a quite strong patterning of on-record Spanish across the data as a whole: 17 turns in the first set of data (the restaurant role play) contain insertions, but only 5 in the second set (the guesthouse role play) do. In the restaurant data, 4 of the 14 recordings have no on-record Spanish, whereas for the guesthouse data the figure is 10.

To some extent this variation is idiosyncratic. The discourse marker *bueno* seems especially idiosyncratic in its distribution; only two of the participants use it, and of its five on-record occurrences, four are from one speaker. It could be that *bueno* is a feature of these speakers' idiolects in their L1 that they transfer to the L2. However, given that most of the participants appear in both the restaurant and guesthouse role plays, their idiosyncratic variation should be equally represented in both. It therefore seems likely that another aspect of the context is influencing the use of on-record Spanish here.

One possibility is the way the participants are paired. Perhaps the guesthouse role plays contain fewer occurrences of on-record Spanish because the two participants had not met before, whereas in the restaurant role play they were classmates. In the guesthouse role plays, the speaker may have been less drawn to converge to the (unknown) interlocutor, and the psychological presence of the referee may have been better able to compete for the speaker's attention.

Another possibility is that the task itself makes the difference. The restaurant scenario seems to have been more familiar and to have inspired more involvement, which perhaps led to more unintentional slips into Spanish because the message was relatively more important than the code. Also, in the restaurant role play the participants had only a prop (a menu), whereas in the guesthouse role play they had prompts (explicit instructions). Perhaps the prop allows the participants to fill out a role as they understand it whereas a prompt constrains them to a role that may be alien to them.

I suggested above that learners may be receptive to the idea of performing off-record discourse in the L2. The case may be different for the L1 use that appears in on-record discourse. Unintentional slips may be impervious to correction and indeed may be symptomatic of interaction being *charged* (Stevick, 1982), that is, caused by the very involvement

that is so valuable to language acquisition. It may be possible to squelch (Doyle, 1986) the use of L1 insertions as a communication strategy, but this is not entirely desirable because such strategies can be useful.

The use of discourse markers such as *bueno* may be receptive to conversion to L2 equivalents, but probably not when the speaker wishes to express in-group or personal identity, because the L1 is used for a purpose and not just by default. The same may also be said for the use of the L1 in jokes, swearing, and so on.

CONCLUSIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

This article has sought to contribute to discussions concerning the value of group work, particularly in the context of the monolingual language classroom. Through a detailed analysis of recorded data produced in that context, distinctive features in the discourse were discerned and associated with two layers, labelled *off-record* and *on-record*. By looking at language choice against the background of this patterning, one can appreciate the complexity of the phenomenon of code switching in the classroom.

For the teacher who is worried about the quantity of the target language that learners use in group work, it is significant that not all cases of resort to the L1 will be equally accessible to remedy. I would argue that when learners select the L1 by default, there is a good chance that awareness-raising activities will persuade the learners to employ the target language instead. However, when learners select the L1 by accident or for a particular communicative purpose, attempts to squelch the use of the L1 are unlikely to yield the desired result.

For the teacher who is worried about the quality of the language practice that learners get in group work, it is important not to assume that all L1 use is "bad" and all L2 use is "good." On the one hand, some L1 interjections are a natural by-product of charge in the interaction, and that charge could all too easily be defused by an inflexible insistence on the L2. On the other hand, some L2 contributions are simply recited, in some cases without comprehension, and thus lack any charge. It seems likely that the design and setup of the task will affect the quality of language practice in group work. For example, the restaurant role play in the data described here elicits less recitation than the guesthouse role play does, possibly because the former task is less explicit and constricting and more familiar to the learners as a scenario. The relationship between task and language quality could be a fruitful area for future research, and to this end the analytical apparatus outlined in this article may be of some use.

A final pedagogical consideration, even if less amenable to control by teachers, relates to the concept of referee design. If, as I suggested above, it is the participation of the referee, or absent but salient audience, that makes group work viable in the monolingual class, then how does that referee affect the learner's attitude toward the use of the target language? A learner may, for example, wish to display divergence from the referee through a marked (on-record) use of the L1. Other learners may be so intent on converging to the out-group referee that they are viewed as traitors with respect to their in-group classmates. Although a teacher may not be able to control how the learner feels about the referee, the referee concept may prove useful in diagnosing the kinds of problems seen in these two examples.

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