Scaffolding or Spoon-Feeding? A Case Study of Translanguaging Re-Invention in Team-Taught Soft CLIL Classrooms

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This case study examines how 2 pairs of Japanese secondary school team teachers implemented Soft CLIL, with a particular focus on their use of translanguaging. Classroom observations revealed a complex interplay between Japanese (L1) and English (L2), where strategic language integration was evident but often overshadowed by excessive reliance on L1 for translation and explanations. This overuse indicated a re-invention of CLIL that diverged from its theoretical foundations. Teachers justified this adaptation by emphasizing student enjoyment, emotional support, and accommodation of lower proficiency levels. However, misinterpretations of CLIL's principles resulted in frequent "spoon-feeding" rather than effective scaffolding. The findings highlight the need for continuous teacher collaboration, professional development, and clearer communication to ensure fidelity to Soft CLIL's language-learning framework. Without these supports, the risk of re-invention increases, potentially undermining CLIL's intended outcomes. Nonetheless, this study underscores that CLIL remains a promising approach when adapted with awareness of classroom realities.

本事例研究では、日本の中等学校におけるチームティーチングの2組の教師が、ソフトCLILをどのように実施したかを調査し、特にトランスランゲージングの使用に焦点を当てた。授業観察の結果、日本語（L1）と英語（L2）の複雑な相互作用が明らかになり、戦略的な言語統合の試みは見られたものの、L1への過度な依存が翻訳や説明の手段として頻繁に用いられていた。この傾向は、CLILの理論的枠組みから逸脱した「再発明」となっていた。教師たちはこの適応を、生

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徒の楽しさの確保、感情的サポートの提供、習熟度の低い生徒への配慮として正当化していたが、CLILの原則の誤解によって「足場作り」ではなく「スプーンフィーディング」（過度な手助け）が頻繁に行われていたことが分かった。本研究の結果は、ソフトCLILの言語学習モデルを維持するために、教師同士の継続的な協力、専門的な研修、および明確なコミュニケーションが不可欠であることを

Keywords: secondary school; soft CLIL; team teaching; translanguaging

The growing popularity of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has sparked discussions around effective implementation strategies, particularly regarding teacher preparedness (Ikeda et al., 2021; Lo, 2020). Soft CLIL, a flexible approach to CLIL, emphasizes the creation of a language-rich learning environment where students can leverage their existing linguistic resources, including their native language (Olson, 2021). A common feature of Soft CLIL is translanguaging, defined as the dynamic use of two languages "to make meaning, shape experiences, understandings, and knowledge" (Baker & Wright, 2017, p. 280). Using this approach in the Japanese context, students are encouraged to use both Japanese and the target language (typically English) to maximize their learning potential (Ikeda, 2021).

This article addresses the need for research into "the actual in-class effects" of translanguaging (Turnbull, 2018, p. 121) by following two pairs of Japanese secondary school team teachers as they embark on implementing Soft CLIL for the first time. A particular focus is placed on how the team teachers balance the use of L1 (Japanese) and L2 (English) in the classroom and whether "re-invention" (Rogers, 2003) of translanguaging practices occurs during implementation. By investigating these factors, the study aims to contribute insights into the operational realities faced by teachers as they navigate the implementation of translanguaging and Soft CLIL more broadly.

Literature Review

Team Teaching and Soft CLIL

Team teaching in secondary school English language classrooms across Japan has a history extending over three decades. Brumby and Wada (1990, p. 6) describe team teaching in the Japanese context as "a concerted endeavor" where the Japanese teacher of English (JTE) and the assistant language teacher (ALT) collaborate to create a dynamic and communicative learning space. Despite JTEs and ALTs working together for more than 30 years, however, there are still several challenges to effective team

teaching. Some researchers point out a lack of well-established practical and theoretical foundations to support JTEs to adapt and cope with new educational challenges, to prepare ALTs, often new university graduates, to co-teach English in a foreign social and educational environment, and to provide teachers with clear guidelines for team-teaching collaborations (Borg, 2020; Crooks, 2001).

More recently, CLIL has gained traction in Japan as an innovative approach to integrating content and language education. As Coyle et al. (2010) highlight, "what separates CLIL from some established approaches such as content-based language learning, or forms of bilingual education, is the planned pedagogic integration of contextualized content, cognition, communication and culture into teaching and learning practice" (p. 6). CLIL further sets itself apart through its flexibility across a learning continuum. At one end lies "Hard" CLIL, closely adhering to its European origins with academic subjects such as history or science taught predominantly in English by non-native content teachers, with minimal language support. In contrast, "Soft" CLIL offers a more flexible approach, typically led by language teachers (native or non-native speakers) with a stronger emphasis on language learning alongside content acquisition (Ikeda, 2021).

In their survey of Hard and Soft CLIL programs worldwide, Banegas and Hemmi (2021) identify a common emphasis on learner-centered methodology, enhancing critical thinking and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), and applying translanguaging to improve content comprehension. Ikeda (2019) observes that while Hard CLIL is uncommon in Japanese secondary and tertiary education, Soft CLIL has emerged as the "de facto norm in Japan" (p. 29). Although some scholars caution against simply transplanting European solutions onto Japanese contexts (e.g., Morton, 2019), CLIL advocates in Japan regard it as a transformative educational strategy. They view CLIL as uniquely positioned to equip future generations for new challenges by fostering competencies, pluriliteracies, and enhancing learning experiences through translanguaging (Ikeda, 2021; Tsuchiya, 2019).

Translanguaging in Practice

The concept of translanguaging—the flexible, strategic use of students' full linguistic repertoires in the classroom—has emerged as an innovative approach in language education. Translanguaging has been embraced as a critical response to monolingual English-only policies, challenging the notion that languages should be kept separate in the classroom (García & Wei, 2014). It acknowledges how bi/multilingual learners naturally

integrate their languages and can serve various functions, from enhancing content understanding to facilitating classroom communication (Canagarajah, 2013; Ikeda, 2021). Cenoz and Gorter (2021) distinguish between two types: *pedagogical translanguaging* as a planned instructional strategy integrating students' languages for specific learning aims, and *spontaneous translanguaging* as the natural blending that occurs during interactions.

Although incorporating both types is believed to create a more inclusive environment that leverages learners' full linguistic resources, research suggests teachers are more likely to engage in ad hoc translanguaging without a clear pedagogical plan or awareness of its potential benefits (Wang, 2016). When translanguaging becomes mere spontaneous translation, concerns arise about its consistency and effectiveness for language learning outcomes. As Ikeda (2021) argues, translanguaging "does not mean teachers and learners can resort to their L1 whenever," (p. 88) as this reduces opportunities for target language development. The underlying principle is that translanguaging should be used as a scaffolding strategy to maximize learning. Furthermore, the social justice emphasis of translanguaging in primarily ESL contexts (García & Wei, 2014) may not transfer effectively into the EFL context of Japan (Turnbull, 2021). As speakers of a majority language learning a minority one, Japanese EFL learners may not view themselves as bilingual or embrace the concept of "emergent bilingualism," posing challenges for transferring the ideological aims of translanguaging.

Finally, the lack of teacher training and resources complicates the widespread adoption of strategic, pedagogical translanguaging. Although some studies demonstrate successful implementation with support (e.g., Ikeda, 2019), such cases are limited. Without explicit guidance, in-service secondary school teachers may generally be unaware of translanguaging's aims as an innovative scaffolding approach and struggle to purposefully implement it into their lessons.

Diffusion of Innovations and Re-Invention

In his seminal work *Diffusion of Innovations*, Everett Rogers (2003) proposes a framework for understanding how innovative ideas and technologies disseminate through social systems over time. This theory has found resonance and empirical support across various domains (see, e.g., Peres et al., 2010 for an overview). However, researchers have noted that the process of adopting innovations into real-world practice is often complex (Fullan, 2015; Henrichsen, 1989). The necessity for adjustments to ensure compatibility with existing systems or preferences can lead to

what Rogers termed re-invention: the process whereby users significantly alter or adapt an innovation during its adoption phase (Rogers, 2003).

In the educational domain, re-invention typically entails instructors adapting complex innovations to better align with their own interpretations or misconceptions, thereby making the innovations more applicable and palatable within their specific contexts (Sansom, 2017). These adaptations enable educators to assert autonomy by determining how best to implement innovations in their classrooms. While the resulting re-invention may facilitate quicker adoption rates, it also underscores a fundamental disconnect between theoretical ideals and practical applications, where a theory's original purposes may be overlooked in favor of more immediate, pragmatic solutions.

Re-invention is particularly prevalent with "loosely bundled" innovations like CLIL, which presents broad principles amenable to a wide range of implementations (Ikeda et al., 2021). While CLIL aims to foster enhanced communication and leverage preexisting knowledge by employing techniques such as pedagogical translanguaging, the practical application of these strategies sometimes diverges from their original conceptualizations (Olson, 2023). Within CLIL contexts, translanguaging may veer towards becoming a straightforward means for meaning transference or expeditious translation, straying from its intended pedagogical principles and strategic purposes.

Methodology

This case study investigated how two pairs of Japanese secondary school team teachers implemented Soft CLIL, focusing on their use of translanguaging. The study addressed the following research questions:

RQ 1. How did team teachers balance L1 (Japanese) and L2 (English) use in the classroom?
RQ 2. Did re-invention of translanguaging take place during implementation, and if so, how?

Participants

The participants were part of a larger project examining the collaborative efforts of Japanese secondary school team teachers to adopt and implement Soft CLIL. This study focuses on two educational settings: Take Senior High School (Take SHS) and Ume Junior High School (Ume JHS).

Ethical protocols were followed, including obtaining informed consent and using pseudonyms to protect anonymity.

The participant team at Take SHS consisted of Sato, a male JTE with extensive teaching experience, and Emily, a female ALT from the UK with a decade of experience teaching in Japan. They designed a special elective class to pilot a team-taught CLIL approach, running for 11 weeks with 12 students whose English proficiency ranged from A2 to C1 on the CEFR scale.

The team at Ume JHS was Fujita, a female JTE with over ten years of English teaching experience, and Latoya, an American female ALT in her third year at the school. Their CLIL project was implemented in four lessons over two weeks to a special needs class of four students. Although the students had special needs, these needs were behavioral in nature, and both the researcher and teachers assessed their English proficiency as typical for their grade level, approximately A1 on the CEFR scale.

Collaborative Action Research Approach

Since it was the first time for both teams to implement CLIL, participants were invited to engage in collaborative action research with the researcher throughout the study. Specifically, participants followed a collaborative CLIL teacher development model based on Sasajima (2013) where teachers work together before each class to create lesson plans, materials, and discuss details like teacher roles and scaffolding student needs. After the lesson, teachers reflect on successes, failures, adherence to CLIL principles, roles, student engagement, and other factors. Finally, they revise their approach for subsequent lessons based on this reflection.

To support participants, the researcher provided training resources on CLIL principles and practices before and throughout implementation. These resources covered core CLIL tenets using training videos and templates such as a CLIL Lesson Planning Sheet (Ikeda, 2016), and a Feedback Sheet with checklists for recommended practices (Olson, 2021). However, the onus was on the teachers to review and internalize these resources in their own time, as the researcher's direct involvement was limited to providing the materials and support during meetings.

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary data sources were weekly recorded classroom videos provided by the teachers, as well as recordings from teacher–researcher planning and reflection meetings conducted via Zoom. For Take SHS, the

data comprised 9 hours 13 minutes of recorded classes and 11 hours 47 minutes of teacher meetings. For Ume JHS, it included 3 hours 16 minutes of classes and 5 hours 6 minutes of meetings.

To examine teachers' use of the L1 (Japanese) and L2 (English), quantitative analyses of character/word counts and teacher speaking time were conducted. While all lessons were observed and analyzed qualitatively, a subset of lessons was selected for detailed quantitative analysis based on two key criteria. First, these lessons exemplified critical moments of translanguaging and team teaching that closely aligned with the research focus on how re-invention of CLIL practices occurs. Second, these lessons provided consistently clear audio quality necessary for reliable quantitative analysis, as some recordings had technical limitations that made precise measurement difficult.

As teacher-student interactions during pair/group work were often inaudible, analyses were limited to whole-class, teacher-fronted instruction segments. Following Tsuchiya (2019), an initial quantitative analysis explored overall discourse patterns by transcribing classroom interactions verbatim, excluding fillers. The transcripts were then verified by a Japanese native speaker, timestamped using Transana (Fassnacht & Woods, 2019), and coded using Taguette (Rampkin et al., 2021). Finally, relevant excerpts illustrating teachers' language use and translanguaging practices were selected.

Findings

Take SHS

Sato first learned about CLIL through a former JTE colleague and their efforts to use CLIL at the school. He believed CLIL to be a more authentic method of language education and thought it would help motivate students to learn English. Emily initially learned about CLIL through Sato and did not have any strong feelings about CLIL as an innovation.

Sato and Emily team-taught a total of nine 50-minute CLIL lessons on the theme of Cultural Awareness. After an initial trial lesson on the Philippines, they conducted four lessons on Emily's home country of the UK. For these lessons, Emily prepared the materials and led the content instruction in class. Sato, on the other hand, provided feedback on the materials, added translations, and kept the students on task during the lessons.

Excerpt 1 illustrates how the teachers introduced a worksheet on British stoicism (see Appendix A). In turn 1, Emily attempts to activate

the students' prior knowledge of the concept in English but receives no response, so she calls on a higher-level student instead. However, still not getting a positive response in turn 3, she explains the meaning as written on the worksheet. Sato then signals in turn 4 that he will translate Emily's explanation into Japanese. After translating, he directs the students' attention to the Japanese translation provided at the bottom of the worksheet. Sato tells the students who feel confident in their English to hide the translation, although none of the students in the classroom footage are seen folding over their worksheet or attempting to do so. He then gestures toward Emily, signaling her to continue. In turns 5 and 6, the same pattern is repeated as Emily gives an example of stoicism relating to joy, and Sato again translates it before gesturing for her to proceed.

Excerpt 1

01 Emily: So, today, we are going to talk about stoicism. Stoicism. Does anybody know the meaning? Yes, [S1], you know the meaning? Have you heard of this word before?

02 S1: Never.

03 Emily: Alright, so, stoicism is "not expressing extreme feelings," so it's basically enduring something patiently, putting up with something patiently. So, for example, if you feel pain, or if you feel joy, or if you feel anger, some kind of extreme emotion, you do not show this, okay? This is stoicism.

04 Sato: *Mōikkai īmasu yo. Minasan no nichijō seikatsu nani demo sō desu kedo, sugoi ureshikattari toka, nanka chotto tsurai koto ga atta toki, kanashī koto ga atta toki, sore wa kanjō o dashitai kibun ni narimasu. Dakedo, kono* stoicism *to iu no wa, sō iu kanjō o dasanai. Mā, yoi imi demo warui imi demo, sōiu shugi no, sōiu gaman. Chinami ni, shita ni Nihongo ga arimasu. Moshi hitsuyō na baai, kochira o mite kudasai. Eigo ni jishin aru hito wa kore o kakushitoite ne. Hai, jā, onegaishimasu.* [I'll say it one more time. When you are happy, or when you are in pain, or when you are sad, you feel the need to express your feelings, you know. However, "stoicism" means not showing such emotions. Well, in a good sense and in a bad sense, it is that kind of principle, that kind of patience. By the way, there is Japanese on the bottom [of the sheet]. If you need it, you can look at it. If you are confident in your English, keep this hidden. Yes, well, please [go ahead, Emily].]

05 Emily: So, let's see, about 6 years ago, I went back to the UK because it was my sister's wedding and my older sister got married. So of course I was very happy, and she was standing at the alter and she looks very beautiful, and I started crying. I couldn't stop crying. And my mother was sitting next to me, and she threw a tissue at me. And she said, "stop crying!" So, my mother is very stoic. She didn't want me to show any kind of emotion. Even on my sister's wedding day.

06 Sato: *Yaa, watashi mo kore o kiita toki ni sugoi bikkuri shitan da kedo, roku-nen gurai mae ni, [Emily] no onēsan no kekkonshiki to iu koto de, Igirisu ni modorimashita. Sorede, kekkonshiki-ba no toki ni, saidan no tokoro de, onēsan ga hijō ni kikazatte subarashī sugata de, kō shikijō ni imashita. Sore o mite kandō shite, mō naite shimatta wake desu, atarimae desu ne, soshite tonari ni ita okāsan ga, "nande kono toki naku no?" To tisshupēpā o ban to nagete, "kore de naku no yamenasai!" to iwaretan datte. Chotto bikkuri shita nda ne. Arigatōgozaimasu.* [I was very surprised when I heard this, but about 6 years ago, [Emily] returned to England for her sister's wedding. At the wedding, her sister was there at the altar, looking beautiful in her dress. Seeing this, [Emily] was so moved that she started to cry, and her mother, who was standing next to her, said, "Why are you crying at this moment? and she threw a tissue paper at her and said, "Stop crying over this!" I was a little surprised. Thank you.]

Note. S1 is an identified student

The pattern of Emily providing instructions in English while Sato offers Japanese translations is repeated in Excerpt 2 for the language instruction. In turn 1, Emily reads the examples of language usage directly from the worksheet. Turn 2 shows Sato adding that the term should be familiar since it is also used in Japanese, providing a relevant example for the students, and then gesturing for Emily to proceed. Finally, in turn 3, Emily introduces a question and reads the explanatory passage from the worksheet to answer it. Although not included in the excerpt, Sato subsequently reads aloud the Japanese translation on the worksheet.

Excerpt 2

01 Emily: Alright, so, let's look at the ways we can use this word. So, usage. "He practices stoicism."Okay? "He practices stoicism." The next one: "He is a stoic." And then the last one: "He is stoic."

02 Sato: *Hai, kono tsukaikata no tokoro ne, sono stoicism dato nanka yoku wakaranai tango datta na to omou hito mo, jitsuwa, minasan kiita toko aru to omoimasu. Nihongo ni natte iru ne. Sutoikku. "Kare wa sutoikku da ne." Tatoeba, kyonen sotsugyō shita hito de purogorufā mezashiteita futari mo itan desu yo. Karera wa mō tonikaku sutoikku na seikatsu shite ne, tabemono mo yappari sonna zeitaku mo dekinai desho? Tōzen, jankufūdo, poteto chippusu toka sonna tabenaide, sutoikku na seikatsu o shite… tsumari, nanika o gaman suru, sorede mokuhyō o motte ganbaru, jukensei mo onajida ne, sono hitotachi mo sutoikku ni benkyō shitaita. Hai.* [Yes, this "Usage" part. I think that some of you have heard of "stoicism," even if you think that it is a word that you don't know. It's Japanese, isn't it? *Sutoikku*. He's stoic. For example, there were two students who graduated last year who were aiming to become professional golfers. They lived a stoic life and could not afford to eat extravagantly, could they? They couldn't eat junk food, potato chips, and so on... In other words, they had to endure something, and they worked hard to achieve their goals. Yes.]

03 Emily: Okay, so, if we look below. I have this question: "Why are British stoic?" Okay, so, "Why are British people stoic?"

A vocabulary review activity on the UK content further reveals the teachers' language use in empirical terms, as shown in Table 1. The 10-minute 50-second review had Emily leading the class by reading English fill-in-the-blank sentences and asking students to recall vocabulary words from the previous lesson. Sato then supported her by translating each sentence into Japanese and providing hints about the English vocabulary words. Afterwards, the teachers prompted the students to attempt spelling the words in English.

Table 1
Word Count and Speaking Time Length of Teachers for UK Lesson Vocabulary Review

	Word count		Speaking time		
	English	Japanese	English	Japanese	Total
Sato	31	653	00:42	02:19	03:01
Emily	440	0	03:21	00:00	03:21
Total	471	653	04:03	02:19	06:22

Note. Japanese is shown in characters; Time is shown in minutes and seconds (MM:SS).

During the 10-minute 50-second review, Sato spoke for 42 seconds (31 words) in English and 2 minutes 19 seconds (653 characters) in Japanese, while Emily spoke for 3 minutes 21 seconds (440 words) exclusively in English. Notably, Sato's English usage was limited to repeating the vocabulary words or enunciating them for spelling practice (e.g., "Independence. In-de-pen-dence. Independence."). Emily used English for procedures ("Alright, let's go to the next one."), praise ("Yay, good, good!"), and providing hints ("Very close. Just the end part you need to change."). Conversely, Sato used Japanese for procedures ("*Tsugi no pēji mekutte kudasai*. [Please turn to the next page.]"), praise ("*Oō, subarashi!* [Oh, wonderful!]"), offering hints ("'Expect' *tte ne, kitai suru to iu*. [means expect.]"), and encouragement ("*Machigattemo zenzen ī kara*. [It's totally fine to make a mistake.]"). This division of roles, with Emily leading instruction in English and Sato providing support in Japanese, was a regular pattern in their collaborative lessons.

After Emily had prepared the materials and led the instruction for all four UK lessons, Sato decided to give her a break and take on more responsibilities for the next lesson on Taiwan. He created a worksheet as well as two handouts from online English articles about Taiwan, each including Japanese translations similar to the previous lessons.

During the Taiwan lesson, Sato showed the students a 6-minute Japanese video about Yoichi Hatta, a Japanese engineer who helped build infrastructure in Japanese-occupied Taiwan. His intention was for students to deeply consider Japan-Taiwan relations using the phrase "if possible." However, the classroom footage reveals little effort to enforce or even encourage the use of English. For example, when distributing the first article, Sato

announced to the students: "*Narubeku Nihongo minaide ne. Mā, mitemo ī kedo*. [As much as possible, try not to look at the Japanese. Well, it's okay if you look.]" Minutes later, he admitted: "*Hontō wa Eigo de yaritain desu kedo, nakanaka kore ga Eigo da to muzukashī*. [I really want you to do this in English, but it's quite difficult when it's in English.]"

A quantitative analysis of the lesson, as shown in Table 2, reveals that while Emily used English during the 27 minutes of solo and pair work, Sato conducted the remaining 17 minutes of teacher-fronted, whole-class instruction almost entirely in Japanese. In fact, Sato only spoke English for 1 second, uttering the word "surprise" to indicate where Emily should start reading the article. Excluding her reading aloud to the class, Emily's English usage was limited to 11 seconds (18 words) when preparing to read the article ("Okay, so...") and briefly at the end regarding the homework ("Did anyone do the homework from last time? Oh, you did? Thank you. Perfect, perfect. Yay!").

Table 2

Word Count and Speaking Time Length of Teachers for Taiwan Lesson

	Word count		Speaking time		
	English	Japanese	English	Japanese	Total
Sato	1	3854	00:01	16:35	16:36
Emily	18	0	00:11	00:00	00:11
Total	19	3854	00:12	16:35	16:47

Note. Japanese is shown in characters; Time is shown in minutes and seconds (MM:SS).

During the reflection meeting, Emily expressed frustration at being excluded from the preparations, stating: "I didn't receive a lesson plan or anything, so I didn't fill out the other sheet, the feedback one, because there was no lesson plan... I received the article, but I didn't know what we were doing with it." She further elaborated:

> I think I should have had a more active role because I felt like I was just standing and listening most of the time. I know this lesson was different from usual, but I would have liked to know what we were doing next. With the student worksheet, I didn't see that in advance, so I had to stand there, read it, and figure out what it was saying.

Despite her intermediate Japanese proficiency, Emily admitted having difficulty understanding and "zoning out" during the video and Sato's Japanese lecture on the content. Although Sato had assumed a leader role for this lesson, he acknowledged his mistake in a pre-meeting message: "*Konkai no jyugyō wa, Taiwan to Nihon no kankei ni tsuite mazu Nihongo de kangaesaseru koto wo mokuteki to shimashita node*, [Emily] *Sensei no yakuwari ga sukunakunatte shimaimashita*. [For this class, my objective was to have the students think about the Taiwan-Japan relationship first in Japanese, so Emily's role was regrettably diminished.]" Sato's intention to take more responsibility and not overburden Emily during planning seemed to backfire. However, they learned from this experience and went on to teach four lessons on the US in a more collaborative manner that aligned with their approach to the UK lessons.

During the final teacher interviews, Sato explained that he adopted CLIL because he wanted to teach more challenging content and use translanguaging as a scaffolding method without relying solely on English. This stemmed primarily from his concerns about the students' varying English proficiency levels and his prioritization of ensuring everyone could understand and enjoy the content. When asked about strategic translanguaging, he admitted: "*Yahari riron wa subarashī ga jissen ni kanshite wa, sōtō no jyunbi to doryoku ga hitsuyō ni naru*. [The theory is excellent, but putting it into practice requires a lot of preparation and effort.]" Emily also acknowledged, "With CLIL, there are so many things to consider in order to have a 'successful' lesson." Sato seemed to agree, stating at one point: "*Mesoddo ga shikkari shiteitemo, sore wo namami no kōkōsei ni oshitsuke ni naranai yō ni kufū shimashita*. [Even with solid methods, I had to find ways to ensure that CLIL would not feel imposed upon the high school students.]" Considering Take SHS's relaxed attendance policy, his stated goal was "*narubeku doroppuauto shinai yō ni, tanoshinde morau yō ni shimashita*. [To have the students enjoy the team-taught CLIL class as much as possible without dropping out.]" Finally, when asked about the future use of CLIL at Take SHS, Sato said "*seito no kyōmi to nōryoku ni ōjite tsukaitsudzukeru tsumori desu*. [We plan to continue using it based on the students' interests and abilities.]"

Ume JHS

Similar to Sato, Latoya viewed CLIL as an opportunity to teach content without solely relying on English. By her own assessment, Latoya was already quite knowledgeable about CLIL practices, having implemented

CLIL-like projects with special needs students in the past. For the present study, Latoya convinced Fujita to team-teach four 50-minute CLIL lessons on the theme of Cultural Awareness. Fujita agreed to let Latoya plan and lead the content instruction while providing feedback and assisting as the classroom manager.

For the first lesson, Latoya wrote the target language on the board ("Where do you want to go?"; "What do you like?"; "What do you want to do?"), and the teachers modeled answering the questions, as shown in Excerpt 3. Turn 2 not only reveals Fujita's Kansai dialect but also illustrates how she often mixed Japanese and English in her speech, seemingly to maintain the students' attention, as evident in turns 15 and 20. After turn 14, as Latoya began loading a PowerPoint presentation example with her back to the class, Fujita kept her eyes on the students and directed their attention in turn 18. This dynamic, with Latoya leading the procedures and Fujita fulfilling her role as classroom manager, was representative of their team-teaching roles for the remainder of the project.

Excerpt 3

01	Latoya:	Ms. [Fujita], where do you want to go?
02	Fujita:	*Yutta kamoshirehen kedo* [I might have already said it, but] I want to go to Finland.
03	Latoya:	Woah, you want to go to Finland? Why?
04	S1:	Why go?
05	Fujita:	Because, do you know Moomin? I like Moomin very much.
06	S1:	I like Moomin. Mother, mother, I love you. (laughs)
07	Fujita:	(laughs) Moomin is from Finland. So, I want to visit Finland.
08	S1:	*Shusshinchi? Mūmin no shusshinchi wa Finrando?* [Hometown? Moomin's hometown is Finland?]
09	Fujita:	I want to see *ōrora*. [the aurora (borealis).]
10	S1:	*Ōrora wo mitai.* [You want to see the aurora (borealis).]
11	Latoya:	*Ōrora raitsu?* [The aurora lights?]
12	S1:	♪*Kirakira kirakira…* [Twinkle, twinkle…] ♪
13	Fujita:	Very good, very beautiful. So, that's why I want to go to Finland.
14	Latoya:	So, you like Moomin. And you like pretty lights. So you want to go, you want to see Moomin museum in Finland? And you want to go see aurora lights in Finland?

15 Fujita: Yes. *O,* [Latoya] *Sensei ni kiite miru ka?* [Oh, should we ask [Latoya]?] [Latoya], where do you want to go?
16 Latoya: I want to go to…
17 S1: I want to go to…
18 Fujita: Look at the screen.
19 Latoya: Vietnam. Do you know Vietnam?
20 Fujita: *Wakaru?* [Do you know?] Do you know? *Nihongo de wa "Betonamu" ne* ["Vietnam" in Japanese, right?]

Note. S1 is an enthusiastic female student.

The second lesson was the final one with sustained teacher-fronted, whole-class instruction. Excluding the students' solo work time researching countries they wanted to visit, the teachers led classroom activities for 19 minutes and 15 seconds. Table 3 summarizes the teachers' word count and speaking time during this period. Compared to a similar total speaking duration for an activity at Take SHS (cf. Table 1), the L1 and L2 usage appeared more balanced between Latoya and Fujita. While Fujita spoke English for 42 seconds, the same as Sato, she used more than double the number of words, indicating a faster pace of speech. Notably, unlike Emily, Latoya also spoke Japanese and had significantly more speaking time than Fujita, suggesting she took on more of a leadership role.

Table 3

Word Count and Speaking Time Length of Teachers for Lesson 2 (Country Comparison)

	Word count		Speaking time		
	English	Japanese	English	Japanese	Total
Fujita	77	529	00:42	01:51	02:33
Latoya	367	353	02:45	01:17	04:02
Total	444	882	03:27	03:08	06:35

Note. Time is shown in minutes and seconds (MM:SS); Japanese is shown in characters.

In line with CLIL principles, Fujita provided instruction focused on both topic knowledge (e.g., "[Latoya] *Sensei wa doko ni ikitain? Betonamu ya na. Ī na. Metcha shashin kirei ya na.* [Where does Latoya want to go? Vietnam,

right? That's nice. The pictures look really pretty, don't they?]") and metalanguage (e.g., "What day? *Nan yōbi?* [What day of the week?]"). Latoya also offered metalanguage instruction (e.g., "Before we talk [sic] about 'I want to go.' 'I want to go to *nani nani* [something something]'"). However, unlike Emily, Latoya's topic knowledge instruction was primarily in Japanese. For example, when providing procedures for comparing countries, she said:

> *Hitobito wa onajiku nai ne. Sō desu kara, minasan no kuni wa erabeta no kuni ni Nihon to sono kuni wa nani ga chigaimasu ka? Sono kami ni kaita hō ga ī. Nihon wa chigau to, sono kuni wa chigau ne. Hai, minasan, Nihongo de kaite kudasai.*

While her meaning may have been conveyed to the students (that people are different, so they should write in Japanese on their worksheets what distinguishes their chosen country from Japan), it is worth noting that she made some noticeable grammatical errors in Japanese. For instance, "not the same" should be *onaji jyanai* instead of *onajiku nai*, and "chosen country" should be *eranda kuni* rather than *erabeta no kuni*.

After providing the procedures, the teachers handed out the students' worksheet (see Appendix B). It is noteworthy that the worksheet was written entirely in Japanese, with prompts such as "What are the differences between your country and Japan?", "What are the similarities between your country and Japan?", and "What do you think of your country?". Moreover, in the classroom footage, when one female student attempted to write a response in English, Latoya can be seen erasing her sheet while saying: "*Eigo wa muzukashisugiru.* [English is too difficult.]" During the reflection meeting, Latoya elaborated on this incident, stating that "Japanese is better [for her] because [she] can explain more and express more things."

The students then created PowerPoint slides and presented on their chosen countries (Italy, Korea, the US, and China) using a mixture of English and Japanese. Reflecting on the project, Fujita commented that the students' presentations were wonderful, elaborating: "*Hitomae de hanasu koto ga nigate na seito mo ita ga, yarikiru koto ga dekite jishin ni natta to omou*. [Some students are not very good at public speaking, but I think they gained confidence by overcoming this challenge]." Latoya, providing her overall impression, reflected:

> I think this project ended up going very well. It has helped reinforce certain grammar points and aided with public speaking. It was really interesting helping the students

> discover what they liked about different countries and the experiences they can try.

When asked about the difficulties in implementing the project, Latoya commented that "some of the challenges were explaining to Fujita about using CLIL and how Japanese can be and sometimes should be used in the classroom." Reflecting on this, Fujita stated, "*Amari takusan tsukau to yokunai desu kedo, seito ga, 'n?' to natta toki ni, Nihongo de chotto hitsuyō na bubun dake ittekuretari suru koto de kodomotachi ga anshin suru kana to omotteimasu.* [It's not advisable to use Japanese too much, but I think it puts the children at ease if the ALT can say a little bit in Japanese when they seem confused.]" Ultimately, however, Fujita believed that future CLIL projects at the school would be logistically challenging. She preferred the more structured textbook activities, as the open-ended nature of the project was too chaotic for the special needs students.

Discussion

Balancing L1 and L2 in Team-Taught CLIL

The classroom excerpts and quantitative analyses revealed intricate dynamics in how the team teachers balanced their use of Japanese (L1) and English (L2) during CLIL instruction. At Take SHS, a distinct pattern emerged where Emily typically spearheaded content explanations and procedural instructions in English, while Sato provided corresponding Japanese translations and facilitated classroom management strategies like encouragement and praise. This role division aligns with traditional team teaching dynamics identified in prior research (e.g., Brumby & Wada, 1990). However, a pronounced imbalance became evident in Sato's Taiwan lesson, where he conducted nearly the entirety of the teacher-fronted instruction in Japanese, effectively relegating Emily to a marginalized role of merely reading English scripts aloud. This extreme case exemplifies the "human tape recorder" phenomenon reported by disenfranchised ALTs in previous studies (Borg, 2020; McConnell, 2000), marking a lack of not only team teacher collaboration but also individual teacher agency.

At Ume JHS, a more balanced overall utilization of L1 and L2 was observed between Latoya and Fujita during whole-class instructional segments. Yet Latoya's relatively low Japanese proficiency was evidenced through errors in her instructions, which may inherently limit her ability to strategically and smoothly transition between languages as a means to scaffold student learning. This observation suggests that a higher level

of L1 proficiency may be a necessary prerequisite for ALTs to effectively employ scaffolding techniques through the students' first language. Furthermore, Latoya's insistence on using Japanese as the primary medium to explore cultural content in-depth, coupled with her discouragement of a student's attempt at L2 writing, suggests a concerning reversion to positioning Japanese as the default language. Under typical circumstances within the CLIL framework, students may indeed be permitted to utilize their L1 strategically to enhance the Cognition component of the approach; however, this would be implemented with the underlying expectation that the final output and production be conducted in English (see, e.g., Ikeda, 2016).

Overall, these findings underscore how team teachers' respective language proficiencies, particularly in the L1, as well as the presence (or lack thereof) of substantive collaborative planning can significantly impact their ability to strategically integrate both languages in adherence to core CLIL principles. Even with sufficient training and opportunities for collaborative lesson planning, an excessive dependence on the L1 may emerge, potentially compromising opportunities to challenge students and promote growth in the target language.

Reconciling Scaffolding Aims and Re-Inventive L1 Reliance

The data indicates that re-invention of translanguaging practices did indeed occur during the process of CLIL implementation by both teacher pairs examined in this study. At Take SHS, while Sato initially expressed intentions to leverage translanguaging as a strategic scaffolding approach, his pedagogical priorities appeared to shift over time towards primarily ensuring that students could access the lesson content and "enjoy" classroom activities without being overburdened. This realignment of aims resulted in a tendency to resort to extended explanations exclusively in Japanese as well as instances of ad hoc translation from English to Japanese. Although translanguaging proponents argue that spontaneous translanguaging can be used in a pedagogically productive manner (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020), the observations in this case study revealed a clear overreliance on this ad hoc type of language integration practice to the detriment of more planned, strategic implementations of pedagogical translanguaging. Similarly, at Ume JHS, Latoya expressed a belief that utilizing Japanese was a necessity in order to fully explore the nuances of cultural content, despite her persistent struggles to clearly articulate a coherent pedagogical rationale to her team-teaching partner Fujita. This perspective aligns with Wang's

(2016) observation that teachers tend to frequently engage in spontaneous translanguaging practices that lack intentional strategic aims.

Furthermore, the contextual reality that both schools opted to implement CLIL in specialized educational settings—an elective cross-grade class and a class dedicated to students with special needs—rather than within mainstream English language classrooms, may have contributed to re-inventive tendencies that effectively deprioritized strict adherence to CLIL's established principles in favor of more immediate aims like ensuring student enjoyment and avoiding potential frustration.

As Garton and Copland (2021) assert, however, it cannot be the case that "anything goes" (p. 5) with CLIL classroom practices. The findings suggest that the relatively loose definitions surrounding the concept of "translanguaging" appear to have inadvertently enabled these re-inventive practices centered on excessive reliance on the L1, running contrary to CLIL's core principles. Moving forward, advocates and practitioners of the CLIL approach should remain cognizant of the risk that a wholesome rejection of restrictive "English-only" instructional policies does not become re-invented into an equally unproductive ethos of "Japanese-only" within nominally English-focused classrooms, as was exemplified in the extreme case of Sato's Taiwan lesson.

Ultimately, while the existing literature highlights translanguaging's potential as a theoretically sound approach to scaffolding linguistic development, the findings of the present study demonstrate how the realities of actual classroom implementation can lead to re-inventive practices that substantially loosen the boundaries between judicious, strategic linguistic integration and excessive, unnecessary reliance on students' L1. As Ikeda (2021) cautioned, such re-inventive overuse of the L1 risks reducing rich opportunities for productive linguistic development in the very target language that CLIL aims to cultivate.

Conclusion

This case study examined how two pairs of Japanese secondary school team teachers navigated the implementation of Soft CLIL, with a particular focus on their use of translanguaging practices. The findings revealed complex dynamics and imbalances in how the teachers utilized Japanese and English during CLIL lessons. While some attempts at strategic language integration were observed, instances of excessive L1 use for translation and content explanations suggested re-invention (Rogers, 2003) that strayed from CLIL's theoretical foundations. Teachers' rationales for

re-invention included ensuring student enjoyment, providing emotional support for learners, and accommodating lower proficiency levels.

Misinterpretations about CLIL's aims for scaffolding and judicious translanguaging were also evident. Despite CLIL's emphasis on offering support only when necessary through scaffolding, several examples of "spoon-feeding" were documented. The findings underscore the need for ongoing collaboration, training, and clear communication between team teachers to maintain fidelity to Soft CLIL's model of language learning. Without these supportive conditions, the risk of re-invention and ad hoc implementation increases, potentially undermining CLIL's core tenets.

A significant limitation of this study was the teachers' relatively limited training in CLIL principles and translanguaging pedagogy, which likely influenced their implementation practices. However, this limitation itself reveals an important finding about how educational innovations are typically adopted in real-world contexts—often with incomplete understanding that leads to re-invention. This aligns with Rogers' (2003) diffusion of innovations theory, which recognizes that practitioners frequently modify new approaches to fit their specific circumstances and understanding. Future research would benefit from comparing implementation patterns between teachers with varying levels of CLIL training to better understand how professional development impacts fidelity to the approach's core principles.

After reviewing a decade of CLIL implementation across Europe, Georgiou (2021) found that "the CLIL umbrella might be stretching too much" (p. 497). However, she concluded: "It is clear that CLIL, as an innovation, was difficult to implement perfectly at the beginning, but that should not deter us from striving towards improving an approach that has important potential for language learning and education in general." The present study's findings support this perspective—while the challenges of implementation are substantial, they should not overshadow CLIL's transformative potential. Rather, these challenges highlight the importance of developing comprehensive teacher training programs, creating clear implementation guidelines, and fostering sustained communities of practice where teachers can collaboratively work through the complexities of CLIL adoption. Through such systematic support and continued research into actual classroom practices, CLIL's vision for integrated content and language learning can be more effectively realized in Japanese secondary education.

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Appendices

All appendices are available from the online version of this article at https://jalt.org/main/jj.

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