RASK 51
SPRING 2020

Revisiting the classic debate on language choice in the FL classroom: Current perspectives from a Ghanaian university

BENEDICTA ADOKARLEY LOMOTEY

Department of Modern Languages, University of Ghana

ABSTRACT
This study aims to provide fresh perspectives on the age-old 100 %-target-language debate by examining data from a hitherto unexplored context. Through the administration of questionnaires in a West African public university, the author explores lecturers' perceptions on language choice and students' attitudes to their instructors' medium of instruction. The study also examines the possible relationship between students' language anxiety and lecturers' language choice. The data shows that although the majority of lecturers prefer to use the monolingual approach, code-switching in the lecture halls can be observed in varying degrees. Additionally, the findings confirm that the majority of student participants do experience foreign language anxiety.

KEYWORDS
Spanish as a foreign language, classroom communication, language choice, language anxiety, code-switching

1. Introduction

For ages, the proportion of target language (TL) used by teachers and learners in the modern foreign language classroom (MFLC) has been a major issue in the history of language teaching. Indeed, by the 1970s, it had become a widespread assumption that the monolingual approach, supported by linguists such as Krashen (1981) and Macdonald (1993), was the best and most effective method for learning new languages. This approach has its roots in the direct method which was introduced by language teaching specialists and reformers like Montaigne (1533-1592), Sauveur (1826-1907) and Gouin (1831-1896), (see Richards & Rodgers (1986) for a detailed explanation on the history of language teaching and learning). Other proponents of the method were Chaudron (1988) and Ellis (1984). Drawing on Krashen's (1981) 'comprehensible input' hypothesis,[1] members of this group hypothesise that maximum use must be made of the foreign language (FL) in order to maximise the input and, consequently, learning of the TL. They also

1 Krashen argues that students need optimal exposure to the second language in order to be proficient in the language. According to his Input Hypothesis, "we acquire language by understanding messages [...]. '[C]omprehensible input' (CI) is the essential environmental ingredient in language acquisition" (1991: 409).

balomotey@ug.edu.gh

argue that the bilingual method (using both the TL and the students' first language [L1]) promotes negative interference from the L1.

In his summary of the salient points of the debate, Chaudron notes that the common belief is that "the fullest competence in the target language is achieved by means of the teacher providing a rich TL environment" (1988: 121). Ellis also argues that by using the L1 for certain functions such as explaining tasks and managing behaviour, teachers "deprive the learners of valuable input in the L2" (1984: 133).

As Atkinson explains, these beliefs revolve around the concept of 'authenticity', which can be considered as the assumption that the language practiced by students in the foreign language classroom should be: "as realistic as possible, that materials used should be 'authentic' wherever possible and that learners should engage in activities which mirror the things which people do with language outside the classroom in 'real' situations" (1993a: 2). Consequently, these arguments insist on the use of the TL because it is claimed that the L1 cannot be authentic.

2. Previous studies on language choice in the FL classroom

Indeed, the possible advantages of the 'optimal' use of the target language in the MFLC cannot be dismissed. Language learners need quality TL input as well as maximised opportunities to actively use the target language as explained by Swain's (1985) 'comprehensible output' hypothesis.[2] Several studies in SLA research (Nunan 1987; Willis 1990) demonstrate that language learning is most successful when the TL is used in real-life communication. Nonetheless, although many language teachers and other scholars agree on the desirability of using the target language as the medium of instruction, quite a number of researchers (see Atkinson 1993a; Butzkamm 2003, among others) report that the exclusive use of the FL poses some challenges and does not reflect the realities in the MFLC.

Subsequently, with the publication of Swan's articles in the 1980s, other scholars began to question and reassess the 'TL only' stance. Swan argued that "if we did not keep making correspondences between foreign language items and mother tongue items, we would never learn foreign languages at all" (1985b: 85). An increasing number of language-teaching studies have since then consistently questioned and reassessed the taboo placed on the use of the students' own language in the foreign language classroom. Prominent amongst them are the papers by Duff (1989) and Atkinson (1993a; 1993b). The latter points out that the arguments presented by the proponents of the monolingual only approach are moot points which can be criticized on three grounds: theoretical rationale, feasibility and desirability (Atkinson 1993a: 2). He maintains that the use of the L1 is most advantageous because it is the preferred learning strategy of the majority of language learners around the world (Atkinson 1987, as quoted in Wharton

2 Swain's (1985) comprehensible output hypothesis claims that under certain conditions, language production (speaking or writing) enhances second language learning. According to the author, a learner's unsuccessful attempt to produce a comprehensible message (communicative failure) to a conversational partner makes him/her aware of his/her linguistic deficiencies. This triggers the learner's search for alternative outputs.

2007). Regarding feasibility, Franklin (1990) reports that the problems faced by teachers in the attempt to comply with the 100% TL can be attributed to issues such as nature of the class (number of pupils, ability mix grouping, whether taught in the TL the previous year) and the reaction of the class (behaviour). On the subject of theoretical rationale, Atkinson asserts:

> While it is true that the principle of 'monolingualism' ... clearly enjoys widespread and sometimes uncritical acceptance, it needs to be clearly stated that there is no solid theoretical evidence to support any case for a methodology involving 100% target language. ... Close study of the literature bears out the view that the prevalence of assumptions about the "ideal" nature of 100% TL has much more to do with currently fashionable notions and terminology in contemporary language teaching than with hard fact. (1993a: 2).

Atkinson criticises the theoretical gap in foreign language teaching with regard to the beneficial use of the L1 and points out that "total prohibition of the students' L1 is now unfashionable" (1987: 241, as quoted in Wharton 2007). Eldridge also notes that there is "no empirical evidence to support the notion that restricting mother tongue use would necessarily improve learner efficiency" (1996: 303).

3. Objectives

Despite the earlier focus on language choice in the foreign language classroom, not much research can be found on an African university-level context of Spanish as a foreign language, as the majority of current research on the subject deals with the teaching of English as a foreign language. In addition, the context for these studies has often been Asian countries such as China (Qing 2012), Japan (Holthouse 2006), and Malaysia (Then & Su-Hie 2009); some Middle-East ones such as Iran (Mirhasani & Mamaghani 2009); and European countries like Turkey (Yavuz 2012). Against this background, the present article seeks to provide additional empirical evidence by contributing to the discussion from a hitherto unexplored multilingual and multicultural African university context. The author's aim was to:

1. Investigate students' attitudes and reaction to their instructors' language choice.
2. Examine Spanish as a FL lecturers' perceptions on the 100% L2 view.
3. Survey lecturers' perceptions on code-switching in the Spanish as a FL classroom.
4. Examine the possible relationship between students' language anxiety and lecturers' language choice.

4. Method

A description of the participants of the study (including their background), and of the data collection and analysis methods is provided below.

4.1 Background

Ghana is an ethnically heterogeneous West African country, where each ethnic group has its own language and culture. According to *Ethnologue*, there are 81 languages spoken in Ghana. English is the official language. Ghanaians thus generally, have one or two local languages as their L1 and English as their L2. Spanish is consequently the L3 (or L4) of the Ghanaian participants of this study. Nonetheless, the literature on L2 learning is applicable in this context as well. Furthermore, it can be argued that English functions as the L1 of the participants, given that due to the after-effects of colonization and acculturation in contemporary times, most Ghanaians speak English better than their own languages. In addition, they learn the grammar, vocabulary, structure etc. of the English language in school, whereas very few of them have such knowledge of their own languages.

Coming to the context of our study, the majority of students have no knowledge of the Spanish language before gaining admission to the University. After their third year in the programme however, students have the option of doing a year-abroad programme in Spain or Latin America. Although the Modern Languages Department of the University has no official policy on the medium of instruction, there is undocumented support for the 100% TL view.

4.2 Data collection and participants

The data collection was done in two phases. To conduct the study on the 100% L2 view and code-switching in the FL classroom, the researcher employed the use of questionnaires and classroom observation techniques. The questionnaires were designed with close-ended questions which were selected based on insights from the existing research on language choice in the MFLC. Also, the options presented in the data collection instruments were chosen partly on the basis of comments made by lecturers in informal discussions, and partly on the basis of the author's own experience of trying to maintain the use of the TL in the classroom. As a member of the Departmental Teaching Assessment Committee, the author also had the opportunity to make personal observations on lecturers' language choice during lecturer evaluations and took notes of classroom interactions between the teachers and the students.

The participants in the first sample were 145 students in their second, third and final years of the Spanish programme. First year students were not included in the survey because with the exception of oral lessons, lectures for that level[3] are conducted in English. First year students thus encounter minimal occurrences of Code-switching (CS)[4] during their classroom lessons. The survey was done in the second semester of the 2017/ 2018 academic year. Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic information of the participants of the first survey.

3 The term 'level' is used to refer to students' year of study. For example, a second year student is referred to as a level 200 student, a third year student is referred to as a level 300 student etc.

4 Code-switching is, as Cook defines, "going from one language to the other in mid speech when both speakers know the same two languages" (1991: 63, as quoted in Qing 2012).

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON STUDENT PARTICIPANTS IN SURVEY ON LANGUAGE CHOICE

QUESTION	RESPONSE	No	PERCENTAGE %
Age	15- 20	57	39.3
	21- 25	85	58.6
	26- 30	1	0.7
	31 +	0	0
	No response	2	1.4
Gender	Female	117	80.7
	Male	26	17.9
	No response	2	1.4
Nationality	Ghanaian	136	93.8
	Non Ghanaian	5	3.4
	No response	4	2.8
Levels	200	55	37.9
	300	23	15.9
	400	62	42.8
	No response	5	3.4
For how long have you been studying Spanish?	2 Years	57	39.3
	3 Years	24	16.6
	4 Years	45	31.0
	> 4 Years	17	11.7
	No response	2	1.4
How would you describe your level of proficiency in this language?	Beginner	8	5.5
	Low intermediate	77	53.1
	High intermediate	54	37.2
	Advanced	6	4.1
	No response	0	0
Did you choose this subject when applying for admission to the University?	Yes	103	71.0
	No	41	28.2
	No response	1	0.7
Where have you had exposure to this foreign language? (Please check all that are relevant)	At home or elsewhere in the local community	17	11.7
	In a different institution	11	7.6
	In a country where the language is spoken	16	11.0
	No other experience other than previous courses before this academic year	105	72.4
	No response	2	1.4

In order to examine *the possible relationship between students' language anxiety and lecturers' language choice*, the author also drew on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The FLCAS enabled the collection of quantitative data on participants' language anxiety. A total of 407 students of Spanish as a foreign language from the same university participated in the second survey. The questionnaire was administered in the first semester of the 2018/ 2019 academic year. (See Table 2)

TABLE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON STUDENT PARTICIPANTS IN SURVEY ON LANGUAGE ANXIETY

QUESTION	RESPONSE	No	PERCENTAGE %
Age	15-20	314	77.1
	21-25	81	19.9
	26-30	3	0.7
	31+	1	0.2
	No Response	8	2.0
Gender	Female	345	84.8
	Male	50	12.3
	No Response	12	2.9
Nationality	Ghanaian	385	94.6
	Non-Ghanaian	7	1.7
	Half Ghanaian, Half Togolese	1	0.2
	No Response	14	3.4
Level	100	208	51.1
	200	78	19.2
	300	59	14.5
	400	38	9.3
	No Response	24	5.9
How would you describe your level of proficiency in the Spanish language?	Advanced	2	0.5
	High intermediate	55	13.5
	Low intermediate	117	28.7
	Beginner	227	55.8
	No Response	6	1.5
Did you choose Spanish when applying for admission to the University?	No	80	19.7
	Yes	314	77.1
	No Response	13	3.2

Where have you had exposure to this foreign language? (Please check all that are relevant)	At home or elsewhere in the local community	80	19.6
	In a country where the language is spoken.	31	7.6
	In a different institution	22	5.4
	No other experience other than previous courses before this academic year	253	62.1
	No Response	38	9.3

Table 3 summarises the demographic information on the six (6) lecturer participants who also participated in the present study.

TABLE 3: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON INSTRUCTOR PARTICIPANTS

QUESTION	RESPONSE	No
Age:	25 – 30	0
	31 – 40	3
	41- 50	1
	51- 60	1
	61+	1
Gender:	Female	4
	Male	2
Nationality:	Ghanaian	2
	Spanish	3
	Senegalese	1
Qualification:	Master of Philosophy	2
	Doctor of Philosophy	3
	Other (please specify)	BA translation and interpretation English-Spanish
For how long have you been teaching Spanish?	1 - 5 years	1
	6 - 10 years	2
	11- 15 years	1
	16- 20 years	1
	21 – 25 years	0
	26 years plus	1
What is your specialization?	Language (Orals)5	2
	Language (Linguistics)	3
	Literature	2

5 These are oral classes in which the instructor focuses on language skills such as speaking and listening.

4.3 Data Analysis

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) is a 33-item questionnaire for the detection and measurement of anxiety among foreign language learners. The authors define language anxiety as the "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope 1986: 128). They explain that Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety is an example of specific anxiety reactions concerning performance evaluation within an academic and social context. Statements in the FLCAS measure the following three related performance anxieties which constitute Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety: (1) communication apprehension (2) test anxiety (3) fear of negative evaluation.

Firstly, communication apprehension is "a type of shyness characterised by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope 1986: 127). Communication anxiety might be experienced by people who experience difficulty while talking in groups or in public. Foreign language learners with low competence may suffer anxiety and be reluctant to express themselves or communicate in the target language – a "medium in which only limited facility is possessed" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope 1986: 127). The authors note that "the special communication apprehension permeating foreign language learning derives from the personal knowledge that one will almost certainly have difficulty understanding others and making oneself understood" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope 1986: 127).

A related performance anxiety is test anxiety. According to Sarason, this is "the tendency to view with alarm the consequences of inadequate performance in an evaluative situation" (Sarason 1978: 214). Test anxiety is therefore most likely to be experienced during oral tests which cause both test and oral communication anxiety simultaneously in susceptible students (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope 1986).

Finally, Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope identify fear of negative evaluation as "apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (1986: 128). This kind of anxiety can be provoked by the belief that learners are obliged to avoid mistakes in the target language. Such beliefs can cause tension, frustration and ultimately, the fear of negative evaluation in students.

Consequently, the 33 items on the FLCAS test for communication apprehension (statements 1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32); fear of negative evaluation (statements 3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33); and test anxiety (statements 2, 8, 10, 19 and 21). Items 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 26, 28, and, 30 measure the general anxiety of foreign language classes. The quantitative data were analysed using the SPSS package.

5. Results and discussion

The findings of this study are discussed below.

5.1 Students' attitudes and reaction to lecturers' language choice.

When asked how much of the foreign language they would prefer their lecturers to use, a majority of students (50.3%) expressed satisfaction with the current state of affairs. 44.8% confirmed

they would prefer more of the FL while a very low percentage of participants 1.4 % said they would prefer less.

These results were not surprising because unlike the French students at the same research setting who have more contact with the French language, Spanish students have limited exposure outside the classroom. There are many francophone countries in Africa (Ghana's neighbouring countries are all francophone) and due to the ECOWAS free movement, it is very common to find Francophones living in Ghana. Another major difference is that the French students have had a considerable number of years of exposure to the learning of the language in school; from the primary level in most cases, and sometimes up to the secondary school level. In fact, all those admitted to study French in the University must have a good pass in French for the West African Secondary Certificate Examination. The case is not the same for the Spanish students. Comprehensible language input as well as output thus becomes limited given that the students live on a linguistic island and the majority of them have contact with the TL only during classroom hours (between four to six hours per week)[6]. Hence, the importance of high quality/high quantity TL input/output in the classroom cannot be underestimated. As Schweers (1999: 9) explains, some teachers may argue that foreign language learners need optimal exposure to the L2 in the classroom due to the limited exposure they might have outside classroom hours.

Nonetheless, while a strong majority (69.7 %) declared they liked the use of CS on the part of their lecturers, a minority (3.4 %) confirmed that they disliked it, while 25.5 % said they were indifferent. (See Table 4)

TABLE 4: STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS CS BY LECTURERS

QUESTION	RESPONSE	No	PERCENTAGE %
In general, how would you rate your attitude toward code-switching by your lecturers?	I dislike it	5	3.4
	I like it	101	69.7
	I am indifferent	37	25.5
	No response	2	1.4
Generally, how much of the foreign language would you like your lecturers to use in class?	More of the foreign language than now	65	44.8
	About the same as now	73	50.3
	Less than now	2	1.4
	No response	5	3.4
How much of your lecturer's foreign language speech do you understand in class?	Almost all of it	80	55.2
	Some of it	60	41.4
	Very little	4	2.8
	No response	1	0.7

It was expected that final year students would have more linguistic confidence and consequently, more negative attitudes towards CS. Interestingly, the results conflicted with these expectations. The majority of participants (59%) confirmed that they liked CS. 36.3% expressed indifference while the minority (4.5%) declared they did not like it. (See Table 5)

6 Minus tutorials.

TABLE 5: FINAL YEAR STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS CS BY LECTURERS			
QUESTION	**RESPONSE**	**No**	**PERCENTAGE %**
In general, how would you rate your attitude toward code-switching by your lecturers?	I dislike it	3	4.5
	I like it	39	59.0
	I am indifferent	24	36.3

Nonetheless, it must be noted that students' generally positive attitudes towards CS could also be due to their linguistic environment. People who grow up in highly multilingual and ethnically diverse environments normally have more positive attitudes towards CS (Dewaele & Li 2014: 247). In the linguistically heterogeneous Ghanaian context, MacSwan's (2000) observation that in many cultures, code-switching may be regarded as a prestigious display of linguistic talent becomes particularly relevant. Despite the peculiarity of the MFLC context, the higher number of participants who expressed indifference or confirmed they liked CS (as against the significantly low number who said they disliked it) probably corroborates MacSwan's (2000) observation.

5.2 Teachers' perceptions regarding the 100% L2 view

When teachers were asked if they were aware of the target language only doctrine, the greater number of participants (5) answered affirmatively, while one (1) lecturer answered in the negative. The majority of the participants (4) also declared that their main medium of instruction was the TL. On the other hand, two (2) respondents confirmed that they use both English and Spanish in teaching. On their perceptions about the 100% TL view, the majority of participants expressed disagreement (4) while the minority (2) expressed support for this view. The results are summarised in Table 6.

TABLE 6: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE 100% L2 VIEW		
QUESTION	**RESPONSE**	**No**
What language do you use as your main medium of instruction?	Target language (Spanish)	4
	English	0
	A combination of both	2
Are you aware of the 'target language only theory' that has been postulated by some scholars in the field of Second Language Acquisition as the best means of teaching foreign languages?	Yes	5
	No	1
What is your opinion about the target language only theory for foreign language teaching?	I agree	2
	I totally agree	0
	I don't agree	4
	I totally disagree	0

It was found that CS is used in the research setting mostly for teaching grammar (54 [37.2 %]) and translation (52 [35.9 %]). On the other hand, the majority of student participants confirmed that their oral language lecturers (88 [60.7%]) and literature or civilization lecturers (75 [51.7 %]) used CS rarely.

These findings were in tandem with previous research. According to Cook (2001), more than 80 % of FL instructors use the L1 for grammar instruction. Also, in her study, Qing observed that teachers use CS for explaining and elaborating grammar points and this "makes it easier for students to concentrate on the core message conveyed and reduces the overall comprehension burden" (2012: 32). Subsequently, "the smooth flow of classroom interaction and communication is achieved" while "teachers' solidarity and expression of emotional understanding can also be maintained" (Qing 2012: 32). Likewise, from the students' perspective, Kelleher found that the majority of students would prefer to use the L1 when learning grammar and vocabulary (Kelleher 2013: 2038). Indeed, Celik's (2008) study of the issue indicates that the use of the L1 increases the potential for learning the rules and structures of the FL and it helps learners to be more efficient at the grammar of the TL (as quoted in Kelleher 2013: 2038).

Additionally, explaining certain unfamiliar concepts such as grammatical gender to learners whose language do not have this distinction can be effectively done by making comparisons between the L1 and the FL. As Gill notes, in the presentation of grammar and language rules "metalanguage is frequently a lot more complex than what it's being used to describe and L1 can smooth the path and avoid unnecessary terminology in L2" (Gill 2005). Similarly, other studies also confirm the common use of the L1 for translation lessons. In Qian, Tian, & Wang's (2009: 725) study, they found that CS was used to maximise teaching of translation, and to clarify or highlight information.

Through the classroom observations in the present study, it also became evident that the amount of CS used varied according to factors such as the level of the students, the course being taught and the teaching method being used. For instance, in the second year civilization class a significant amount of L1 use was observed. On the other hand, the lecturers for the oral classes used the L1 less often and allowed CS only when there was the need to explain difficult concepts, to facilitate comprehension or talk about issues which were not related to the topic being discussed in class (e.g. for giving advice). In all the classes observed, however, there was some amount of CS although the range varied according to the parameters mentioned earlier (level of the class, subject, teaching method etc.). The results on the patterns of CS usage are summarised in Table 7.

TABLE 7: USES OF CS IN THE SPANISH AS A FL CLASSROOM			
QUESTION	**RESPONSE**	**No**	**PERCENTAGE %**
Does your Spanish orals lecturer engage in code-switching?	No, not at all	38	26.2
	Yes, but rarely	88	60.7
	Yes, somewhat frequently	11	7.6
	Yes, very frequently	6	4.1
	No response	2	1.4
Does your Spanish grammar lecturer engage in code-switching?	No, not at all	8	5.5
	Yes, but rarely	32	22.1
	Yes, somewhat frequently	54	37.2
	Yes, very frequently	51	35.2
	No response	0	0
Does your Spanish translation lecturer engage in code-switching while explaining concepts?	No, not at all	12	8.3
	Yes, but rarely	32	22.0
	Yes, somewhat frequently	52	35.9
	Yes, very frequently	43	29.7
	No response	6	4.1
Does your Spanish literature or civilization lecturer engage in code-switching?	No, not at all	43	29.7
	Yes, but rarely	75	51.7
	Yes, somewhat frequently	18	12.4
	Yes, very frequently	5	3.4
	No response	4	2.8

In relation to the reasons, lecturers who confirmed that they use CS while teaching indicated that they mostly use it for explaining difficult concepts and as a time saving technique. As can be observed in Table 8, there is a discrepancy in the perceptions expressed by some instructor respondents. Although only two participants confirmed they used a combination of the target language and the L1 while teaching, more answered the questionnaire item on the reasons for their use of CS. On the one hand, this could imply that one of the respondents contradicted herself/ himself (see Table 10 below) by giving reasons for a practice he or she had initially denied doing. As Bernard & Ryan note, accuracy is a "real issue" in interviews because "people are inaccurate reporters of their own behaviour for many reasons"[7] (2010: 37). On the other hand, this contradiction in responses could also be a result of the respondent in question's interpretation of the word "main" (in Table 6 above). In this case, that would imply that although the person normally uses the target language, she/ he also switches codes when necessary.

7 For example, respondents might "overreport socially desirable behaviour ... and underreport socially undesirable behaviour"; or they might simply be reporting "what they think they usually do" (2010: 37).

TABLE 8: LECTURERS' REASONS FOR USING CS IN THE SPANISH AS A FL CLASSROOM		
QUESTION	**RESPONSE**	**No**
Why do you switch languages? (circle all that apply)	To explain difficult concepts	3
	When students do not seem to understand what is being said in the foreign language	1
	To save time	3
	When students are not responsive, especially in an interactive class	1
	Other	0

Likewise, with the aim of investigating if students had made any unconscious observations about patterns in their lecturers' use of language alternation, students were asked to indicate why they think their lecturers use CS. 79.2 % of them felt it was to facilitate comprehension, whereas 70.1 % believed it depended on the level of difficulty of the task. 41.7 % thought CS was used to promote interaction, while a very low percentage, 2.8 %, believed their lecturers used CS to save time.

TABLE 9: STUDENTS' OBSERVATIONS ON THE REASONS FOR LECTURERS' USE OF CS			
QUESTION	**RESPONSE**	**No**	**PERCENTAGE %**
Why do you think your lecturers engage in code-switching? (circle all that apply)	To explain difficult concepts	101	70.1
	When students do not seem to understand what is being said in the foreign language	114	79.2
	To save time	4	2.8
	When students are not responsive, especially in an interactive class	60	41.7
	Not sure	0	0
	Other (please explain)	0	0

5.3 Teachers' perceptions on CS in the FL classroom

Lecturers gave a variety of responses about the importance of CS in the MFLC: two participants believed it was unnecessary, three felt it was necessary, while a single participant expressed indifference. However, it is important to note that none of the participants who believed CS is necessary selected the 'very necessary' option. This finding appears to emphasise that even if CS should be used, it needs to be used minimally.

Regarding their CS habits in the classroom, two participants said they never use CS, another 2 confirmed they use it rarely while the remaining 2 respondents confirmed they use CS somewhat frequently. Furthermore, when asked if students should be allowed to engage in language alternation, the majority of participants (4) said no, while two participants believed the opposite. (See Table 10)

TABLE 10: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON CS IN THE FL CLASSROOM

QUESTION	RESPONSE	No
In your opinion, generally, code-switching in the foreign language classroom is:	Unnecessary	2
	Necessary	3
	Very necessary	0
	I am indifferent	1
Do you engage in code-switching?	No, not at all	2
	Yes, but rarely	2
	Yes, somewhat frequently	2
	Yes, very frequently	0
In your opinion, should students be allowed to switch languages?	Yes	2
	No	4

As can be observed, the findings from the survey reflect a relative amount of contrast between some teachers' perceptions and actual practice in the classroom. This is probably illustrated especially by the apparent divergence in the data presented in Tables 6, 8 and 10. The results also show that there is a conflict between students' and teachers' perceptions towards the use of code-switching in the Spanish as a FL classroom, as evidenced in Tables 4 and 10. It should be noted that the data gathered from the student respondents was in reference to the same 6 instructors who were instructor respondents. This implies that while some lecturers themselves code-switch, they are reluctant to allow their students to do the same. While this is surprising, it is not unusual. The perceptions of the lecturers sampled in the present study are in tandem with the findings of several other researchers on foreign language teaching and learning.

In his study, Kelleher (2013) reports that a strong majority of 90% of instructors do not allow students to use L1 inside the classroom. In early studies, code-switching was believed to be a demonstration of lack of linguistic proficiency in either language. Consequently, it attracted negative connotations which originated some overtly pejorative terms: "verbal salad", "still colonized", "very irritating" (Lawson & Sachdev 2000, as quoted in Dewaele & Li 2014); and some not so obviously negative ones: "semilingualism" (Martin-Jones & Romaine 1986), "gibberish" (Edwards 2004, as quoted in Dewaele & Li 2014), "Tex-Mex", "Franglais", and "Japlish" (Dewaele & Li 2014: 236-237). As Dewaele & Li assert, these "terms reflect ideologies of monolingualism and linguistic purism, or one language only (OLON) and one language at a time (OLAT), which lie behind attitudes against CS (Wei & Wu 2009)" (2014: 236-237). Doubtlessly, this general negativity towards CS contributes to lecturers' disapproval of CS in the FL classroom.

Nonetheless, as mentioned earlier, the conclusions of some recent studies have overturned the acclaimed negative effects of code-switching. Poplack confirms that there is strong evidence that code-switching is a "verbal skill requiring a large degree of linguistic competence in more than one language, rather than a defect arising from insufficient knowledge of one or the other" (1980: 615)[8]. The author notes that "code-switching, then, rather than representing deviant behaviour, is actually a suggestive indicator of degree of bilingual competence" (Poplack 1980: 616).

Furthermore, several scholars insist that CS is an integral part of the language learning process. Butzkamm, for example, insists that, "even if it was possible to banish it [L1] from the classroom, it could never be banished from the pupils' minds" (1998: 95). Consequently, with the aim of finding out the extent to which the ban on the L1 is feasible, student participants were asked to indicate which language they normally use for thought processing in the Spanish as a FL classroom. A very strong majority (73.8%) affirmed it was English; few participants (22.0%) indicated Spanish, while a very low number (2.8%) said it was their mother tongue. (See Table 11)

TABLE 11: LANGUAGE USED FOR THOUGHT PROCESSING AMONG STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

QUESTION	RESPONSE	No	PERCENTAGE %
In what language do you normally think when in the foreign language class?	Spanish	32	22.0
	My mother tongue	4	2.8
	In another Ghanaian (local) language	0	0
	In English	107	73.8
	No response	2	1.4

Indeed, various researchers have emphasised the importance and the inevitability of the L1 in FL learning. Prodromou (1992), for example, notes that the L1 cannot be completely banished, because even if the students are not speaking the L1, they will almost certainly be thinking in it. Likewise, Scott and Fuente (2008) confirm that it appears the L1 is used as a natural and spontaneous cognitive strategy; for which reason it may be futile to prevent learners from using it (L1) during consciousness-raising tasks. They affirm that exclusive use of the L2 during collaborative consciousness-raising, form-focused tasks "appears to inhibit collaborative interaction, hinder the use of metatalk, and impede 'natural' learning strategies" whereas "by contrast, use of the L1 for these kinds of tasks may reduce cognitive overload, sustain collaborative interaction, and foster the development of metalinguistic terminology" (Scott & Fuente 2008: 109-110). Most importantly, they conclude that when permitted to use the L1, learners' two languages function in tandem; but when students are not permitted to use the L1, "their two languages compete, causing frustration and cognitive strain" (Scott & Fuente 2008: 109-110).

8 Gardner-Chloros notes that the ability to manage communicative demands and switch between languages in conversational interaction "requires high linguistic knowledge as well as sociolinguistic sensitivities" (Gardner-Chloros 2009, as quoted in Dewaele & Li 2014: 237)

5.4 The possible relationship between students' language anxiety and lecturers' language choice

In all, 6 out of the 11 items which measure general anxiety in foreign language learning were endorsed by the majority of participants. The greater number of respondents endorsed 5 out of the 8 items which test for communication apprehension. Additionally, a higher percentage of students agreed with 7 out of the 9 statements which are indicative of the fear of negative evaluation. Test anxiety appeared to be the least prevalent among the participants as only two out of the 5 items which test for this component of foreign language anxiety were endorsed by the greater percentage of respondents. The breakdown of responses to each item on the FLCAS are reported in Table 12.

TABLE 12: FLCAS ITEMS WITH RESPONSES TO EACH STATEMENT

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class					
	90	158	60	81	9	9
2	I don't worry about making mistakes in language class					
	25	125	60	104	85	8
3	I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in my language class					
	55	146	57	73	66	10
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in a foreign language					
	103	140	55	76	26	7
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes					
	158	136	36	54	15	8
6	During language classes, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course					
	26	72	67	181	53	8
7	I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am					
	106	143	50	70	31	7
8	I'm usually at ease during tests in my language class					
	42	136	89	106	25	9
9	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class					
	118	160	56	57	8	8
10	I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class					
	158	120	52	47	22	8

11	I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.					
	114	135	80	48	19	11
12	In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.					
	57	120	71	125	25	9
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class					
	38	66	84	159	54	6
14	I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers					
	57	129	79	103	32	7
15	I get nervous when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting					
	74	137	63	100	23	10
16	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.					
	50	163	51	107	27	9
17	I often feel like not going to my language class					
	35	62	56	156	88	10
18	I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class					
	33	117	128	94	27	8
19	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make					
	23	51	80	166	75	12
20	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class					
	99	151	55	68	23	11
21	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.					
	25	61	60	168	81	12
22	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class					
	38	118	62	137	41	11
23	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.					
	92	130	80	69	24	12
24	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students					
	82	182	66	52	12	13
25	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind					
	86	118	72	95	22	14
26	I feel more tensed and nervous in my language class than in my other classes					
	65	99	80	115	34	14
27	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class					
	36	133	69	130	23	16

28	When I am on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed					
	48	151	108	70	15	15
29	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says					
	77	165	63	74	11	17
30	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language					
	75	128	83	85	22	14
31	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language					
	49	79	83	133	48	15
32	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language					
	56	156	105	66	9	15
33	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance					
	116	185	47	37	8	14

The data reveal that the majority of student participants do experience foreign language anxiety. This reflects Chambers finding that the FL is perceived as "a factor of stress" due to the "need to be fluent and persevering" (1991: 27). The findings are thus crucial since existing evidence suggests there is a negative relationship between language anxiety and students' performance as well as their motivation (Aida 1994). Indeed, MacIntyre & Gardner also point out that foreign language anxiety can have adverse effects on the language learning process because "it can interfere with the acquisition, retention and production of the new language" (1991: 86).

The data show that conflicts between instructors' and students' beliefs about language choice can provoke language anxiety. These results are in tandem with Mak's (2011) findings. Mak (2011) applied the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) with the aim of determining the factors that cause language anxiety among Chinese students studying English as a second language in a Hong Kong university. The author found that speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation as well as the inability to use their first language (L1) in class also contributed to students' speaking-in-class anxiety.

As mentioned earlier, language anxiety can have negative effects on students' motivation. Harbord notes that "if students are unfamiliar with a new approach, the teacher who cannot or will not give an explanation in the L1 may cause considerable student de-motivation" (1992: 352). On the other hand, allowing the use of CS can promote spontaneous TL use both inside and outside the classroom context (Christie 2013). By helping the learner to persevere in the attempt to communicate (as against hesitating, pausing, or stopping), CS helps to boost the learners confidence in the target language. Foreign language students can therefore use CS as a commu-

nicative strategy[9]. Additionally, CS can also serve as a cover strategy[10] "which learners may use when faced with language difficulties that might make them appear unintelligent, stupid or even foolish" (Cohen 2010: 164). Actually, within the classification of communicative strategies, CS is considered as an "achievement or compensatory strategy" alongside other techniques such as circumlocution, approximation, use of all-purpose words, and "foreignizing" (see Cohen 2010: 165). Cohen affirms:

> These strategies extend the learners' communicative means beyond the constraints of target-language proficiency and consequently help to increase their linguistic confidence as well. (2010: 165)

This assertion is confirmed by Butzkamm (2010), who maintains that classroom code-switching improves students' language proficiency since they develop a higher level of confidence when they code-switch; this improves students' competence in communication. Levine (2003) and Greggio & Gil (2007) also report that CS is a motivating factor in learning the second language since it reduces the level of difficulty for learners (as quoted in Nordin et al. 2013: 479).

Consequently, although CS is often perceived in a negative light, it seems to have significant benefits in that it increases learner participation, facilitates lesson comprehension, boosts learner confidence and thus, reduces learner anxiety. As Chambers asserts, FL students should therefore be exposed to the TL "to an extent which is reasonable" and the L1 should be used when necessary because failure to "recognise this necessity can result in alienation and demotivation" (1992: 66). In the words of Chambers, "since motivation is arguably the key to a successful lesson, its diminution or eradication must be avoided" (1992: 66).

6. Conclusion

The Spanish section of the research setting has some of the highest dropout rates. Only an approximate one-third of the students admitted each year continue to study the language until they graduate. In order to attain a successful learning environment, it is necessary that lecturers take note of students' beliefs about learning and classroom preferences, while attempting themselves to adhere to their own preferred teaching strategies. The classroom is a linguistic community where cooperation between lecturers and students should exist in order to foster a good ambience and facilitate the goal of learning. As Butzkamm explains, "successful classrooms have a dual focus: on content, ideas, persons as well as on language" (1998: 97). While

9 I.e. "strategies used to convey a message that is both meaningful and informative for the listener or reader, for example, when we want to explain technical information for which we do not have the specialized vocabulary" (Cohen 2010: 164). Of equal importance is the fact that communication strategies also include floor-holding and conversational interaction strategies for proficient speakers as well (Cohen 2010: 165).

10 I.e. 'using a memorized and partially understood phrase in a classroom drill in order to keep the action going' (Cohen 2010: 164).

the overuse of the L1 can be a disincentive to high level students and slow down the language learning process of lower level students, its strategic use can produce considerable benefits for students of all levels. In view of the significant levels of language anxiety amongst the student participants, it would be beneficial for lecturers to make more conscious efforts to encourage their students' foreign language confidence by avoiding a strict ban on the use of the L1 in the lecture halls. This could have a positive impact on their motivation and subsequently, improve their performance. By extension, it could also increase student recruitment and retention in the Section.

Acknowledgement

This research was supported by the University of Ghana Building a New Generation of Academics in Africa (BANGA-Africa) Project, with funding from the Carnegie Cooperation of New York. The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the author.

References

Aida, Yukie. 1994. Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's Construct of Foreign Language Anxiety: The Case of Students of Japanese. *The Modern Language Journal* 78. 155-168. doi: 10.2307/329005.

Araya Río, Jacqueline, & Jorge Luis Espinoza Campos. 2013. Code-Switching in the EFL Classroom: Friend or Foe? *Revista de Lenguas Modernas* 19. 375-391.

Atkinson, David. 1987. The Mother Tongue in the Classroom: A Neglected Resource? *ELT Journal* 41(4). 241-147. doi: 10.1093/elt/41.4.241

Atkinson, David. 1993a. Teaching in the Target Language: A Problem in the Current Orthodoxy. *The Language Learning Journal* 8(1). 2-5. doi: 10.1080/09571739385200261.

Atkinson, David. 1993b. *Teaching Monolingual Classes*. London: Longman.

Bernard, Russell H. & Gery Wayne Ryan. 2010. *Analyzing qualitative data: systematic approaches*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Butzkamm, Wolfgang. 1998. Code-switching in a Bilingual History Lesson: The Mother Tongue as a Conversational Lubricant. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 1(2). 81-99. doi: 10.1080/13670059808667676.

Butzkamm, Wolfgang. 2003. We Only Learn Language Once. The Role of the Mother Tongue in FL Classrooms: Death of a Dogma. *The Language Learning Journal* 28(1). 29-39. doi:10.1080/09571730385200181.

Chambers, Francine. 1991. Promoting Use of the Target Language in the Classroom. *Language Learning Journal* 4 (1). 27-31. doi: 10.1080/09571739185200411.

Chambers, Gary. 1992. Teaching in the Target Language. *Language Learning Journal* 6 (1). 66-67. doi:10.1080/09571739285200491.

Chaudron, Craig H. 1988. *Second Language Classrooms: Research on Teaching and Learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Christie, Colin. 2013. Speaking Spontaneously in the Modern Foreign Languages Classroom: Tools for Supporting Successful Target Language Conversation. *Language Learning Journal* 44(1). 74-89. doi: 10.1080/09571736.2013.836751.

Cohen, Andrew D. 2010. Focus on the Language Learner: Styles, Strategies and Motivation. In N. Schmitt (ed.), *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics*. London: Hodder Education. 161-178

Cook, Vivian. 1991. *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*. Edward Arnold/Hodder Headline Group: Melbourne.

Cook, Vivian. 2001. Using the First Language in the Classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review* 57(3). 402–423. doi: 10.3138/cmlr.57.3.402.

Dewaele, Jean-Marc & Li Wei. 2014. Attitudes Towards Code-Switching Among Adult Mono- and Multilingual Language Users. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 35(3). 235-251. doi:10.1080/01434632.2013.859687.

Duff, Alan. 1989. *Translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eldridge, John. 1996. Code-switching in a Turkish Secondary School. *ELT Journal* 50(4). 303-311. doi: 10.1093/elt/50.4.303.

Ellis, Rod. 1984. *Classroom Second Language Development*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Franklin, Carole E. 1990. Teaching in the Target Language: Problems and Prospects. *Language Learning Journal* 2(1). 20-24. doi:10.1080/09571739085200371.

Gill, Simon. 2005. The L1 in the L2 Classroom. *Humanizing Language Teaching* 7(5). Accessed 5 October 2018. http://www.hltmag.co.uk/sep05/mart03.rtf

Harbord, John. 1992. The Use of the Mother Tongue in the Classroom. *ELT Journal* 46(4). 350-355. doi: 10.1093/elt/46.4.350.

Holthouse, John. 2006. The Role of the Mother Tongue in EFL Classrooms. *Gaikokugokyoiku Forum* 5. 27-37. Accessed 5 october 2018. https://www.kansai-u.ac.jp/fl/publication/pdf.../027holthouse.pdf

Horwitz, Elaine K., Michael B. Horwitz, & Joann Cope. 1986. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal* 70(2). 125-132.

Kelleher, Mark. 2013. Overcoming the First Language Taboo to Enhance Learning a Foreign Language. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 93. 2037–2042. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.161.

Krashen, Stephen. 1981. *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Krashen, Stephen. 1991. The Input Hypothesis: An Update. In J. E. Alatis (ed.), *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1991*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. 409-431.

Macdonald, Carol. 1993. *Using the Target Language*. Cheltenham: Mary Glasgow Publications.

MacIntyre, Peter D. & Robert C. Gardner. 1991. Methods and results in the study of anxiety and language learning: A review of the literature. *Language Learning* 41. 85-117.

MacSwan, Jeff. 2000. The Architecture of the Bilingual Language Faculty: Evidence from Intrasentential Code Switching. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 3(1). 37-54. doi: 10.1017/s1366728900000122.

Mak, Barley. 2011. An Exploration of Speaking-In-Class Anxiety with Chinese ESL Learners. *System* 39. 202-214. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2011.04.002.

Martin-Jones, Marilyn & Suzanne Romaine. 1986. Semilingualism: A Half-baked Theory of Communicative Competence. *Applied Linguistics* 7(1). 26–38. doi: 10.1093/applin/7.1.26.

Mirhasani, Akbar & Homa Jafarpour-Mamaghani. 2009. Code-Switching and Iranian EFL Learners' Oral Proficiency. *Journal of Teaching English as a Foreign Language and Literature* 1(2). 21-31.

Nordin, Maishara Noli, Farrah R. D. Ali, Sharifah I. S. Zubir & Roslan Sadjirin. 2013. ESL Learners' Reactions towards Code Switching in Classroom Settings. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 90. 478-487. doi.10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.07.117.

Nunan, David. 1987. Communicative Language Teaching: Making it Work. *ELT Journal* 41(2). 136-145.

Poplack, Shana. 1980. Sometimes I'll Start a Sentence In Spanish Y TERMINO EN ESPANOL: Toward a Typology of Code-Switching. *Linguistics* 18(7-8). 581-618.doi. 10.1515/ling-2013-0039.

Prodromou, Luke. 1992. From Mother Tongue to Other Tongue: What is the Place of the Student's Mother Tongue in the EFL Classroom? *TESOL Newsletter Greece* 67.

Qing, Xu. 2012. A Tentative Analysis of Code-Switching in College Bilingual Education. *Cross-Cultural Communication* 8(4). 30-33. doi:10.3968/j.ccc.1923670020120804.1583.

Qian, Xiaofang, Guisen Tian & Qiang Wang. 2009. Codeswitching in the Primary EFL Classroom in China–Two Case Studies. *System* 37(4). 719-730. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2009.09.015.

Richards, Jack C. & Theodore Rogers. 1986. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sarason, Irwin G. 1978. The Test Anxiety Scale: Concept and Research. In C. D. Spielberger & I. G. Sarason (eds.), *Series in Clinical and Community Psychology*. Washington, D.C.: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation. 193-216.

Schweers Jr, William C. 1999. Using L1 in the L2 classroom. *English teaching forum* 37(2). 6-9.

Scott, Virginia M. & María J. Fuente. 2008. What's the Problem? L2 Learners' Use of the L1 During Consciousness-Raising, Form-Focused Tasks. *The Modern Language Journal* 92(1). 100–113. doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00689.x.

Swain, Merrill. 1985. Communicative Competence: Some Roles of Comprehensible Input and Comprehensible Output in its Development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (eds.), *Input in Second Language Acquisition*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House. 235-253.

Swan, Michael. 1985a. A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (1). *ELT Journal* 39(1). 2-12. Accessed 5 October 2018. http://seas3.elte.hu/coursematerial/HalapiMagdolna/Swan1.pdf

Swan, Michael. 1985b. A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (2). *ELT Journal* 39(2). 76-87. Accessed 5 October 2018. http://seas3.elte.hu/coursematerial/HalapiMagdolna/Swan2.pdf

Then, David. C.-O. & Su-Hie Ting. 2009. A Preliminary Study of Teacher Code-Switching in Secondary English and Science in Malaysia. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language Electronic Journal* 13(1). 1-17. Accessed 5 October 2018. http://tesl-ej.org/pdf/ej49/a3.pdf

Wharton, Chris. 2007. *Informed Use of the Mother Tongue in the English Language Classroom*. Assessed 5 October 2018. http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/collegeartslaw/cels/essays/secondlanguage/wharton-p-grammar.pdf

Willis, Dave J. 1990. *The Lexical Syllabus*. Glasgow: Collins Cobuild.

Yavuz, Fatih. 2012. The Attitudes of English Teachers about the Use of L1 in the Teaching of L2. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 46. 4339 – 4344.