Using a Disjunctive Marker to Teach English in English

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Although the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has strongly encouraged Japanese English teachers to teach English in English, many Japanese teachers of English remain uncertain about how to teach in English. In this study, the author examined the instructional practices of 4 expert English teachers who successfully deliver their lessons in English. Conversation analysis was used to reveal their strategic practices. The 4 teachers consistently used a discourse marker, *okay*, as a disjunctive marker when they code-switched their instructional language from Japanese to English. It is suggested that the strategic use of the disjunctive marker can be useful for other Japanese English teachers to deliver their own lessons in English.

近年の文部科学省の学習指導要領によって、中等教育学校の英語の授業は英語で行うことが基本とされている。しかし現場では未だ多くの英語教師がどのように英語を用いて授業を行えばよいのか分からないために授業の大半が日本語で行われている。そこで本研究では実際に授業を英語で行っている教師らの授業実践を対象に会話分析的手法から教師らの言語管理方法を分析することを試みる。4人の英語教師の計40授業時間分の録画データを対象に分析した結果、教師らが教授言語を日本語から英語に切り替える際にdiscourse marker（談話標識）のokayをdisjunctive marker（選言的標識）として使用する実践が明らかになった。結語では、このようなdisjunctive markerの使用が他の教師たちにも共有可能な実践知となることを提案する。

Several years have passed since the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (hereinafter, MEXT) implemented the New Course of Study—Foreign Languages and English, which requires that "Teaching English in English should be standardized in English classes" at senior (e.g., MEXT, 2009) and junior high schools (MEXT, 2013). Since Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) are the essential resource of spoken English for Japanese students who study EFL, the MEXT's new guidelines strongly encourage JTEs to develop English classes into English-speaking communities.

However, even 3 years after the implementation of the New Course of Study (MEXT, 2013), only 12.1% of the teachers in 9,460 junior high schools and 11.0% of the teachers in 3,390 senior high schools taught English mainly in English (MEXT, 2016). As these survey results show, nearly 90% of JTEs seem to have some difficulty in teaching English in English.

This study focused on the minority of JTEs who are able to teach English in English. Because these JTEs are often considered simply superior JTEs who have higher speaking skills than other JTEs, many practitioners believe that they are able to teach English in English merely because they are excellent at speaking English (Ishino, 2013). Thus, how they actually manage to teach English in English has not been studied. By examining their actual classroom management, we may be able to learn their strategies for teaching English in English. In this study we conducted qualitative research to explore the strategic practices of expert JTEs' to maximize target language (TL) use during classroom instruction, which until now have been considered their hidden strategies that are difficult to share with other JTEs.

Literature Review

Teachers' TL Use in Foreign Language Classrooms

Many previous studies have investigated teachers' TL use in foreign language classrooms (e.g., De la Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Duff & Polio, 1990; Macaro, 2001; Nakatsukasa &

Loewen, 2015). Except in Japanese EFL teaching contexts (Ishino, 2013; Kaneko, 1992), the literature about many foreign language teaching contexts have reported teachers' use of a large amount of TL during classroom instruction (e.g., De la Campa & Nassaji, 2009). Although many teachers have been teaching a TL in the TL itself, "how they do it" has not been documented in previous literature. Instead, the discussion of teachers' judicious use of students' L1 has become a key topic in current FL teaching research (e.g., Hall & Cook, 2012; Turnbull, 2001).

Although teachers' judicious use of students' L1 is still essential to Japanese EFL classrooms, one problem of L1 use for JTEs is the difficulty in getting back to the TL (English) after using L1 (Japanese). This is because most JTEs share their L1 with their students, and their communication outside English classrooms is conducted in Japanese. Thus, once JTEs use Japanese during classroom instruction, it is difficult for them to get back to using English, as it is much easier and natural for both JTEs and students to communicate in Japanese. Therefore, getting back to using English after using Japanese can be difficult for JTEs when teaching English in English. How then are some expert JTEs able to deal with this difficulty and conduct lessons mainly in English? How are they able to get back to using English after using Japanese? Observing and documenting their language management practices will give other JTEs some practical solutions to keep using English as the instructional language, even after temporarily using Japanese.

Conversation Analysis as a Descriptive Research of Foreign Language Classrooms

Many previous studies on the documentation of teachers' language use have utilized "qualitative and descriptive research" (Nassaji, 2015), as it is well suited to the study of language classrooms. Nassaji claimed that because conducting tightly controlled experimental research is hardly possible for the study of language classroom teaching, qualitative descriptive research is the best option to capture what really goes on in language classrooms. He stated that both qualitative and descriptive research "involve naturalistic data," and they "attempt to study language learning and teaching in their naturally occurring settings without any intervention" (p. 129).

As one such descriptive research approach, conversation analysis (CA) deals with naturally occurring interactions (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 2007). Although CA is originally from the discipline of sociology, as numerous prior works in language teaching research have shown (e.g., Markee, 2005), CA has a robust methodological capability for capturing learners' and teachers' naturally occurring interactions (e.g., Greer, Bussinguer, Butterfield, & Mischinger, 2009; Okada, 2010). For example, as an initial CA study on teachers' TL/L1 use, Üstünel and Seedhouse (2005) examined EFL teachers' code-switching between TL and L1 during classroom instruction in Turkish EFL classrooms. Okada (2010) documented FL teachers' tactical question designs involving code-switching between TL and L1 in Japanese EFL classrooms. Using CA, these previous studies explained FL teachers' detailed interactional practices.

Notion of Disjunctive Marker and Interactional Resources

Looney, Jia, and Kimura (2017) analyzed three math teachers' interactional practices in an American university. In their analysis, the teachers used a specific discourse marker *okay* to switch between self-directed talk and pedagogic instructional talk. The authors developed Beach's (1993) finding of a transitional marker that is used specifically when a teacher shifts from self-directed talk such as calculation on the blackboard to classroom instructional talk. Since the teacher's use of the specific discourse marker functions as a clear disconnection between the teacher's prior talk and his or her subsequent talk, the students can predict that the subsequent talk is different from the prior talk and are able to prepare for the activity transition.

Regarding such interactional resources, Sidnell's (2007) study of "disjunctive marker" is useful. Sidnell analyzed people's use of *look* in their turn-initial position in everyday conversation and news interview data. He found that a speaker's use of the turn-initial *look* functions as a disjunctive marker "which serves to mark a disjunction and redirection of the talk away from the conditionally relevant next action and towards some alternative" (p. 387). Although Sidnell's finding is not from classroom interaction data, I suggest that the notion of a disjunctive marker will better explain the specific interactional resource that teachers use when they switch between two different things, such as two different languages or topics.

On this account, there must be some interactional resources that expert JTEs use for their interactional practices when switching their instructional language from Japanese to English. Applying the concept of a disjunctive marker, the current study examined expert JTEs' classrooms, where English is taught mainly in English.

Objective

This study addressed the following research question:

- What kind of interactional resources do expert JTEs use as a disjunctive marker when they switch their instructional language from Japanese to English?

Method

In this study, CA was used as the research method. Two specific features differentiate CA from other qualitative and descriptive research methods: (a) a specific transcription convention (Jefferson, 2004), and (b) the specific interpretative framework of the discourse/conversational data.

Stivers (2015) defined CA's analytic and coding process as "formal coding" because it uses the abovementioned specific features. Following this definition, the current study also used CA's formal coding to examine some expert JTEs' language-switching practices (from Japanese to English).

Data

The data used in this study consisted of 40 videotaped English lessons. Each class consisted of 32 to 37 students, and each lesson lasted 50 minutes.

Participants

The participants in this study were four junior high school teachers in Japan. They were selected based on the following criteria: (a) the teachers taught English classes mainly in English; (b) they were honored by the local educational board of their municipalities as distinguished teachers; and (c) the participants agreed that the author could observe their English classrooms for a year. The teachers agreed that all their utterances in their classrooms would be audiorecorded and transcribed. Henceforth the participating teachers will be referred to as Mr. Tanaka, Ms Yamazaki, Mr. Shimizu, and Ms Suzuki. These names are pseudonyms.

Procedure

Classroom video recordings were conducted during two different periods. The first recordings were conducted from February to March 2012 at a public junior high school (A) where Mr. Tanaka taught English in English. The second recordings were conducted from April 2015 to March 2016 at three other junior high schools, B, C, and D, where Ms Yamazaki, Mr. Shimizu, and Ms Suzuki (respectively) taught English in English.

Findings

The analysis shows that the four expert JTEs frequently produced *okay*-prefaced code-switching turns when they switched their language from Japanese to English. Table 1 shows the distribution of these JTEs' production of the *okay*-prefaced turns among the total number of their code-switching turns.

Table 1. Distribution of the Use of Disjunctive Markers Among the Four Expert JTEs

Turn-initial marker	Tanaka	Yamazaki	Shimizu	Suzuki	All
Okay	44	38	22	48	152
Other	16	0	10	10	36
None	0	2	4	2	8
Total Japanese to English code-switching turns	60	40	36	60	196

As Table 1 shows, about 78% (152 of 196 cases) of code-switching turns from Japanese to English were produced with turn-initial *okay*, and about 18% of them were produced with other items such as *by the way*, *so*, and *well*, which were also in turn-initial positions. Only about 4% of code-switching turns were produced with no turn-initial items. In the following, a typical case of each category will be illustrated through excerpts.

Turn-Initial Okay as Disjunctive Marker

Excerpt 1 illustrates a typical case of the JTEs' code-switching turn produced with turn-initial *okay*. (See Appendix A for transcription conventions used and Appendix B for abbreviations used.)

```
[Excerpt 1 Mr. Tanaka 01]
1   T :   how do you say okashi?
                          Snacks
                          Snacks
2     :   (1.6)
3   S?:   sweets
4   T :   sweets? o:ka:y.> everyone snacks <
5   Ss:   snacks
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6   T :   snacks
7   Ss:   snacks
8   T :   oka:y?
9     :   (.)
10  T :   tamo-chan mata sawara nai
          TAMO-TL   again touch no
          Tamo-chan, again, (you) shouldn't touch (it)
11  Ss:   huhuhuhuh
12  T :-> okay:|what is he doing?
               | T points a picture on the blackboard
13        (1.2)
14  Ss:   nandemo happyoukai
          Whatever recital
          A recital
15  T :   yeah:: this is kind of nandemo happyoukai and this is..
                                 whatever recital
        Yeah:: this is kind of a recital and this is…
```

In line 1, Mr. Tanaka initiates the "initiation-response-feedback (IRF) sequence" (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) with students by asking how to say *snacks* in English. After Mr. Tanaka gives feedback to students in line 8 for their pronunciation of *snacks*, he switches from English to Japanese and calls out one of the students, namely Tamo-chan, to correct his misbehavior (Tamo-chan seems to be touching an object that he should not be touching at that moment). Immediately after Mr. Tanaka calls out the student, Tamo-chan stops touching the object, and the laughter of the other students follows in line 11. In line 12, Mr. Tanaka produces the turn-initial *okay* utterance in English. Subsequently, as shown in line 15, Mr. Tanaka continues to use English for instruction.

When Mr. Tanaka switches from English to Japanese in line 10, he obviously diverts to off-task talk (Markee, 2005). Note that, based on Markee's notions, on-task refers to whatever task the teacher designates as the current class agenda, and off-task refers to all other tasks. On-task instructions are, for example, instructing students to read a textbook, answer questions, and carefully listen to English audio material. Since Mr. Tanaka's pointing out a student's misbehavior in line 10 is not directly related to the current lesson agenda, his turn in line 10 is identified as off-task talk. When Mr. Tanaka switches from Japanese to English with the *okay*-prefaced turn in line 12, his orientation is interpreted as on-task talk (Markee, 2005), as he initiates another IRF sequence related to their current subject (Mr. Tanaka asks about a picture on the blackboard).

Therefore, the turn-initial *okay* in Mr. Tanaka's switching turn is identified as a disjunctive marker showing his students that what will follow will be different from the prior turn. In other words, the disjunctive marker *okay* enables students to interpret the shifting interactional orientation.

Excerpt 2 is another example of the teachers' use of turn-initial *okay* that functions as a disjunctive marker between off-task talk in Japanese and on-task talk in English.

```
[Excerpt 2 Ms Yamazaki 11]
1   T  :  kaiteru hito  atode kaku jikan tsukuru kara ikkai kao agete ne
          Writing person later write time make   since once face up   FP
          Stop writing and look up, I will give you writing time later
2     : ->okay (.) please repeat after me=
3     :  =the car is washed every day
4        (0.5)
5   Ss :  the car is washed every day
```

In line 1 of Excerpt 2, Ms Yamazaki uses Japanese to ask students to stop writing and look up, because many students are looking at their desk and writing notes. In line 2, she instructs students to perform an on-task activity (repeating after her) in English. Again, this switching turn was produced with the teacher's use of the disjunctive marker *okay*.

```
[Excerpt 3 Ms Suzuki 32]
1   T :   dewa (0.2) kyo   wa:: honbun    ni hairazuni::
          Then       today CP  main text NP  enter no
          Then (we are) not going to deal with the main text
2     :   choto: bunsho        no tsukurikata wo benkyo shite
          Little sentence NP  how to make OP study  do LK
          But (we are) going to study how to make a sentence
```

```
3     :    iki tai  to  omoi  masu
4          Go  want TP think CP
           We might want to do that
5     :->  okay: |what's this?
                 | T is showing a slide that is projected on the blackboard
6   Ss:    (0.5)
7   S1:    hai
           Yes
           Yes
```

In lines 1-4 in Excerpt 3, Ms Suzuki explains the lesson agenda in Japanese. In line 5, she switches from Japanese to English, initiating an IRF sequence with students by showing something on a PowerPoint slide. After a 0.5 second pause, one of the students responds to her initiation in line 7. Ms Suzuki's turn in line 5 changes her talk to on-task talk as she initiates an IRF sequence. Here again, the teacher's turn-initial *okay* in code-switching turn from Japanese to English functions as a disjunctive marker between off-task talk in Japanese and on-task talk in English.

Other Turn-Initial Items

As shown in Table 1, about 18% of code-switching turns were produced with other turn-initial items that also function as disjunctive markers. Excerpt 4 is a typical case of code-switching utterance with other turn-initial items. In this excerpt, the change-of-state token *oh* (Heritage, 1984) and *by the way* seem to function as a disjunctive marker between off-task talk in Japanese and on-task talk in English.

```
[Excerpt 4 Mr. Tanaka 08]
1     T :   anna  kanji yatta sou desu
            Such  like  did   yes   CP-POL
           (It was) like such things
2     Ss:   hahahahahahahaha
3     T : ->oh oh by the way, what is she doing?
```

Mr. Tanaka and his students were talking about their school trip and line 1 was the story's climax. After the students' laughter in line 2, Mr. Tanaka shifts his orientation to on-task talk as he initiates an IRF sequence with the students by pointing to a picture on the blackboard. Thus, the turn-initial *oh, oh* and the discourse marker *by the way* seem to function as a disjunctive marker between off-task talk in Japanese and on-task talk in English.

Like in Excerpt 4, in a small number of cases, the JTEs produced code-switching turns from Japanese to English with other items such as *oh*, *by the way*, *well*, and *right* in the turn-initial position. All these items functioned as disjunctive markers between off-task talk in Japanese and on-task talk in English.

No Turn-Initial Items

Table 1 also shows that about 4% of code-switching turns were produced by the JTEs without any turn-initial items. This means that only 4% of their code-switching utterances were produced without a disjunctive marker. Excerpt 5 illustrates an example of this unusual case.

```
[Excerpt 5 Ms Suzuki 02]
1   T :   It looks noisy.
2         (0.6)
3   T :   do you remember noisy?
4   Ss:   (0.7)
5   T :   noisy?
6   S1:   sawagashii
          1. Noisy
          2. Noisy
7   T :   ↑un sawagashii: yane
          Yes  noisy      right
          Yes noisy right
8         (0.2)
9   T : ->the:n there are many signs
```

From lines 1 to 5, Ms Suzuki initiates an IRF sequence with the students as she asks whether they remember the meaning of *noisy* in English. In line 6, student 1 (S1) responds to Ms Suzuki in Japanese. Subsequently, Ms Suzuki produces a Japanese utterance to give S1 positive feedback in line 7. After a short silence in line 8, Ms Suzuki continues her instruction in English in line 9.

Here, even though there was code-switching from Japanese to English in Ms Suzuki's instruction, she did not insert any disjunctive marker at the turn-initial position in the code-switching turn. This phenomenon could be interpreted from the on-task and off-task perspective. Although there was code-switching from Japanese to English, both Ms Suzuki's turns in line 7 and in line 9 were oriented to on-task talk. There was no orientation shift between on-task talk and off-task talk. Thus, Ms Suzuki did not need to insert any disjunctive marker between her turn in Japanese (line 7) and her turn in English (line 9).

Discussion and Conclusion

This study employed a conversation analytic formal coding system (Stivers, 2015) to examine how expert JTEs continue using English as their instructional language in their EFL classrooms. The analysis particularly focused on the specific code-switching moment wherein the JTEs try to get back to English instruction after their temporary use of Japanese.

The analysis revealed that about 78% (152 of 196 cases) of code-switching turns from Japanese to English were produced with turn-initial *okay*, and about 18% of them were produced with other items such as *by the way*, *so*, and *well*, which were also in turn-initial positions. Based on a detailed analysis, the turn-initial items were identified as disjunctive markers (Sidnell, 2007) between off-task talk in Japanese and on-task talk in English (Markee, 2005). Therefore, as previous literature reported, some turn-initial items, such as the discourse marker *okay*, can be used as a disjunctive marker when teachers need to shift from one thing (language or topic) to another in their classroom instruction (e.g., Beach, 1993; Looney, Jia, & Kimura, 2017). In particular, in this context, teachers shift not only from one language to another but also from off-task talk to on-task talk. The orientation shift between off-task and on-task is strongly connected to teachers' language switching from the students' L1 to the TL. Such teachers' use of a disjunctive marker enables students to prepare to respond to the next on-task activity in English.

Although previous literature (e.g., De la Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Macaro, 2001) has already reported the relationship between instructional topic shifting (such as shifting between on-task and off-task talk) and language shifting, this study is novel in that it was found that teachers frequently use disjunctive markers when they shift from off-task talk in L1 to on-task talk in TL. This implies that foreign language teachers need to make an extra effort when shifting from off-task talk in L1 to on-task talk in TL. The expert Japanese EFL teachers in this study successfully do this extra work by using disjunctive markers. The findings of this study are useful for other Japanese EFL teachers because it is now clear how JTEs deal with the issue of switching back to English instruction after temporarily using Japanese; this study has documented their strategic practice through a conversation analytic lens.

One question remains unanswered in this study: Why were 78% of the code-switching turns produced by the turn-initial *okay*. Although it was observed that JTEs used a disjunctive marker as a necessary item for switching to on-task talk in English from off-task talk in Japanese, why about 78% of the disjunctive markers were *okay* is still not clear. One possible explanation is the number of participating teachers, which is also a limitation of this study. The current study only analyzed four expert JTEs' practices. Further analysis with a larger number of expert JTEs could reveal the use of a variety of disjunctive markers. As for directions for future research, further investigation on more expert JTEs should be conducted.

Bio Data

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Appendix A
Transcription Conventions

(0.0)	Time gap in tenths of a second
(.)	Brief time gap less than 0.1 second
=	"Latched" utterances
[	The beginning of overlapped talk
(( ))	Transcriber's description of nonvocal actions
-	Cut-off
:	Elongated sound
?	Rising intonation
↑	Marked rise of following segment
> <	Increased speed
italic words	Japanese
bold words	English translation
|utterance	
|*Times New Roman*	Nonverbal action along with the utterance

Appendix B
Abbreviations

CP	Copula
FP	Final particle
LK	Linking particle
NP	Nominative particle
OP	Direct object particle
POL	Polite
TL	Title
TP	Topic marker