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MULTILINGUAL PRACTICES IN LOTE INSTRUCTION: INSIGHTS FROM JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Summary. *This paper examines the role of code-switching in teaching Languages Other Than English (LOTE) through the example of Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL). Drawing on recent research on multilingual pedagogy, the study reviews the functions of code-switching and its relationship with translanguaging in multilingual classrooms. Previous studies indicate that teachers frequently alternate between Japanese, English, and learners' first languages when explaining vocabulary, grammar, and specialized terminology, as well as when checking comprehension. Such practices facilitate understanding, reduce ambiguity, and support content learning. The paper also discusses teachers' attitudes toward code-switching and the ongoing shift from monolingual teaching approaches toward multilingual pedagogies. The findings suggest that strategic use of multiple languages enhances classroom interaction, promotes learner confidence, and supports more effective acquisition of Japanese. The study argues that code-switching should be viewed not as a deficiency in language teaching but as a valuable pedagogical resource that reflects the realities of multilingual learning environments. These insights contribute to the growing discussion on multilingual practices in LOTE instruction and highlight the need for teacher training that incorporates multilingual pedagogical approaches.*

Keywords: *code-switching; translanguaging; multilingual pedagogy; Japanese as a Foreign Language; LOTE instruction.*

Statement of the problem. The growing linguistic diversity of contemporary classrooms has challenged traditional monolingual approaches to language instruction. This shift is particularly evident in the teaching of Languages Other Than English (LOTE), where learners frequently draw on multiple linguistic resources to facilitate learning. In Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) education, the interaction between learners' first language (L1), English, and Japanese has generated increasing interest in multilingual pedagogies, especially code-switching and translanguaging. Although these practices have often been viewed as deviations from target-language use, recent research suggests that they may contribute positively to language learning and classroom communication.



Literature review. Previous studies have examined code-switching in JFL contexts, which is particularly prominent among beginner learners [1, 2] and multilingual classrooms [3]. Research has also explored teachers' beliefs regarding the use of multiple languages in Japanese language education and English-Medium Instruction (EMI) environments [4, 5]. However, despite the growing recognition of multilingual pedagogies, there remains insufficient discussion of how code-switching functions as a pedagogical resource in LOTE instruction beyond English language teaching. Furthermore, tensions persist between monolingual instructional ideologies and the realities of multilingual classroom interaction [4, 5, 6].

The context of multilingual practices encompasses such terms as code-switching, code-mixing and translanguaging. Code-switching generally refers to the alternation between two or more languages during communication, whereas code-mixing involves combining linguistic elements from different languages within a single clause or sentence [7]. According to Sato (2023), code-switching is often associated with strategic language alternation motivated by communicative needs, while translanguaging represents a broader pedagogical practice that mobilizes learners' entire linguistic repertoire for meaning-making [8].

Research on JFL classrooms demonstrates that multilingual practices are widespread. Muliadi and Haristiani (2020) found that English use alongside Japanese supports cross-linguistic transfer, improves comprehension, and encourages student participation [1]. Similarly, Putu Dewi Merlyna (2023) reported frequent incorporation of English lexical items into Japanese speech among beginner learners [2], illustrating the natural emergence of multilingual communication.

Moreover, classroom language choices are also influenced by teacher-related factors. Champ (2014) observed that instructors' confidence in English affects their willingness to alternate between English and Japanese when teaching *gairaigo* (vocabulary derived primarily from English) [9]. Interestingly, studies comparing native-speaker and non-native-speaker Japanese teachers suggest that the latter tend to rely on English more extensively as instructional support [3].

Differences in teachers' attitudes toward code-switching have been documented in JFL research. Hobbs et al. (2010) reported greater acceptance of learners' L1 use among teachers from English-speaking backgrounds than among their Japanese counterparts, highlighting the role of educational and cultural experiences in shaping classroom language practices [10].

Within EMI settings, researchers increasingly question the assumption that English should be the sole language of instruction. Dearden (2014) reported that many educational institutions lack explicit language policies regarding classroom language use, creating space for flexible multilingual practices [11]. This perspective aligns with scholarship that conceptualizes EMI as inherently multilingual rather than strictly monolingual [4].

Research objective. This paper aims to examine the pedagogical role of code-switching in LOTE instruction through evidence from Japanese as a Foreign Language classrooms. Particular attention is given to the functions of code-switching, its relationship with translanguaging, and its contribution to multilingual learning environments.

Presentation of the main material. Evidence from recent studies indicates that code-switching serves several pedagogical functions in multilingual JFL classrooms. Teachers frequently alternate between Japanese, English, and learners' first languages when explaining vocabulary, grammar patterns, and specialized terminology, as well as when checking students' comprehension. Such strategic language alternation facilitates access to complex concepts, reduces ambiguity, and minimizes misunderstandings. Research further suggests that the use of multiple languages during instruction enhances content learning by enabling students to draw on their existing linguistic knowledge [5], whereas exclusive reliance on Japanese may increase the likelihood of incomplete or inaccurate understanding.

The educational value of multilingual practices extends beyond immediate comprehension. Translanguaging and code-switching create opportunities for learners to connect prior linguistic knowledge with new information, thereby strengthening learning outcomes [6]. Rather than functioning as compensatory mechanisms for linguistic deficiencies, these practices can be viewed as strategic resources that support cognitive engagement and knowledge construction.

The findings also challenge rigid monolingual approaches to language teaching. Several scholars argue that multilingual classrooms operate most effectively when learners are allowed to mobilize all available linguistic resources [12]. This position is particularly relevant in Asian educational contexts, where multilingual communication frequently occurs both inside and outside the classroom [13].

Teacher attitudes toward code-switching remain complex. Despite using multilingual practices regularly, some teachers continue to express uncertainty about their pedagogical legitimacy [14]. Research suggests that professional development programs should therefore include training in multilingual pedagogies to help teachers better understand the benefits and appropriate implementation of code-switching and translanguaging [4].

The evidence further indicates that multilingual instructional approaches contribute to more inclusive educational environments. By acknowledging students' diverse linguistic backgrounds, teachers can reduce language-learning anxiety, increase learner confidence, and foster greater participation [4]. Such practices also promote intercultural awareness and communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries [6].

Conclusions and recommendations. The literature analysis demonstrates that code-switching constitutes a valuable pedagogical resource in LOTE instruction, particularly in Japanese-as-a-Foreign-Language classrooms. Rather than hindering language acquisition, strategic alternation among Japanese, English, and learners' native languages supports comprehension, facilitates content learning, and enhances classroom interaction. The findings challenge monolingual instructional ideologies and support contemporary multilingual perspectives on language education.

Future research should further investigate how code-switching and translanguaging function across different proficiency levels and instructional settings within LOTE education. Greater attention should also be paid to teacher training and institutional language policies that can support effective multilingual pedagogical practices.



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МУЛЬТИЛІНГВАЛЬНІ ПРАКТИКИ У ВИКЛАДАННІ МОВ, ВІДМІННИХ ВІД АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ: ДОСВІД ВИКЛАДАННЯ ЯПОНСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ІНОЗЕМНОЇ

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Анотація. У статті розглядається роль перемикання кодів у викладанні мов, відмінних від англійської (LOTE), на прикладі японської мови як іноземної (JFL). Спираючись на сучасні дослідження багатомовної педагогіки, аналізуються функції перемикання кодів та його взаємозв'язок із транслінгвуванням у багатомовних аудиторіях. Попередні дослідження свідчать, що викладачі часто чергують японську, англійську та рідні мови здобувачів освіти під час пояснення лексики, граматичних структур і спеціалізованої термінології, а також для перевірки розуміння навчального матеріалу. Такі практики сприяють кращому розумінню, зменшують неоднозначність і підтримують засвоєння змісту навчання. У статті також розглядаються ставлення викладачів до перемикання кодів і теперішній перехід від монологічних підходів до багатомовних педагогічних практик. Результати досліджень свідчать, що стратегічне використання кількох мов покращує взаємодію в аудиторії, підвищує впевненість здобувачів освіти та сприяє ефективнішому опануванню японської мови. Обґрунтовується, що перемикання кодів слід розглядати не як недолік мовного навчання, а як цінний педагогічний ресурс, що відображає реалії багатомовного освітнього середовища. Отримані результати роблять внесок у дискусію щодо багатомовних практик у викладанні LOTE та підкреслюють необхідність підготовки викладачів до використання багатомовних педагогічних підходів.

Ключові слова: перемикання мовних кодів; транслінгвування; багатомовна педагогіка; японська мова як іноземна; викладання мов, відмінних від англійської (LOTE).