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EFFECTIVE TEACHER-PUPIL INTERACTION IN CLASSROOMS OF PUPILS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

by Irit Cohen

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the Faculty of Social Science and Law, Graduate School of Education

November 2006

CONTAINS PULLOUTS

Abstract

While a growing number of research studies have examined teacher-pupil interaction in English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms, very few studies focus on how EFL teachers interact with pupils with specific learning difficulties (SpLD). This dissertation examines teacher-pupil interaction from a Vygotskian (1978), socio-cultural perspective, with a view to good practice, and investigates characteristics of effective EFL instruction for pupils with SpLD. The study took a qualitative, longitudinal, multiple-case-study approach to investigate classroom interaction of five EFL teachers. Data analysis methods included analysis of deviations from the classroom Initiation, Response and Feedback (IRF) instructional exchange (Seedhouse 2004) and analytical frameworks of teacher-pupil interaction and classroom scaffolding (Webster Beveridge & Reed, 1996. Deviations from the traditional, restrictive classroom interaction of the IRF sequence were found advantageous to pupils with SpLD learning EFL. Teachers' process-oriented, 'genuine' questions; responses in the form of a question, and non-evaluative feedback moves, were found to sustain interactional opportunities thereby increasing learners' engagement and participation. Assessment of the validity of previous sociocultural models in L1 and L2 education revealed interesting overlaps, as well as complementary relationships between the different models. It was found that context-embedded activities, components of classroom scaffolding, and learning-driven instruction, all account for opening up opportunities for language learning and potential development. Specific types of interaction that emerged from the data and that appeared effective in addressing the challenges posed by EFL learners with SpLD included interactive, reciprocal teaching of reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar. Other findings point at aspects which are more indirectly related to EFL learning, but may have particular influence on the degree and the ways in which pupils with SpLD are engaged in EFL learning. These include: blancing individual and group teaching, teaching of organization skills, and scaffolding language through formative classroom assessment. Based on these findings, implications for further research, professional practice, and teacher-education policy are suggested.

Dedication

This work is dedicated

♥ To my beloved husband, Amir, for his everlasting love and encouragement, and for making my dreams come true.

♥ To my beloved parents, Rachel and Reuven Hochberg, people full of kindness and generosity, for always encouraging me to pursue my academic interests and abilities, for their loving support, and for the endless hours spent with our children.

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Deserving of special thanks is my dear friend and coleague, Dr. Gilda Palti, who introduced me to this unique Doctoral degree programme, and whose good advice, encouragement and kindness have supported me throughout the challenges I have faced during my studies.

Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original, except where indicated by special reference in the text, and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other academic award. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

Signed

Date 12/12/2006

Contents

Abstract II

Dedication III

Acknowledgements IV

Author's Declaration V

List of Tables X

List of Figures X

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Setting the problem 1

1.3 Personal interest 4

1.4 Main focus 5

1.5 Organization of the dissertation 6

Chapter 2: Literature Review 8

2.1 Introduction 8

2.2 Sociocultural theory and classroom interaction 8

2.2.1 Learning as a socially mediated activity 8

2.3 The metaphor of scaffolding 11

2.3.1 Classroom interaction 12

2.3.2 Five components of classroom scaffolding 16

2.3.3 Teacher-pupil interaction 18

2.4 Sociocultural theory and L2 learning 23

2.4.1 The foundation of socio-cultural thinking in L2 research 24

2.4.2 A review of research on sociocultural theory and L2 classroom interaction 26

2.5 Teacher-pupil interaction and SpLD 36

2.5.1 Defining SpLD 36

2.5.2 SpLD and L2 learning 38

2.6 Summary 45

Chapter 3: Methodology **46**
3.1 Introduction 46
3.2 Ontological position 46
3.2.1 A qualitative, interpretative approach 47
3.2.2 A multiple case study strategy 49
3.3 Principles guiding the overall research design 50
3.3.1 Research questions and sampling 52
3.3.2 Data collection methods 53
3.3.3 Classroom observation 53
3.3.4 Qualitative interviewing 55
3.3.5 Within-case decisions 56
3.4 Ethical considerations 57
3.5 Conduct of Analysis 59
3.5.1 An overview of analytical practices and tactics 59
3.5.2 Data analysis in the field 60
3.5.3 Summative comments 60
3.5.4 Transcribing and translating data 61
3.5.5 Arranging and selecting data for analysis 63
3.5.6 Triangulating analytical frameworks and methods 63
3.6 Generating and confirming findings 65
3.6.1 Generating findings 65
3.6.2 Confirming findings 66
3.7 Data display 68
3.8 Summary 69
Chapter 4: Findings from Case 1 (Ann) **70**
4.1 Introduction 70
4.2 Background to the first case: Ann 71
4.3 Components of classroom scaffolding and types of interaction 72
4.3.1 Recruitment and management 72
4.3.2 Representation and clarification 73
4.3.3 Further recruitment and management 76
4.3.4 Elaboration and mediation 77
4.3.5 Finishing 79

4.4 Deviation from the I-R-F sequence 80
4.4.1 Process-oriented questions 80
4.4.2 A response in the form of a question 81
4.4.3 Formative follow-up 82
4.5 Scaffolding meta-cognition and language awareness 84
4.5.1 Reading strategies 84
4.5.2 Grammatical awareness 85
4.5.3 Linguistic playfulness 87
4.6 Scaffolding language through formative classroom assessment 88
4.7 Encouraging collaborative peer learning 89
4.8 Summary 90
Chapter 5: Findings from Case 2 (Irene) 92
5.1 Introduction 92
5.2 Background 92
5.3 Components of classroom scaffolding and types of interaction 93
5.3.1 Recruitment and management 93
5.3.2 Representation and clarification 95
5.3.3 Elaborating 96
5.3.4 Mediation 97
5.3.5 Finishing 100
5.4 Scaffolding organisation skills 101
5.4.1 A routine lesson structure 102
5.4.1 procedural strategies 103
5.4.3 Scaffolding writing 104
5.4.4 Graphic organizers 107
5.5 Strategies for improving attention 108
5.6 Summary 111

Chapter 6: Cross-Case Analysis 112

6.1 Introduction 112
6.2 Scaffolding vocabulary learning..... 113
6.2.1 Creating a need to learn words 114
6.2.2 Searching for meaning..... 116
6.2. Evaluating words in relation to context..... 118
6.3 Learning by imitation 119
6.4 Increasing attention to grammatical concepts 121
6.5 Interactive composition 124
6.6 Scaffolding conversation 126
6.7 Use of L1 in L2 classroom 128
6.8 A constructive approach to difficulty 130
6.8.1 Viewing mistake-making as a valuable contribution to teaching and learning 131
6.8.2 Error-analysis..... 132
6.8.3 Talking about difficulty 133
6.8.4 Designing tests with a view to difficulty 134
6.9 Balancing group and individual needs..... 135
6.9.1 Integrating group and individual instruction 136
6.9.2 Accommodating different learning styles..... 137
6.9.3 Solving personal problems in private 138
6.10 Summary..... 139

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion 140

7.1 Introduction 140
7.2 Summary of the study and its findings 140
7.2.1 Verbal mediation and learning opportunities 141
7.2.2 Validity of findings to existing socio-constructivist frameworks 143
7.2.3 Interaction specifically effective for promoting EFL learning in pupils with SpLD..... 149
7.3 Limitations of the study..... 156
7.4 Contributions to knowledge..... 156
7.5 Concluding remarks..... 158

References **159**

Appendices **172**

Appendix 1 Regulatory scale of collaborative corrective feedback..... 172
Appendix 2 Example field notes 173
Appendix 3 interview guide for pupils..... 174
Appendix 4 Interview guide for teacher..... 175
Appendix 5 Consent form for pupils..... 176
Appendix 6 Example of mail correspondence with my informants..... 177
Appendix 7 Example summary notes..... 178
Appendix 8 Transcription codes..... 179
Appendix 9 Transliteration of Hebrew in English letters..... 180
Appendix 10 Using MAXqda..... 181
Appendix 11 Triangulation of analysis 182
Appendix 12 Member check 183
Appendix 13 Example task page (Ann) 184
Appendix 14 Example worksheet (Irene)..... 185

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Literature review grid: Empirical studies of teacher-pupil interaction in L2 27
Table 3.1: Data sources, timetable and methods 51
Table 3.2: Overview of data analysis..... 59

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: A framework of teacher-pupil interaction 19
Figure 3.1: From data to text..... 65
Figure 7.1: Effective teacher-pupil interaction in EFL 146

Chapter 1: Introduction

"In school they loaded me with tons of notions which I diligently digested, but which did not warm the blood in my veins ... I would say to myself: 'I will understand this too, I will understand everything, but not the way they want me to. I will find a short-cut, I will pick the lock, I will force open the doors'."

(Primo Levi, 'The Periodic Table', p. 19)

1.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research problem with which this study is concerned, describes my personal motivation for taking up this work, and sets out the study's overall objectives. It also provides an overview of the study and the organization of this dissertation.

1.2 Setting the problem

In an attempt to explore how second languages are best taught, in the past decade, a growing body of research in the field of second language (L2)[1] teaching and learning has broadened to include Vygotskian, sociocultural theoretical frameworks (e.g., Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Donato, 2000; Lantolf & Poehner, 2004; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf, 2006; Lantolf, & Pavlenko, 1995). Vygotsky (1978) defines learning as an evolutionary human goal of moving a child forward from dependency on other people into independence, taking place through the child's interaction with more capable others (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky and his followers have offered applied linguists an alternative to cognitive L2 acquisition theories "viewing acquisition not only as a mental individualistic process, but one that is also embedded in the sociocultural context in which it occurs" (Davis, 1995, p. 432).

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[1] I use the term *L2* throughout to refer to the teaching and learning of second, additional, or foreign languages

Despite the "sociocultural turn" (Johnson, 2006, p. 237) in L2 research, few empirical studies which have focused on L2 learners with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) have adopted the sociocultural, Vygotskian perspective, shifting the attention from the pupils' cognitive problems to the teaching context and the teacher. According to Frederickson & Cline (2002, pp. 133-134), the predominant approach to studying L2 difficulties has been based on cognitive learning theories within the positivistic paradigm, focusing on individuals' weaknesses as the prime cause of poor language learning. Thus, much research has been devoted to the question of how learners with L2 difficulties differ from high ability learners in acquiring L2 (e.g. Ganschow, Sparks & Javorsky, 1998; Purpura, 1998; Sparks, Javorsky & Philips, 2005). To my knowledge, very few empirical research studies have adopted a sociocultural, Vygotskian perspective to investigate the types of teacher-pupil interaction which facilitate L2 learning in pupils with SpLD.

In the current research, I use the term SpLD throughout to refer mainly to pupils who have been assessed by an educational assessor or a psychologist as being at risk of academic failure due to difficulties in specific cognitive processes. However, in line with Feiler & Gibson (1999), I use this term without excluding pupils whose academic difficulties may result from external factors, such as inappropriate teaching and classroom support, or poor parental support.

My concern with pupils experiencing difficulty in L2 results from my professional experience as an English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher and educational assessor specialising in SpLD. From conversations and interviews I have had with pupils, parents and colleagues, I have learned that many pupils with SpLD who study EFL in mainstream classes gain very little from classroom interaction for the following reasons: Pupils rarely speak English during lessons, they hardly understand classroom interaction and, therefore, make little progress after many years of instruction. This is demonstrated by the following extract from an interview I have had with a colleague, for one of my doctoral assignments. When asked about a sixteen year old pupil with SpLD she had taught the previous year, my colleague said:

"He is a puzzle to me. Sometimes it goes so well and sometimes he forgets most of the words ... I feel I have made very little progress with him ... He is a very hard case ... He missed a lot, he doesn't know the basics."

(Cohen, 2003a)

As a specialist EFL teacher, I have been able to provide pupils with SpLD the appropriate instruction which opened up for them opportunities for learning, enabling them to pass the matriculation examinations in EFL. The discrepancy between these learners' poor progress when learning in regular classes, as opposed to the progress they made when given the appropriate provision, is exemplified by the following extract from a pupil interview:

"All my life I haven't learned and suddenly I learn and this gives me a feeling of - Wow, I suddenly know another language."

(Cohen, 2003b)

Thus, my stance in the current research is to acknowledge that some L2 difficulties indeed stem from learners' cognitive inefficiencies, but to recognize that, to a large extent, learners' abilities are influenced by contextual factors. In line with Frederickson & Cline (2002, p. 136), the assumption underpinning my research is that learning difficulties are relative, and that a full understanding of pupils' needs can only be developed if we explore and understand their L2 learning contexts. Thus, in this research my aim is to find out how EFL who teach pupils with SpLD create and increase opportunities for these learners to engage and participate in L2 classroom activities, and thus open up for them opportunities for potential language development. I believe that an inquiry into effective classroom interactions of good practitioners may yield useful and constructive findings.

1.3 Personal interest

While this study is an attempt to contribute to the larger research field of L2 teaching and learning, it also has personal roots. As I have mentioned in 1.2 above, my interest in this topic stems from my work as an EFL teacher specialising in teaching and assessing pupils with SpLD. During my 17 year professional experience as an EFL teacher, I have found that much of the challenge and satisfaction I experienced in my work derived from helping pupils who experienced difficulties. The motivation to write a dissertation which aims to understand what types of teacher-pupil interaction help pupils with difficulties to learn also lies in my own experience as a pupil. The colours of my school memories are mostly black and white. I remember the teachers whose presence I feared. The ones who were often engaged in 'torturing rituals': posing difficult questions to pupils who did not have the answers; insulting and humiliating pupils. I also remember the ones who warmed my heart: the one who engaged pupils with beautiful drawings and class shows; the one who activated us in lively debates on social and political issues; the one who always made us smile, and the one to whom I, a sixteen year old girl, said: "This is the first time in my life that I understand math".

Of course, there were many others, whose faces and names I hardly remember. Those were the ones who made me absorb tons of indigestible facts, regurgitate them on the next test, and subsequently forget. It never occurred to them to pause and ask: 'Do you really understand?' They had to accomplish the curriculum. A pupil who did not conform was left behind. Unlike the author Primo Levi, in the quote above, I never thought that I would be able to pick the lock and understand. I was a pupil with learning difficulties in many subject areas, who did not end up as a drop-out due to caring parents, who loaded me with private tutors to back up school teaching. I did not find a short-cut, but I did force open some doors, until I finally found an alternative way that in my veins warmed the blood.

At the University of Bristol, I was given an authorized legitimation to my gut feeling, that educational justice does not mean providing "a uniform way of dealing with clients or situations which is insensitive to individual circumstances" (Webster & Bond, 2002, p. 26). Today I am convinced that there is something fundamentally

wrong in educational approaches which assume that every pupil in the classroom can learn the same material in the same way. By the same token, I am convinced that "uniform, universal measures do not suffice to test pupils' learning (Gardner, 1993, p. 12). The application of this understanding to my research philosophy was to adopt the qualitative approach to research, which assumes that there is a range of learning phenomena that cannot be captured under standardized tests or experimental conditions (*ibid*). This belief coincides with the innovative approaches to testing and evaluation that my doctoral programme coordinator and dissertation supervisor, Professor Pauline Rea-Dickins, made apparent to me: formative assessment which is interwoven with teacher-pupils' classroom interaction. Informed by her writing (e.g. Rea-Dickins, 2001), and the writing of my advisor Professor Alec Webster (e.g. Webster Beveridge & Reed, 1996), I adopted a socio-cultural, constructivist view of research, which attempts to answer the question: What is the nature of the help or guidance that teachers give to pupils which promotes learning? (Wood Bruner & Ross, 1976). Thus, the current study aims to examine the characteristics of teacher-pupil interaction which facilitate EFL learning in pupils with SpLD.

1.4 Main focus

The questions that have guided the design of this study are concerned with exploring and explaining teacher-pupil interaction that unfolds and provides potential opportunities for EFL learning and development. Therefore, the study adopts an ethnographic, qualitative, multiple case-study approach to researching classroom interaction of EFL teachers, with a view to exploring best practice. Data were collected through classroom observations, audio and video recordings and interviews with teachers and some of their pupils. It is believed that a close investigation of opportunities that arise through sustained, goal-directed, teacher-pupil interaction may yield understanding into what makes a critical opportunity for pupils' potential engagement in EFL learning and development. Thus, the main research question (RQ), which has guided my data collection and analysis, reads as follows:

RQ1: In what ways do teachers, through their choice of verbal mediation, create and increase opportunities for pupils' potential engagement in EFL learning and development?

The second and third questions have emerged from my data analysis and findings. The second question arose from my attempt to assess the validity of existing socio-constructivist frameworks to my findings, and despite the qualitative, ethnographic epistemological stance of the current study, it is somewhat a more closed question. It reads as follows:

RQ2: Do existing socio-constructivist frameworks allow an account to emerge of effective teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD learning EFL, and if so, how?

The third question to emerge from the findings suggested that some types of teacher-pupil interaction were specifically effective in addressing pupils' EFL difficulties, while other types of interaction addressed more general difficulties which had an influence on EFL learning. Thus, the third question is:

RQ3: Are there specific types of interaction that appear effective in addressing the challenges posed by EFL learners with SpLD, and if so, what are they?

By identifying, describing, analysing and interpreting aspects of classroom interaction that are thought to promote EFL learning, I will attempt to answer the aforementioned questions.

1.5 Organization of the dissertation

Chapter 1 gives background and an overview of the entire study.

Chapter 2 provides key definitions of terms used in this study. It explains conceptual and theoretical frameworks from the general education literature regarding teacher-pupil interaction. It then reviews previous empirical investigations

of teacher-pupil classroom interaction in relation to L2 learning, and SpLD. It also locates areas in which further research is needed.

Chapter 3 presents the methodological approach and explains the rationale for the methods and procedures employed throughout the data collection and analysis processes.

Chapter 4 provides findings from case 1 (Ann).

Chapter 5 reports on the findings from case 2 (Irene).

Chapter 6 provides findings from cases 3, 4 and 5. It also presents a comparative analysis across the five cases.

Chapter 7 summarizes the study's findings and explains the study's contribution to the field. It provides comments upon the strengths, limitations and challenges of the study, as well as its potential contribution to language educational research and practice.

Finally, Appendices are presented to exemplify and shed more light on data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

"Just as a mould gives shape to a substance, words can shape an activity into a structure."

(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 28)

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I first locate my study in the larger educational landscape of the sociocultural approach to learning. Secondly, I present two major models from education research which take a sociocultural perspective towards investigating classroom interaction. These models will be used in the current research as analytical frameworks. I then review studies that have looked specifically at teacher-pupil interaction in the L2 classroom. Finally, I narrow the focus to research on pupils with SpLD. Throughout the chapter, I draw upon general education and language teaching literature, together with special education literature. This is done partly because literature in the intersection of sociocultural theory, L2 learning and SpLD is meagre, and partly because much of the relevant research from sociocultural theory in first language (L1) classroom interaction seems directly relevant to L2 classroom interaction.

2.2 Sociocultural theory and classroom interaction

2.2.1 Learning as a socially mediated activity

The conceptual frameworks that inform the present study stem from sociocultural theory which originated in the work of Lev S. Vygotsky (1896-1934), a psychologist whose ideas have contributed to current understanding of teacher-pupil interaction. As Vygotsky's ideas are wide-ranging, this chapter will focus only upon those that I find particularly important for my understanding of classroom interaction and its influence on language learning. One major influence of

Vygotsky's work upon contemporary educational research lies in his emphasis upon the roles of society and culture in the mental development of children. Vygotsky approaches learning as an interactive, reciprocal process, which is not only internal to the mind but also takes place between people. His ideas embody the view that the learning is possible through the child's interaction with more capable others. He suggests that, symbolically, learning is located in:

"the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential development as determined by problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers ... The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturing, functions that will mature tomorrow..."

(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

According to Vygotsky's definition of the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD), when guidance or instruction is given to the children and they are assisted to reach beyond their current level of functioning, their mental development level can be expanded. By emphasising the importance of society (e.g. adults, teachers) on the child's mental processes, Vygotsky, in essence, recognises the fundamental interaction between socio-cultural and cognitive factors. According to Maybin (2003), for educationalists, Vygotsky's argument that cognitive development happens first at the social level, through interaction and dialogue with others, before being internalised to feed into individual development has shifted the focus to the explicit guiding role of the teacher, through talk. Vygotsky emphasised the importance of *talk* in children's cognitive development. Just as work-tools are "a means of labour of mastering nature", Vygotsky sees language as a symbolic cultural tool (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 53). The importance of language in children's mental development lies in the fact that language is not only shaped by the mind but also shapes the mind:

"Initially speech follows action, is provoked by and dominated by activity. At a later stage, however, when speech is moved to the starting point of an activity, a new relation between word and action emerges. Now speech guides, determines, and dominates the course of action; the planning function of speech comes into being in addition to the already existing function of language to reflect the external world".

(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 28)

Vygotsky (1986, pp. 24-27) argues that significant intellectual development occurs when speech and practical activity converge. He suggests that since the relationship between speech and action is the very essence of practical and abstract intelligence, research that seeks to investigate processes of cognitive development should look at goal-directed verbal interaction between people (*ibid*).

A contemporary of Vygotsky who has influenced research in Applied Linguistics is the linguist Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975). Bakhtin (1986) recognised the importance of investigating language use as a dynamic, complex, socially situated process (Kramsch, 2000; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). According to Bakhtin (1986), speech is perceived as a dialogic process, composed of utterances, which are shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with others' individual utterances. He suggests that listeners are not passive receivers of a ready-made message whose communicative task is one of decoding, but rather co-participants in the human activity in which the utterance is situated.

Bakhtin's and Vygotsky's ideas, which were innovative at their time, have inspired and influenced researchers in L1 and L2 education. Research in both fields has begun to broaden its view of teaching and learning to include sociocultural and Vygotskian concepts which conceptualize learning as a dialogic process, within which knowledge is simultaneously and collaboratively built by both the teacher and the learner (e.g., Block, 2003; Swain, 2000; Webster, et al., 1996; Wells, 1999). Nevertheless, Vygotsky's approach, which provides an answer to the question: 'What is learning?' does not provide an answer to the question of how adults or teachers can guide children in order to assist them to reach beyond their current ability (Wood & Wood, 1996). Using Vygotsky's concept of the ZPD, i.e., the difference between what a child can achieve on his or her own, and what the same child can achieve when supported by a teacher or more able other, researchers in L1 and L2 education have looked at how teachers can support learners through dialogue to extend their zones of proximal development. The metaphor of scaffolding (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976, p. 6), which has been linked to the concept of ZPD, can be seen as one attempt to address the question: 'What is the nature of the help or guidance that adults give children?' (Wood and Wood, 1996).

2.3 The metaphor of scaffolding

Scaffolding

Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;

Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.

And yet all this comes down when the job's done
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.

(Seamus Heaney, 1966, p. 37)

The metaphor of scaffolding in the context of teaching and learning was coined in 1976 by Wood, Bruner and Ross. The metaphor of scaffolding represents the idea that tutors serve to provide a bridge between the learner's existing knowledge and skills and the demands of the new task, which, left alone, novice learners might not be able to approach. Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) suggest that scaffolding includes:

- Recruiting the child's interest in the task.
- Establishing and maintaining an orientation towards task relevant goals.
- Highlighting critical features of the task that the child might overlook.
- Demonstrating how to achieve goals and helping to control frustration.

Scaffolding is also suggested to include guided participation of the learner, which means that the learner plays an active role in learning and contributes to the successful solution of problems. Guided participation involves: a) ensuring that the child is neither left to struggle alone with too much complexity, nor, conversely, given too little scope for involvement and initiative in task and b) a transfer of responsibility from tutor to learner (Wood and Wood, 1996, p. 6).

The idea of providing appropriate assistance and stepping out once the pupil shows signs of being able to carry on with the task independently is linked to Vygotsky's ZPD and is termed by Wood and Wood (1996, p. 7) as '*contingent instruction*'. They suggest that contingent instruction has three ingredients:

1. The ability to suspend or depart from initial teaching intent and offer any help in response to what the learner infers he/she is trying to achieve.
2. The ability to decide what is to be the focus of any help to be offered and how specific that help should be.
3. The ability to decide when is the best time to leave the learner alone and when to offer help.

Mercer (2000) links between the two concepts of 'scaffolding' and 'ZPD', suggesting that teachers and learners constantly negotiate their way through the activity in which they are involved. For example, a teacher may scaffold a pupil and extend his/her ZPD through the use of particular kinds of questions to direct pupil's attention, or through rephrasing of pupil's response. Mercer suggests that if the instructional dialogue between the teacher and the learner is successful, the learner becomes able to operate just beyond his or her current capability, and to consolidate this experience as new ability and understanding (Mercer, 2000, p. 141).

Initially, the concepts of scaffolding and ZPD referred to contexts of individual tutoring. Therefore, applying these concepts to classroom contexts is problematic. This is because school teachers and their pupils operate under complex circumstances. In the classroom, teachers have to engage groups of learners, who have multiple zones of potential developments (Mercer, 1995, p. 74, Webster et al., 1996, p. 36). In addition, in the classroom, factors that have nothing to do with learning per se often determine the teacher's priorities (Webster et al., 1996, p. 36).

2.3.1 Classroom interaction

Many studies examining classroom instructional conversation from a sociocultural perspective have built on a well-quoted study in Applied Linguistics by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975), which uses Discourse Analysis to identify patterns of teacher-

pupil talk in first language classrooms. The study identifies a three-part sequence typical of classroom interaction. This sequence is generally known as teacher initiation (the I move), learner response (the R move) and teacher feedback (the F move). Applied linguists have argued that although the IRF sequence occurs quite frequently in everyday conversation, it is often used differently in the classroom (e.g. Nassaji & Wells, 2000, p. 377; Seedhouse, 2004). The difference between classroom and everyday use of the IRF sequence results from three main reasons: Firstly, in the classroom sequence only one participant – the teacher – usually initiates the exchange. Secondly, questions initiated by teachers are very often display, assessment questions requiring recitation and recall. Thirdly, in the classroom exchange the teacher always has the right to provide the third move. Moreover, in the classroom exchange, the feedback move is very often an evaluation of "the student's contribution for its conformity to what he or she considers to be a correct or acceptable response" (Nassaji & Wells, 2000, p. 377). This claim is demonstrated in the following stereotypical example from L2 classroom interaction:

1 T: Right, the cup is on top of the box...
2 Now, where is the cup?
3 P: In the box.
4 T: The cup is?
5 P: In the box.
6 T: The cup is in?
7 P: The cup is in the box.
8 T: Right. Very good, the cup is in the box.

(Seedhouse, 2004, p. 144, citing Johnson, 1995, p. 10)

According to Seedhouse, the focus of the above interaction is on form and accuracy and even though the answers the learner produces are linguistically correct and sequentially appropriate, the teacher initiates repair until the learner produces exactly the targeted string of linguistic forms (*ibid*).

Research on both L1 and L2 classroom interaction (e.g. Bliss, Askew M., & Macrae, 1996; John, 2003; Webster et al., 1996; Webster and Roe, 1998; Wells, 1999) shows that teachers rely heavily on the IRF teacher-managed sequence. In specific relation to children with special educational needs (SEN), Webster and Roe

(1998) note that the IRF pattern of talk actually reflects teachers' assumptions on the different parts they and their pupils play in classroom discourse (i.e. the teacher manages and controls by checking the pupils' comprehension and knowledge and exercising disciplinary control). The result is that pupils are reduced to the passive role of answering questions and carrying out the teacher's instructions. Cummins (1984) has long ago argued against a transmission model which assigns a passive and dependent role to the learners with SEN, and inhibits in them the intrinsic motivation and active involvement in learning that are essential for the development of higher-order cognitive and academic skills. He observes that effective teacher-pupil interaction consists of:

"Reciprocal interaction between adults and children [in which] learning objectives tend to be focused on process rather than content, and higher levels of active cognitive processing (e.g. analysing, synthesizing, evaluating) are emphasized to a greater extent than factual recall. Children are involved in using language to learn and to amplify their own experience rather than learning language in isolation ... The interactional environment is structured to facilitate children becoming intrinsically involved and personally committed to completion of challenging academic activities."

(1984, p. 230)

Despite the above criticism of the typical teacher-dominated classroom interaction where pupils are seen as 'vessals to be filled', it has been acknowledged that in large group contexts teacher-dominated interaction often serves to ensure that the discussion proceeds in an orderly manner and that as many participants as possible will contribute to and benefit from the instructional conversation (John, 2003; Nassaji & Wells, 2000). Moreover, in L2 instructional contexts, where learners have limited language proficiency, it is difficult for teachers to replicate speech events that are natural outside of the pedagogical setting (Gil, 2002; Seedhouse, 1996). This entails that from a methodological perspective, Discourse Analysis of classroom IRF sequences which is used as an isolated system may conceal the complexity of L2 classroom interaction (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 65).

Research studies of both L1 and L2 classroom interaction which have gone beyond the IRF framework have found out that "a relatively minor change in the traditional

IRF sequence can have significant effects on the process of the discourse as a whole" (Gibbons, 2003, p. 263). Findings of an action research project conducted over seven years, involving nine elementary and middle school teachers and three university researchers in Canada (Nassaji & Wells, 2000) revealed that the basic IRF structure used by teachers was recruited for a wide variety of functions, depending on the goal of the activity that the interaction served to mediate. Thus, for example, 'Initiation moves' were coded for the extent in which the demanded information was assumed to be known to the teacher, and would therefore be likely to provide an evaluation as a follow up, or, on the other hand, personal, and so the follow up would take a form of a comment or a request for further information from the giver of the information. 'Follow-up moves' were coded for their degree of responsiveness to the pupils' talk and for six functions which were identified: Evaluation, justification, comment, clarification, action and meta-talk.

The results indicate that the choice of initiating question has an important influence on the way in which the IRF sequence develops: questions that introduce issues for negotiation are more likely than known information questions to elicit substantive pupil contributions. However, it was found that the choice of follow-up is even more important: evaluative follow-ups tend to suppress extended pupil participation. However, many of the follow-up moves were encouraging rather than evaluating and did not have this negative effect (Nassaji & Wells, 2000, p. 400). The writers conclude that asking a follow-up question that invites the pupil to explain or extend on his/her own contribution can be seen as the most fundamental role of teacher-pupil interaction.

In line with Nassaji & Wells (2000) and Seedhouse (2004), in the current research I have used classroom interaction analysis which attempts to create connections between teachers' use of the IRF sequence and the particular social and institutional context of EFL and pupils with SpLD. Understanding teacher-pupil interaction within its specific context is important because, from a sociocultural perspective, classroom interaction is viewed as "concrete, dynamic human action existing in real spatiotemporal and social contexts" (Wertsch, 1995, p. 62). I believe that such broader analysis may yield some results which haven't been explored by previous research.

In addition to using the IRF framework, two major frameworks of teacher-pupil interaction have been used in the current research: the 'five components of classroom scaffolding' and the quadrant model of 'adult-child proximation' (Webster & al., 1996; Webster & Roe, 1998). As will be discussed later, these frameworks originate in L1 classroom research but have been used in both L2 and SpLD research contexts. These frameworks, which are based on sociocultural Vygotskian ideas, have given rise to my second research question, which aims to assess whether or not these existing socio-constructivist frameworks allow an account to emerge for effective teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD who study EFL.

2.3.2 Five components of classroom scaffolding

Building on the original notion of scaffolding and its components, Webster et al. (1996, p. 71-78) suggest explanations of how the notion of scaffolding could be interpreted in a classroom context through the following five components.

Recruitment and management: The first aspect of the tutoring interaction is concerned with how the teacher gets the pupil to focus on the task. In this stage of recruitment the teacher warms and inspires the pupils to the relevance or interest of the task even if these are not immediately apparent. This is achieved by gaining the pupils' attention, directing them towards resources, directing their behaviour, giving background and/or sharing with them personal information, and monitoring their attention.

Representation and clarification: A second aspect of the tutoring role consists of helping pupils to conceptualise the task in terms that they understand by clarifying what they have to do and how they can proceed. This might involve adding useful information or hints, or correcting misinformation. The teacher may set out ways of organising the task. An important function of this stage is getting pupils to know and understand why they are going to pursue an activity and what they are going to achieve as the outcome.

Elaboration: In this stage, the teacher builds conceptual bridges and assists the pupils to develop, fit in and adapt the new concepts to their existing conceptual frameworks, or to reconstruct previous ways of thinking to accommodate new learning modes. Elaboration also includes keeping the pupils on the right track and giving them feedback on their process of adapting the new concepts to their conceptual frameworks.

Mediation: Mediation is defined as the stage at which appropriate ways of learning are mediated by words. Helping pupils to externalize their thinking requires reflection with them during the task. Time has to be found to listen to pupils' accounts of their own learning and of their difficulties in going through the process of developing, fitting in and adapting the new concepts elaborated in the third stage. This kind of strategic verbal mediation between the pupil and the goal of the activity is at the core of scaffolding and constitutes the dialogue between the teacher and the pupil.

Finishing: The final component of teachers' scaffolding is concerned with drawing together pupils' classroom activity and reflecting on the process and outcomes. In this stage, teachers may consider issues concerning how pupils set out to tackle a problem and how learning activities progressed. Teachers can identify crucial aspects of pupils' achievements and highlight pupils' potential for further improvement and development.

These five components, when used in the classroom, are thought to facilitate learning and open up opportunities for literacy development. In this study, I will examine whether and how these five components emerge from large-group classroom interaction. In addition, I will use a second theoretical framework, the 'teacher-pupil interaction' quadrant model, which is described below on p. 19.

2.3.3 Teacher-pupil interaction

The second model, which proposes a research framework of teacher-pupil interaction (Figure 2.1), aims to describe aspects of teaching and learning in contexts where literacy is used. This model was firstly proposed by Webster, et al. in 1996. The concepts underpinning the model were tested by teaching colleagues, and in workshops held in the schools. In 1998, Webster and Roe adapted this framework to study social interactions between teachers and children with visual impairments. Heineman-Gosschalk (1999) used the model to examine and compare the roles of teachers, parents and deaf adults in promoting reading in deaf children. John (2003) used this framework to examine patterns of didactic and informal talk and the development of reading in children learning English as an additional language. In the current research, this model has been adopted and has provided an analytical framework for classroom data. I believe that since the model has been proven helpful in describing and analysing teacher-pupil interaction in special educational needs (SEN) contexts, as well as L2 contexts, it is suitable for the current study, which is concerned with pupils with SpLD.

The following 'teacher-pupil interaction' quadrant model (figure 2.1) is adapted from Webster et al.'s (1996, p. 36-43) and Webster and Roe's (1998: 191-196), 'Adult child proximation'.

Figure 2.1: A framework of teacher-pupil interaction

Active environment

A: Teacher-driven
- Teacher manages and controls
- Learning is the transmission of information
- Pupils are passive recipients
- Pupils are expected to respond to teacher's interests and initiatives
- Activities are not negotiable
- Context is irrelevant to pupils
- Literacy is a set of skills to be handed over
- Engagement of children is low
- Teacher supervises and protects
- Pupils are discouraged from independent problem- solving

D: Learning-driven
- Teacher negotiates and collaborates
- Pupils seen as active partners
- Learning is through guided participation
- Pupils work collaboratively
- Learning arises from joint problem-solving
- Activities provide opportunities for dialogue
- Teacher is sensitive to pupils' needs
- Interaction is high in contingency
- Context is made explicit
- Learning processes are highlighted

Passive learner — **Active learner**

B: Resource-driven
- Teacher relies on set resources to structure learning
- Learning is to be occupied but with low child initiative
- Few teacher prompts or invitations
- Non-interactive styles

C: Pupil-driven
- Teacher provides resources when requested
- Pupils pursue own interests and initiatives
- Learning is through self-directed exploration
- Pupils manage their own learning
- Interaction is low in collaboration

Passive environment

As shown above, the quadrant model includes two continua which provide the structure for the framework. According to Webster et al. (1996, p. 36-37), the horizontal axis represents the degree of initiative, engagement and active involvement of the pupil in the learning process, while the vertical axis represents the nature and level of the teacher's management and control and the way that the teacher mediates learning in general. Using this model, the authors describe the nature of interaction between children and adults, the way in which environmental inputs are structured and made accessible to children, and whether children are treated as passive recipients of information or are engaged as active learning partners. The model provides a framework for describing and locating the quality of

questioning and the nature of assessment, how concepts and learning processes are discussed or reviewed, and the relative emphasis on activities such as rote drilling compared with discovery learning and free choice (*ibid*). According to Webster et al (1996, p. 40-43), the four quadrants are characterized as follows:

Quadrant A: Teacher-driven

Quadrant A describes high teacher management and control where pupils are perceived as empty vessels to be filled with information and skills. Interaction is characterised by the IRF pattern where teachers elicit, directly nominate and then correct or evaluate responses. It includes rote-teaching, highly controlled drills, de-contextualized learning in which relevance and meaning are more apparent to the teacher than to the pupils, such as rule-driven teaching. Webster and Roe (1998) describe this quadrant also as 'care-driven' in relation to teachers' tendency to protect and discourage children with visual impairments from exploring and experiencing learning independently. According to Webster et al. (1996), when managed successfully, this teaching style has its benefits in the context of a large group of pupils; permitting an ordered turn-taking with individual pupils contributing to the discussion; encouraging attention and alertness; and monitoring, though superficially, students' understanding.

Quadrant B: Resource-driven

Quadrant B is characterised by the authors as including little management, direction or technique. In this domain, neither teacher nor pupil initiate and manage the learning. Literacy is used mainly to occupy pupils while the teacher's role is that of supervisor or 'baby sitter' as pupils proceed through worksheets, or other instructional materials without any specific guidance. An example of this kind of teaching is exam-type tasks which involve few external signals for direction or purpose. It is argued that even though in such a lesson pupils may have contact with a wide or/and high quality language-related materials, it precludes any real extension of pupils' development because interaction takes place mainly between pupils and learning materials without the teacher monitoring or mediating.

Quadrant C: Pupil-driven

The learning experience described by Webster et al (1996) in quadrant C reflects the view that children are self-motivated individuals or mini scientists who can initiate and design their own learning. The teacher's role is to supply a wealth of materials that will provide a stimulating and rich environment. Pupils are encouraged to pursue interest but with little initiation, explicit teaching, guidance or assistance by the teacher. This domain is consistent with interpretations of Piaget's work in relation to education, viewing learning and development as arising out of the child's own action and problem solving. It is low in teacher management and control except for resources, as well as information and help when requested.

Quadrant D: Learning-driven

Quadrant D, according to the authors, embodies the view that development is a socially constructed activity. It ascribes active roles to both teacher and pupil in a learning partnership. According to Webster et al (1996, pp. 44-45), the emphasis is on learning which is facilitated, but not controlled, by the adult. Learning is viewed as a complex process, more than just the sum of a number of small sub-skills. Teacher interaction opens up opportunities to take risks and make mistakes in collaboration with partners who contribute different perspectives and understandings. Learners are not seen as isolated individuals who succeed or fail by their own efforts, but rather teaching and learning are treated as social and communicative processes. Tasks are contextualized in the sense that teachers share the meaning and purpose with pupils. Questions are often process-oriented or speculative, of the 'what if?' or 'how?' variety. Assessment is reflective and formative, reviewing how tasks were tackled and identifying key issues for next teaching steps (*ibid*). In this quadrant, both child initiative and engagement and teacher involvement are high.

In line with the Webster and Roe (1998), this framework is used in the current study in order to provide background reference points against which data from the observational study will be interpreted. The reason for choosing this model for the purpose of the present study is threefold. Firstly, the model builds on the ideas of

Vygotsky (1978), Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) and their followers, who view learning as a socially-constructed activity. Secondly, the framework has been developed and used by researchers for large group classroom contexts with children of all ages. Thirdly, as I have mentioned above, the framework has been applied to the research of children learning L2 (John, 2003), as well as children with SEN (Heineman-Gosschalk, 1999; Webster and Roe, 1998). Findings from studies which have used the 'adult-child proximation' quadrant model in SEN contexts suggest that when working with pupils who have learning difficulties, teachers often exert a high degree of control over conversation and pupils are cast as passive assimilators. Teachers do not negotiate meanings or collaborate with pupils, but rather direct and require pupils to use strategies such as imitation and repetition of correct language. In this research I aim to examine if this framework allows an account to emerge of effective teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD learning EFL, and if so, how.

Cummins (2000) proposes his framework for L2 teaching and learning which links to the above model in that it highlights the distinction between context embedded and context reduced instruction, and between cognitive undemanding and cognitive demanding L2 activities, and locates them along two continuums. Although Cummins' framework appears to focus more on different task types than on teacher-pupil interaction, central to both frameworks is their shared implication for instruction, which asserts that:

"Language and content will be acquired most successfully when students are challenged cognitively but provided with the contextual and linguistic supports or scaffolds required for successful task completion."

(Cummins, 2000, p. 71).

In summary, this section have highlighted important concepts and models from L1 and L2 educational research which has adopted a sociocultural, Vygotskian approach to investigating classroom interaction. Having introduced the major concepts underpinning sociocultural research - of the ZPD and classroom scaffolding - it is now appropriate to consider the specific applications of these concepts to L2 learners.

2.4 Sociocultural theory and L2 learning

Even though Vygotsky's concern was children performing tasks in their L1, his theory has been successfully applied to L2 contexts. van Lier (1988) has long ago suggested that in addition to studying specific linguistic features of the learners, researchers should focus on what is done by the teacher which provides the learners opportunities for speaking and for using the language. Therefore, he asserted that research has to probe which kinds of interaction can be called meaningful, and how could these kinds of interaction benefit language development. He argued that it is impossible to make a link between observable behaviour and language development because learning is characterized by improved performance and knowledge at some unspecified time, after the learning has occurred, and it is not always visible or observable (van Lier, 1988, p. 91). Therefore, he presupposed that participation, personal involvement and the taking of initiative by the learner are manifestation of learning. The view that language grows through participation over time, has contributed to L2 research in that it shifted the concept of learning away from the acquisition metaphor towards metaphors of participation (e.g. Block, 2003; Donato, 2000; Swain, 2000).

In the following two sections I overview empirical studies in L2 which include sociocultural, Vygotskian conceptual frameworks. Although the current research aims at investigating EFL learning and teaching, my literature review is informed by studies in both second language and foreign language (FL), as one body of knowledge (to which I use the term *L2)* even though the latter is situated inside a community where L1 is shared by pupils and teachers. The reason for not focusing solely on sociocultural research in FL is that it has been found to be relatively meagre. However, as I have mentioned in the introductory chapter, my third research question, which was formulated as a result of findings which had emerged from the data, seeks to pinpoint the specific types of interaction that appear effective in addressing the challenges posed by EFL learners with SpLD. Therefore, in my finding chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) I will naturally address some issues related to the fact that these pupils share the same L1 with their teachers.

2.4.1 The foundation of socio-cultural thinking in L2 research

Current research on classroom interaction in L2 learning has its origin in Krashen's 'input hypothesis' (Krashen, 1985 in Block, 2003), which is concerned with how the learner acquires L2. According to this hypothesis, the learner improves and progresses along a 'natural order' when he/she receives L2 input that is one step beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence. For example, if a learner is at a stage 'i', then acquisition takes place when he/she is exposed to 'comprehensible input' that belongs to level 'i + 1'. Since not all of the learners can be at the same level of linguistic competence at the same time, Krashen suggests that natural communicative input, which focuses on the message rather than the form and which takes into account the real communicative need is the key to designing a syllabus.

Krashen's hypothesis was concerned with the input and the provider of input, but failed to provide enough information about the dialogic nature of verbal interaction between people, and the type of interaction itself which accounts for L2 acquisition (Swain, 2000). Therefore, researchers began to look beyond the comprehension of input hypotheses to other aspects of interaction. One explanation of how input is made comprehensible was the 'interactional modification' explanation. This asserts that when a speaker/hearer signals that he/she is having a lack of comprehension, the interlocutor modifies his/her language input in order to make it more suitable for the particular partner (Long, 1985, in Block, 2003). A close explanation was that comprehensibility is achieved through 'negotiations of meaning' by means of interlocutors repeating and rephrasing their statements for their partners when they anticipate or experience difficulties in communication (Pica, 1991).

Following the interactional modification explanation, which was fundamentally an explanation of how L2 is learned in natural contexts outside the classroom, in the late 1980s a communicative tradition developed which saw much traditional L2 classroom communication as undesirable in comparison to natural communication (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 67). Nunan (1987), for example, provides a characterization of a desirable, 'genuine' classroom communication, suggesting that:

"Genuine communication is characterized by the uneven distribution of information, the negotiation of meaning (through, for example, clarification requests and confirmation checks), topic nomination and negotiation by more than one speaker, and the right of interlocutors to decide whether to contribute to an interaction or not."

(p. 137).

The communicative tradition, however, which stems from research in L2 acquisition in non-pedagogic contexts, has led to criticism from both researchers and practitioners. Natural conversation, they argue, is differentiated from institutional discourse, and, in theory, it is not possible for FL teachers to replicate conversation in the FL classroom as part of a lesson (e.g. Gil, 2003; Seedhouse, 1996; Seedhouse, 2004). Therefore, researchers have begun to explore interdisciplinary connections which provided a broader perspective to language learning (e.g. van Lier, 1996, p. 35). In the mid 1980s, Frawley and Lantolf began to explore the potential relevance of sociocultural theory for L2 acquisition. In their early work they were interested in how speakers used their new language to mediate themselves (for an overview of literature see Lantolf, 2006). Since then a great deal of research that is directly or indirectly informed by sociocultural theory has been carried out on L2 learning (e.g. Aljaafreh, A. & Lantolf, 1994; Donato, 2000; Donato & Aair-Hauck, 1992; Gibbons, 2003; Jarvis & Robinson, 1997; John, 2003; Lantolf, & Poehner, 2004; Nassaji & Cumming, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Swain, 2000). Researchers have adopted sociocultural theories because these theories provided

"a psycholinguistic explanation of the sociocultural circumstances and processes through which pedagogy can foster learning that leads to language development."

(Nassaji & Cumming, 2000, p. 97).

In the next section I provide a review of empirical research studies which undertake a Vygotskian, sociocultural approach to investigating L2 teaching and learning. In selecting the articles, a major focus was on studies that have identified specific aspects of teacher-pupil interaction which may be critical for providing and increasing opportunities for pupils to learn L2.

2.4.2 A review of research on sociocultural theory and L2 classroom interaction

In this section I first provide an overview of research on teacher-pupil interaction in L2, of which there have been a number of studies which have included sociocultural frameworks. These studies were gathered by reviewing journals in three main areas: special education, educational research, and applied linguistics, using library search for books and journals, suggestions from my supervisor, database and webpage searches.[2] The selected studies are summarised in Table 2.1, alphabetically. This is followed by a commentary on some general patterns which emerge from the methodology and findings of the studies, as well as specific examples from certain studies. In Table 2.1 I attempt to highlight and clarify the main questions, methodological strategies and findings that are likely to be relevant to the main research question which has guided my data collection and analysis: In what ways do teachers, through their choice of verbal mediation, create and increase opportunities for pupils' engagement in EFL learning and potential development?

[2] I searched mainly using the keywords classroom/ interaction/ scaffolding/ZPD; Foreign language/ second language; Specific learning difficulties/Learning difficulties/ Special educational needs/ Dyslexia. The databases I used were ERIC, Proquest and Psychoinfo.

Table 2.1: Literature review grid: Empirical studies of teacher-pupil interaction in L2

* These article reported portions of larger studies, so the actual number of participants could be larger.

Reference	Research Questions/foci	Participants	Method(s)	Relevant findings in relation to socio-cultural theory and scaffolding
Aljaafreh & Lantolf (1994)*	To investigate the interaction between teacher error correction and pupil learning process within the framework of ZPD	9 students in 8 week advanced ESL university reading and writing course, USA.	Experimental design of an interventional programme through 'Regulatory Scale' of collaborative corrective feedback in the student's ZPD.[3] Qualitative analysis of recorded intervention protocols	Different learners had different ZPDs for the same target language form and therefore required different levels of help. Effective error correction and language learning depended crucially on mediation provided by the tutor, who dialogically co-constructed a ZPD in which feedback was appropriated by the learner. Development arose as a result of the regulatory corrective help (see Appendix 1 on p. 172). The evidence learners displayed in appropriating the help given to them included a marked reduction in the amount of help needed.

[3] The 'Regulatory Scale' used in the interventional tutorials is provided as Appendix 1

Reference	Research Questions/foci	Participants	Method(s)	Relevant findings in relation to socio-cultural theory and scaffolding
Cullen (2002)	To examine provision of feedback and the role it plays in EFL classroom discourse	Secondary school EFL classes in Tanzania.	Video recordings	Teachers' follow up moves had two qualitatively different roles: the evaluative role, and the formative role. The latter was found effective as it aimed to pick up pupils' contributions and incorporate the feedback. When the follow up move took the non-evaluative role, the emphasis was on content rather than form and there was no explicit correction but rather a reformulation of the utterance.
Donato (2000)	To explore how sociocultural theory can contribute to a richer understanding of the FL/SL classroom	A synthesis of three small-scale classroom-based research projects (i) Intermediate ESL students (Smith, 1996); first semester college (ii) French as FL language course (Todhunter, 1996); (iii) First semester university French as FL course (Sanford, 1996);	Classroom interaction was recorded and analysed through Conversation Analysis	Students mediated their thinking in private speech as they puzzled through difficult concepts. Through the teacher's dynamic assistance, students learned ways of mediating their own and each other's learning. Teacher and students were engaged in effective communication that was both conversational and instructional only when they departed from the traditional, textbook-based forms of language practice, or when the teacher stepped out of her authority and pre-planned agenda and talked to the class as co-participants in the interaction.

Reference	Research Questions/foci	Participants	Method(s)	Relevant findings in relation to socio-cultural theory and scaffolding
Donato & Adair-Hauck (1992)	To examine the discourse of formal grammar instruction and explanation (the future tense)	Two high school French teachers in America	Two case studies (video-tape recordings of 10 and 8 lessons and teacher interviews)	Two instructional styles were identified: A monologic explanation which gave little opportunity for pupils' participation and engagement in problem-solving processes. A responsive, collaborative dialogue, through which the teacher challenged the pupils to construct a set of assumptions to make sense of the grammatical feature
Gibbons (2003)	To investigate how teacher-pupil talk in a content-based (science) classroom contributes to learners' language development	Two 5th grade science classes of ESL under-privileged pupils, Australia	Multiple case study (18 audio recorded lessons)	Scaffolding occurred when teachers asked 'open-ended, 'genuine' questions or questions requiring element of choice or interpretation; and when they expanded on pupils' answers and reformulated their answers in a contingent way.
Jarvis & Robinson (1997)	To examine teacher response and support to pupils' learning.	Primary-level EFL classroom in Malaysia		Teacher built the interaction by extending, guiding, bridging or cluing pupils to articulate their ideas, or summarizing the point or principle which had been built by the pupil.
John (2003)	To find patterns of didactic and informal talk and their influence on the development of reading	Three primary school EAL classes (reception, year 1 and year 2) in the UK	Multiple case study – (classroom observations, interviews). Phase 1: 1 observation per week in 3	Scaffolding occurred when teachers: Used questioning style that drew pupils actively into collaborative learning discourse. Enabled pupils to initiate contributions.

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Reference	Research Questions/foci	Participants	Method(s)	Relevant findings in relation to socio-cultural theory and scaffolding
			classes throughout 2 school terms. Phase 2: 4 classroom observations (audio-recorded) for each class. Qualitative & quantitative analysis.	Asked 'open-ended', 'genuine' questions or questions requiring an element of choice or interpretation. Provided feedback that links with pupils' contributions: summarized, confirmed and extended pupils' contribution rather than pursued correct answer.
Ko, Schallert & Walters (2003)	To examine whether and how the performance of ESL learners on a storytelling task could be influenced by teacher-mediated negotiation of meaning.	21 foreign students in ESL classes (three sessions of story telling for each student) in a Research University, USA	Experimental design of pre- and post story telling, mediated by teacher-student negotiation of meaning intervention session. Qualitative analysis (Conversation Analysis) of transcribed discourse	Contingent teacher questioning and follow-ups encouraged a collaborative dialogue and extended teacher-student and student-student interaction.

Reference	Research Questions/foci	Participants	Method(s)	Relevant findings in relation to socio-cultural theory and scaffolding
Nassaji & Cumming (2000)	To provide an account of features of the ZPD in teacher-pupil interaction through dialogue journal	Classroom Journal exchanges spanned the latter half of grade 1 year and the first three quarters of grade 2 year of a SL learners and his teacher	A longitudinal case study Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the written texts of the dialogue journals using scheme of 14 language functions	Appropriation in the instructional interaction contributed to and edged the pupil forward towards a higher quality of writing. The dialogical exchange progress enabled the teacher to convert simple yes/no questions into queries for deeper information (what, who, why and how) and model (implicitly or explicitly) the spelling and syntax of phrases.
Scott (2001)	To describe interaction in guided group work during the Literacy Hour between pupils and class teachers or language support co-ordinators.	Two classrooms at Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) in two primary schools in the UK	Classes were observed, audio and video taped (four literacy hours) and analysed using narrative description and discourse analysis	Scaffolding occurred when teachers: Departed from the IRF pattern Focused on meaning rather than accuracy. Allocated more speaking turns to students. Kept error correction minimal and direct.
Sullivan* (2000)	To examine the contribution of language playfulness as mediating the interaction between teacher and students	Second year university EFL classroom, Vietnam	A case study of one class observed and videotaped during a period of a year	Use of playful verbal interaction creates a collaborative dialogue between teacher and students, and encourages students to scaffold each other.

Reference	Research Questions/foci	Participants	Method(s)	Relevant findings in relation to socio-cultural theory and scaffolding
Walsh (2002)	To examine how teachers, through their use of language, create and increase opportunities for learner involvement?	Eight experienced EFL teachers in the UK	2 case studies (8X30 minute recorded lessons)	Effective interaction was found as one which included: Using discourse that departed from the IRF sequence: • Questioning as a means of clarification and keeping up the flow of the conversation; • Allocating most speaking turns to students; • Keeping error correction minimal and direct in order to reduce interruption without disturbing the dialogue; • Allowing students extended wait time to answer a question.

Table 2.1 shows a clear tendency of sociocultural research towards qualitative research designs. Except for Ko, Schallert and Walters' (2003) experimental study, which included a pre-planned mediation session and a post test, and Aljaafreh & Lantolf (1994), who used an intervention programme, all the other studies employed a qualitative, case-study methodology. Nevertheless, both intervention studies emphasised in their data analysis qualitative, discourse and conversation analysis methods as well as an attempt to minimally manipulate real-life contexts. For instance, Ko et al. (2003) point out that despite the experimental nature of their study, the designated task was designed to be very similar to others the students had participated in as part of their regular classroom activities, and had been introduced to them as required classroom activities. This strengthens the perception, which I will present in chapter 3, that social contexts can be best investigated by allowing data to emerge naturally from the setting with minimum manipulation and intervention (e.g. Holliday, 2002).

The literature review in Table 2.1 also reveals that in relation to the analysis of the IRF classroom sequence, teachers' questioning and feedback moves have been found critical to opening up opportunities for the extension of conversation an learning. Effective deviations from the IRF sequence were found by Johns (2003), who adopted the teacher-pupil interaction analytical framework (Webster et al., 1996 – see figure 2.1 on p. 19). Although she found little evidence of teacher questioning which extends pupils' ideas (even though, as she notes, most of the pupils' answers gave scope for this), conversation analysis with detailed interpretation of particular sections of transcripts, revealed, in some interactions, that the teacher's initiation moves served to guide and scaffold pupil's understanding. In addition, the teachers' feedback moves functioned to extend their answers, as illustrated in the following excerpt.

Extract 2.1

Turn No.	Speaker	Transcription
1	T	Let's have a look at page 4.
2		Right, Jamie – would you like to tell me about the picture first of all?
3	P	Um – getting this doll and teddy.
4	T	Right – he's getting his doll and his teddy.
5	P	What's he wearing Lee?
6	P	Pyjamas...
7	Y	Where might he be going if he is wearing his pyjamas?
8	P	To bed...
9	T	And do you think – he's taking a teddy with his?
10	P	Yes.
11	T	Do you take teddies to bed?
12	P	Yes
13	P	Yes...
14	P	I don't take no teddy to my bed!
15	T	So can you guess what this sentence might say?

(John, 2003, p. 189)

John defines the above interaction as incorporating a facilitating teacher role. The teacher's feedback facilitates the pupil's interaction by recasting the pupil's utterance into standard form and extending the pupil's vocabulary without intruding on the flow of conversation. T's questions are open-ended (turns 1 and 7). The questions also orientate pupils to vocabulary of printed text (turns 2 and 5). Moreover, by relating her question to the pupil's own experience the teacher encourages other pupils to take-up the topic (turns 3, 12, 13 and 14).

Other findings from Table 2.1 are concerned with providing linguistic bridges between learners' language abilities and the demands of the task, which was found to facilitate pupils to reach beyond their current level and extend their ability (e.g. Gibbons, 2003, p. 259). Minimal and direct error correction was found effective, as opposed to lengthy meta-linguistic explanations which obstruct the flow of conversations (Walsh, 2002, Scott, 2001). In addition, a review of the various findings reveals that non-verbal scaffolding, such as extended wait-time (Walsh, 2002), and more unique findings, such as teacher's use of language playfulness (Sullivan, 2000), and teacher's response to a learner's private speech (Donato 2000), have been found to facilitate L2 language learning. The last two concepts of language playfulness and private speech derive from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory but have not gained much attention in L2 research. Language playfulness is described in

Sullivan's study (2000) as verbal play within the social context of the classroom (p. 123). Sullivan is informed by Vygotsky's theory about the influence of play in imaginary situations on the child's language development (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 92-100). According to Sullivan, playful language exchanges, which are often viewed as a distracter in the classroom, can serve as mediation between the individuals (students and teacher) and the language being learned. He demonstrates how a teacher's use of playful discourse in relation to the topic discussed can serve as a tool that results in awareness of language meaning and form (Sullivan, 2000, p. 123).

Donato (2000) reports the findings from Smith's (1996) case study. Informed by McCafferty (1994), Smith applied the Vygotskian concept of 'private speech' in L2 learning to explore direct instruction during grammar lessons in an L2 class. Vygotsky (1986) argued that inner speech, which helps the individual regain control over tasks that he or she regards difficult, may be externalized. According to Vygotsky, through private speech, which as opposed to social, communicative speech, is marked linguistically by repetitions, hesitations, and incomprehensible utterances, learners may help themselves solve mental problems that are currently beyond their reach. Through conversation analysis of teacher-student protocols, Smith (1996) illuminates the way in which a teacher, through a series of expressions that indicate positive response to a student's private speech (e.g., Yeah, OK, and Uh huh), assumes the status of listener, and thus allowing the student to express her difficulty (Donato, 2000, p. 32). In this way, the teacher constructed, together with the student, the understanding that the pupil pursued, expanding the student's ZPD.

The above overview of studies has explored a wide range of findings derived from sociocultural theory and concerned with teacher mediated L2 learning. These studies have been conducted in various contexts: primary, secondary and university. Common to all of these studies is that they attempted to study teacher-pupil interaction in sites and contexts where pupils engage in their normal L2 classroom activities. Thus, these studies "undertake to maintain the richness and complexity of 'living reality' rather than distilling it into its elementary components" (Lantolf, 2000, p. 18, citing Luria, 1979, p. 174). All of the studies reviewed in Table 2.1 deal, in some way, with the fundamental sociocultural and Vygotskian concepts of scaffolding and ZPD. In addition, these studies present empirically-based findings regarding the critical role of

teacher's questioning and feedback moves, in opening up (or closing down) opportunities for engagement in L2 learning and development.

A gap in knowledge which emerges from this overview of published empirical literature is the absence of studies which focus attention on pupils who experience severe difficulties in studying languages. Next, I narrow the focus to research studies that deal with pupils with SpLD who study L2.

2.5 Teacher-pupil interaction and SpLD

2.5.1 Defining SpLD

Nearly 15% of school children in Western countries, such as the United States and Great Britain are considered to have special educational needs (SEN) due to prolonged learning difficulties (e.g. Suresh & Sebastian, 2003; Wong, 1996). Nevertheless, there is lack of agreement upon the definition of their difficulties due to the range of factors that are known to cause and contribute to academic problems (Feiler & Gibson, 1999, Karanth, 2003). There is a diversity of definitions and labels to the phenomenon of SpLD. Terms such Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia, SpLD, Learning Disorders or ADHD are used in different countries, or sometimes alternatively in the same country, and change occasionally for the purpose of legislation, classification, additional support or political correctness (Feiler & Gibson, 1999, Kavale & Forness, 2000). Despite the range of factors which are viewed to cause or influence academic failure, putting forward a definition for the phenomenon of learning difficulties is important, as it acknowledges its existence as a veritable phenomenon (Kavale and Forness, 2000). A commonly used definition of SpLD is the 'Ability-Achievement' discrepancy definition, which was proposed by the U.S Office of Education in 1976 for practical purposes such as diagnosis and classification. According to this definition, SpLD is identified when there is a discrepancy between the level of academic functioning predicted on the basis of intelligence (IQ) test scores, and the actual level of academic functioning, as measured by standardised tests (Bender, 1999; Kavale & Forness, 2000).

In the current research, the 'Ability-Achievement' discrepancy definition has not been adopted as the sole definition for SpLD for the following reasons: Firstly, I agree with researchers who oppose the use intelligence tests as sole measures in diagnosing SpLD on the basis that IQ test scores measure potential academic ability (Stanovich, 1991; Cline, 1998; Cline & Reason, 1993). Secondly, I agree with researchers who have pointed at the limitation of the traditional "uni-dimensional models of development that focus only on within-child variables and underplay the significance of children's interaction with their social and cultural environment" (Cline & Reason, 1993, p. 30). According to Feiler & Gibson (1999, p. 150), when judging a child's difficulty with literacy, we tend to assume that what we witness is largely driven by the child's intrinsic features and we play down "context-based explanations" (such as inappropriate teaching, lack of classroom support or poor parental support). Research in the field of SpLD suggests that within child cognitive inefficiencies interact in complex ways with environmental and contextual factors, resulting in problems in everyday classroom activities, such as reading, writing, spelling, memorizing and organization (Karanth, 2003). Learners with SpLD may show an ability to learn readily in some areas of the curriculum, but have problems acquiring accuracy and fluency in others (*ibid*).

Among within-child cognitive factors which have been found to cause learning difficulties, the literature on SpLD has emphasized the phonological deficit hypothesis, suggesting that SpLD largely derive from difficulties in phonological processing and awareness (e.g. Comeau, Grandmaison, & Lacroix, 1999; Gathercole & Baddeley, 1990; Rack, 1994). Research findings have also indicated that individuals with SpLD have deficits in memory processes (e.g. Baddeley & Logie, 1999; Gathercole & Baddeley, 1993; Gathercole & Pickering, 2001; Olofsson & Niedersoe, 1999; Pickering, 2004; Pickering & Gathercole, 2004). Other findings have emphasized difficulty in rapid, automatic processing (e.g. Meyer, Wood, Hart & Felton 1998; Nicolson & Fawcett, 1995; Yap & van der Leij, 1994). Research studies which have focused on learning strategies suggest that learners with SpLD exhibit fewer meta-cognitive strategies which involve self-regulation mechanisms, such as checking, planning, monitoring and evaluating during an attempt to learn or solve problems (e.g. Swanson, 1990; Vaidya, 1999; Wong & Wong, 1986).

Non-linguistic factors that contribute to SpLD have been characterized as visual, spatial and attentional difficulties (e.g., Everatt, 1999; Pickering, 2000), as well as organization and motor problems (e.g. Carbone, 2001; Chaiker, Kyllonen & Tirre, 2000; Ostler, 1997). Other findings have focused on emotional and social inefficiencies (e.g. Margalit, 1994; Margalit & Efrati, 1996; Palti, 1998). Margalit & Efrati (1996) found that children with SpLD experienced lower sense of coherence, and higher social loneliness than children without SpLD. The concept of 'sense of coherence' will be discussed in chapter 7 in relation the current study's findings. Since learners with SpLD are perceived as being at risk of failure not only academically but also socially and emotionally, the frustration of prolonged failure on a range of curriculum subjects may result in stress (e.g., Jarvis & Justice, 1992; Swanson, 1996; Wenz-Gross & Siperstein, 1998), test anxiety (e.g., Swanson, 1996), and behaviour problems (e.g., Cline & Fredrickson, 2002). Behavioural problems are often linked to Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD). Empirical research has found high correlation between SpLD and ADHD and attention deficit disorders (ADD) in children and adolescents, indicating that attention and learning problems are interrelated and usually coexist (e.g. August & Garfinkel, 1990; Mayes, Calhoun & Crowell, 2000).

This wealth of research findings has pointed at the need for a holistic, ecological approach of assessing pupils who are at risk of academic failure (e.g., Cline & Fredrickson, 2002; Margalit & Tur Kaspa, 1998).

2.5.2 SpLD and L2 learning

Until recently, studies at the intersection of L2 learning and SpLD have focused mainly on group differences between learners with and without SpLD in various cognitive processing difficulties (e.g. Cohen, 2000; Comeau, Cormier, Grandmaison & Lacroix, 1999; Ganschow, Artzer, Siebenhar, & Plageman, 1998; Ganschow, Sparks & Javorsky, 1998; Sparks, Ganschow, Patton, Artzer et al., 1997; Sparks, Javorsky & Phillips, 2005). In the more recent studies which shifted the focus from pupils' difficulties to teaching programmes, various L2 teaching methods that are thought to enhance L2 learning were examined, frequently within experimental or semi-experimental designs. Those experiments aimed at finding relationships between

the use of certain teaching methods and learners' L2 acquisition (e.g., Cohen, 2000; Ganschow, Artzer & Patton, 1997; Schiff & Calif, 2004; Sparks, Artzer, Patton et al., 1998; Sparks, Ganschow, Artzer & Patton, 1997).

Sparks et al. (1998), for instance, examined the benefits of multi-sensory structured instruction of Spanish in 39 students at-risk of SpLD. Learners were provided with direct and explicit teaching of the phonology/orthography (spelling-sound relations), Syntax, and morphology systems of the foreign language. This interventional approach resulted in significant gains on the foreign language aptitude measure. Cohen (2000) found that a short-term EFL vocabulary learning intervention, aimed at increasing awareness of various mnemonic techniques, resulted in a significant increase in the number of words recalled by 80 high school pupils with SpLD. Best predictor of improvement in word recall was pupils' 'sense of coherence and self-perception of their learning strategies. Schiff & Calif (2004) studied an academic intervention programme for EFL Israeli university students with reading disabilities. The program focused on linguistic, cognitive, and meta-cognitive strategies for reading, along with an awareness of specific linguistic features of English particularly relevant for the reading of academic English texts. It was found that the intervention programme resulted in success in reading comprehension, and promoted in the students greater self-efficacy and motivation to read foreign-language texts.

Few research studies, however, have broadened our understanding of the types of teacher-pupil instructional interaction which facilitate learning in pupils with SpLD. My review of studies at the intersection of L2, SpLD, and socio-cultural theories reveal two published empirical studies (Kraker, 2000; Rex, 2000) which have focused on the discourse practices employed by teachers in order to create conditions of active participation of pupils with SpLD who study L2. Kraker (2000) undertook a longitudinal case study of four remedial teachers of L2 learners with SpLD. The study was framed within a sociocultural perspective, attempting to determine the types of teacher support required for pupils with SpLD to achieve academic progress. It included group discussions with teachers as well as observations over a course of a year. For the analysis of teacher-pupil classroom interaction, the research focused on one teacher, who taught five fifth grade pupils with SpLD from ethnically diverse homes in which the English language was impoverished. The teacher was videotaped

on two consecutive 50-90 minute sessions. Transcripts of each teacher and pupil turn were coded during specific phases of instruction with the purpose of defining the different types of assistance employed by the teacher during the instruction. The results indicated that:

- Teacher-pupil verbal and nonverbal scaffolding included direct corrections, task organization, expansion of ideas and monitoring of pupils' performance as well as giving an element of a choice. These, in turn, promoted pupils' question- initiation and self-corrections.
- Specific and consistent verbal and non-verbal assistance (e.g., erasing, writing for pupils or modeling the correct use of language) provided an important part of scaffolding.

Other findings suggest that as the teacher became aware of her own teaching during the instruction of decoding skills, she revised her approach to reading from an implicit, holistic literature-based approach to an explicit decoding instruction. This departure from one method to another reflected the teacher's ability to utilize dynamic classroom assessment in order to assess and match the teaching method that was most suitable for the current pupil's need (Rea-Dickins, 2001), as well as an ability to depart from a pre-planned agenda (Donato, 2000).

The second published empirical study informed by a sociocultural view of inclusion (Rex, 2000) is a classroom based case study of a learner studying in a classroom which was part of a programme called Academic Foundations for Success. This aimed to promote social integration between student groups – L2 learners, pupils with SpLD and gifted learners. The educational philosophy underpinning the programme was that in order to become identified as a rightful, capable member of a classroom learning culture, pupils considered to be lower achievers had to become equal participants and contributors to the classroom academic discourse (*ibid*, p. 319). This philosophy involved their learning to ask 'genuine questions', which meant that pupils asked about what they genuinely believed was important or useful for them to know or understand.

Specifically, this researcher examined segments of instructional discourse where the teacher created conditions for the active participation for Judy, an L2 learner with SpLD, as illustrated below:

Judy:	OK. What about the immigrants- If they find you, and, like, if you xxxx. If they find you on this side...and you're doing something illegal, or something, can they say go back? Can they put you like in a...what do they do? Can they put you in our jail? Or what do they do?
Teacher:	If you commit a crime in this country?
Judy:	And you're not a United legal prisoner here, what do they say? Go back?
Teacher:	That's a good question. That would be a good question. I think they would. (to Lydia) Do you know that answer? What would they do? They would try them for the crime in this country?

(Rex, 2000, p. 324)

In the above interaction, the teacher's feedback to Judy's proposed question aims at rephrasing and articulating Judy's meaning through a request for clarification. By repeating part of Judy's question and rephrasing it, the teacher provides Judy with an opportunity to reconstruct her question. Judy, indeed, responds to the teacher's questioning feedback by treating it as a first part of a restatement of her question, taking it up and building upon it. In the teacher's final subsequent feedback, he does not only acknowledges Judy's question but also sends a message to the class that Judy, a pupil with SpLD, knows what she wants to say ("That's a good question."). According to Rex (2000): "This acknowledgement sent a message that a question can be valuable, even though it is haltingly articulated" (p. 325). The researcher concludes by providing some evidence from Judy's interview and test results at the end of the school year, which indicate her sense of improvement, as well as her successful academic achievement. These findings suggest the effectiveness of a teacher's scaffolding which enables pupils with SpLD to become "socially recognized and acknowledged while exercising their voices in purposeful and strategic ways related to literacy building" (*ibid*, p. 320).

Another two studies which focus on scaffolding and effective instruction of pupils with SpLD learning EFL are unpublished studies, which have utilized empirical methods of data collection and analysis. The first was conducted as part of a doctoral seminar assignment on 'Evaluation of Innovations and Programmes' (Cohen, 2003b). In this study I evaluated a programme that I had taught in Israel to a class of ten

Israeli twelfth-graders with SpLD, whom I was preparing for the 'three point' Matriculation Examination in EFL, which is the minimum college entrance threshold requirement in EFL. Data collection included: an audio recording of one lesson; notes taken by the class teacher (the author) in retrospect, and at the end of the school-year; and audio recordings of interviews with six pupils, three parents and the EFL coordinator. The main research question was: Which aspects of the programme promoted EFL learning? Analysis of classroom and interview data revealed a number of factors related to scaffolding and effective teaching. Firstly, individual instruction within the group was found to support pupils' specific needs. One of the pupils, for instance, said in her interview:

"You would come and help and sit with each one. You strengthened what was weak in me, worked with everyone alone and it strengthens what is needed".

Secondly, classroom data revealed that I encouraged weak pupils to participate and contribute. This is demonstrated in the following extract from classroom data:

Teacher:	Dorit, do you have any idea of what you are going to do on Hanuka holiday?
Dorit:	No.
Teacher:	Is there anything that you would like to do? Maybe one of these things that we mentioned before?
Dorit:	I don't know (translated from Hebrew)
Teacher:	Say: "Maybe I will", and use one of these. (pointing at titled pictures)
Dorit:	Maybe I will... relax on the beach.
Teacher:	Great. Excellent. An excellent sentence.

(Cohen 2003b)

In the above interaction, we observe that Dorit is reluctant to speak English. By providing her with language scaffolding - referring her to the task that she had previously completed, and then providing her with a 'starter' - Dorit was able to reach beyond her current performance and produce a complete sentence. Even though the teacher's last comment is evaluative ("great, excellent. An excellent sentence."), it is aimed at encouraging, rather than judging the pupil for her response. It is worth mentioning that this was the first time that Dorit had uttered a sentence in English. After that lesson she gradually became one of the most industrious and contributing participants. In line with second language acquisition research that takes a Vygotskian perspective claiming that a teacher should establish scaffolding strategies to facilitate

and enhance the learner's performance, the transcript illustrates the pupil's ability to benefit from language support and modification devices.

The second unpublished self-evaluation case study is Zohar (2006)[4], who examined her own classroom interaction with an eighth grade Israeli pupil with SpLD and ADHD during private EFL tuition. Embedding in her lesson plan and instructional interaction components of classroom scaffolding (e.g. Webster et al., 1996), Zohar attempted to construct a learning-driven instructional context, thus departing from:

"...my usual teacher-driven and resource driven lessons with Nitzan [pseudonym] ...This called for more flexibility regarding the structure of the lesson and the time frame. Nitzan would be considered an active partner in our discussion and learning, an "expert" in the field of Capoeira ..."

In her case-study project, Zohar goes on to describe and interpret the actual interaction between herself and Nitzan, basing her analysis on notes that were taken by her daughter surreptitiously while observing the lesson:

"...Giving personal information, I'm trying to help Nitzan make a personal connection to the text. I'm sure he can identify with the idea of Capoeira[5] changing your life ... Nitzan was obviously enjoying these demonstrations and the opportunity to move around, and felt very confident. Actually, I learned something about Capoeira as well! ..."

In her concluding comments, Zohar writes:

"My main concern was that the lesson would get out of hand, with Nitzan cavorting around ...and that the situation would look more like a conversation about Capoeira than an English lesson. In actual fact, Nitzan was able to transition smoothly from his demonstrations back to the task and seemed focused throughout. I did not see any evidence of concentration difficulties, which usually are expressed through yawning, requests for water, bathroom trips, checking the clock, etc....In our subsequent lessons, I have incorporated much more English. In fact, Nitzan and I have started to

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[4] This case study was conducted as part of a professional remedial instruction course to in-service teachers. However, the writer utilized in her case-study empirical data collection and analysis methods, such as classroom observation and discourse analysis.

[5] Copoeira is a Brazilian dancing and martial art initially developed by African slaves in Brazil. Participants form a circle and take turns in playing instruments, singing and in fluid acrobatic play. It is very popular amongst children and adolescents in Israel.

have actual conversations in English (mostly about Capoeira) and have been started to write back and forth using email. For example, I wrote him a letter asking for some Capoera sites I could look at."

(Zoher, 2006)

By applying concepts derived from socio-constructivist theories to her instructional classroom interaction and to the analysis of it, Zohar provided herself, as a teacher, with a convenient way of analysing her interaction with her pupil and also became more aware of the advantages of collaborative, learning-driven instruction.

In summary, the above four studies share the following characteristics:

1. They provide accounts of classroom interaction originated from classroom-based case studies and focus attention on the intersection of teacher-pupil interaction, SpLD and L2 learning.
2. They examine teacher-pupil classroom interaction in relation to sociocultural theories of learning, which claim that adult-child mediation, form and transform development.
3. They suggest that factors which account for effective instructional interaction with pupils with SpLD align with sociocultural concepts, such as 'scaffolding' and 'contingency' (e.g. Wood Bruner & Ross, 1976, Wood & Wood, 1996), and collaborative learning (e.g. Swain, 2000).

The unpublished case-studies which focus on EFL classroom interaction have the limitations of: a) very small data samples, and (b) the fact that the teachers were also the researchers, which raises questions of validity and reliability (Kiely, 1998). It is, therefore, my aim in this doctoral research to explore and illuminate, on a larger scale, the types of interaction and scaffolding that specialist teachers use when teaching pupils with SpLD who study EFL.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter I have presented 16 empirical research studies which have used socio-cultural, Vygotskian conceptual frameworks to explore effective L2 instructional interaction. The studies have used a variety of qualitative data collection and analysis methods; two of them utilized some experimental designs which incorporated qualitative analytical methods. Only two published studies have been found to focus on teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD for whom English is L2. The two unpublished case-studies which have focused specifically on EFL classroom interaction examined a very small data set of teachers' self-evaluations of their own classroom interaction. It is, therefore, my aim in the current dissertation to undertake a longitudinal multiple-case study in an attempt to provide more breadth and depth of finding to this unexplored educational phenomenon of teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD learning EFL. In the next chapter I set out the methodology that I used to design and implement my research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

'The construction of any work always bears the mark of the person who created it.'
(Riessman, 1993, p. v)

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present the methodology underlying the empirical basis of this dissertation. First, I situate the study in its research paradigm, presenting my ontological perspective as a researcher and the principles guiding the overall design of this study. I then focus on the rationale behind the decisions involved in planning and conducting the data collection and analysis. Throughout the chapter, I discuss the advantages, as well as the limitations, of the research approach and design I have chosen.

While I will try to describe my methodology in a linear fashion, the reality of the process I went through in executing the study was not a tight step-by-step process. According to Holliday (2002), in qualitative research, decisions about research questions and instruments "are made in gradual response to the nature of the social setting being investigated as its nature is revealed" (p. 8).

3.2 Ontological position

All research, whether qualitative or quantitative, inevitably stems from the human experience of the person who creates it (Clough, 2002; Riessman, 1993). Research into the philosophical underpinnings of research and the ontological assumptions that underlie different research traditions suggests that like every human activity, different research paradigms result from different human philosophies (e.g., Bassey, 1996; Usher, 1996). People interested in comparing or setting standards of behaviour for broad populations, and in expressing understanding in the form of numerical data suitable for statistic calculations are likely to choose the positivist, quantitative research paradigm (*ibid*). As a person carrying out educational research, I cannot ignore that I am strongly disinclined to counting numbers or measuring group

differences. I am much more interested in 'how?' and 'why?' questions, in order to understand people's behaviour, their perceptions, feelings and ideas. This philosophy is aligned with what has been called the qualitative/interpretative research, alternatively known as naturalistic, ethnographic, or interpretative (e.g. Davis, 1995; Holliday, 2002; Mason, 2002a,b).

3.2.1 A qualitative, interpretative approach

The form of qualitative, interpretative approach to classroom interaction that is of current interest has its origin in the philosophy, theory, and methods of anthropology and subsequently has been adopted by linguistic anthropologists and ethnographers in exploring issues associated with classroom interaction (e.g., Davis, 1995; Maybin, 2003; Rampton, 1995; Street, 2004). Maybin (2003) observes that linguistic ethnography has a potential contribution to Vygotskian studies of talk and learning in education because its methodology is grounded in detailed analyses of communicative practices in specific contexts. This approach provides emic perspectives, which can help the researcher understand classroom interaction, with its patterns of particular kinds of interaction between a specific teacher and specific pupils. My decision to take this qualitative approach to investigating effective teacher-pupil classroom interactions stems from the premise that principles of good (or less good) interaction, which are taken for granted or seen but unnoticed, can be made explicit and visible by close examination, description and interpretation of them in the contexts where they occur (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 5). The importance of observing and describing everyday, natural classroom communication is outlined by Brumfit & Mitchell (1990):

"Descriptive research will aim at providing as accurate an account as possible of what current practice is: ... what classrooms ... look like, at a particular moment in a particular place ... The argument for concentration on description is that expectations of teachers, recommendations of teacher educators and theorists, and the demands of administrators, are often rightly concerned with what ought to be. However, there is little point in constantly pushing for an ideal without any understanding of what in fact happens."

(pp. 11-12).

Since mere description cannot reveal the actual causal relations between learning and potential mental development (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 62), an interpretative approach,

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which seeks to understand and explain the different aspects of the data in relation to the research questions, is thought to be appropriate for researching the dynamic phenomena of teacher-pupil interaction, and its potential influence on pupils' language development. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), data that emerge from qualitative research methods can be "a source of well grounded, rich descriptions' as well as 'explanations of processes occurring in local contexts" (p. 15).

One limitation of the interpretive approach is that since descriptions and interpretations of single cases involve selective viewing and representations, they cannot be neutral or objective (Mason, 2002a). Therefore, taking a qualitative, interpretative approach to research involves the 'risk' of being 'accused' of subjectivity. At a seminar at the University of Bristol, David Block (2004) referred to 'naïve positivism' which leads to questions like "How can I avoid being subjective?" He replied humorously: "I would say – die". I believe that if subjectivity means being influenced by personal feelings and opinions, one must recognize that even the most controlled statistical research is conducted by people who are guided by their personal human perspectives (Clough, 2002). Moreover, as Carr (1995) suggests, moral beliefs and educational values are so vital and integrated in educational research that their elimination is impossible, unless an educational researcher is content with being a laboratory technician. Holliday (2002, p. 7) notes that one reason for the growth of qualitative research in educational research, as well as in a wide range of other academic and professional areas, is the realization that studies using prescribed quantitative, statistical methods that are apparently scientific can tell many quite different stories and are often opportunistic.

A major challenge for interpretive researchers, however, centres on the question of how they can verify that their representations of events or settings are not misinterpretations of the data (Mason, 2002a, p. 76). To maintain scientific rigour, interpretive researchers must base their interpretations on the data and only then draw conclusions, rather than impose interpretations inappropriately or without justification. Holliday (2002) argues that the way to manage the subjectivity inherent within the qualitative research paradigm is twofold: first, through the development of methodological strategies to suit the settings being studied, and secondly, by explaining the workings of the research throughout the whole written study.

Therefore, by taking the readers through my decision-making processes regarding research approach, settings, participants, procedures and methods, I hope to provide the readers with a clear understanding of why and how I have reached my conclusions, to be open to "scrutiny and critical examination" (Phillips, 1993, p. 66), and thereby achieve an appropriate degree of rigour, objectivity and validity.

3.2.2 A multiple case study strategy

A case study is defined as a detailed examination of a particular, complex phenomenon (such as setting, person, event or document) within specific circumstances, aiming to understand the complexity and particularity of the phenomenon (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Stake, 1995). I chose a case study strategy to answer my research questions because the case study has been widely recognized as the most effective means of researching a phenomenon in its natural setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Holliday, 2002; Marshal & Rossman, 1995; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). It is clear that the main aim of the case study approach is not to achieve external validity, fundamental to generalization to some larger population (Schofield, 1993, p. 92).

Nevertheless, as Stake (1995) claims, the case study approach to research distinguishes between 'intrinsic' and 'instrumental' case studies. In intrinsic case studies the interest stems from a need to learn about a particular case. Instrumental case studies, however, aim to gain insight about some general problem. These two aims are not mutually exclusive, and can be complementary. However, Stake suggests that when researchers are interested in some general problem, they may feel they should choose several cases rather than one (Stake, 1995, p. 3). Findings derived from a range of cases are considered to have more potential for generalization than a single case study (e.g. Miles and Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995). For this reason, in the current study, which is interested in the general problem of EFL instruction to pupils with SpLD, I depart from the traditional single case study that extends over a very long period of time, and use a multiple case study approach. It was thought that five teachers working in both school and private instruction would be demonstrative of the kinds of EFL teaching provided to pupils with SpLD in Israel, and would still enable deep and detailed observation of each site (Schofield, 1993).

Whilst recognizing that case study research is not sampling research and that a number of cases are still not a strong representation of other cases (Stake, 1995, p. 4), my standpoint in relation to generalizing findings is in line with Mason (2002a, p. 8): I believe that qualitative research *does* have a capacity "to facilitate cross-contextual generalities", and therefore *should* seek to go beyond "explanations which are idiosyncratic or particular only to the limited empirical parameters of their study", and "produce explanations and arguments which are *generalizable* in some way, or have some demonstrable wider resonance".

Acknowledging the limitations of the case study and recognizing my own voice as significant in my research narrative, in the next sections (3.3 and 3.4) I will show the principles which guided me in my research design and how I managed some of the limitations of the qualitative, interpretative case study approach.

3.3 Principles guiding the overall research design

The choice of participants, methods and procedures within the qualitative paradigm was influenced by my personal inclination, as well as by certain circumstances related to the particular research context and researcher-participant relationships. Before I discuss the overall research design and the factors which influenced it, this study's data sources, collection methods, and its timetable are presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Data sources, timetable and methods

Approaching participants + pilot study	**Dec 2003-Feb 2004**
Gaining access	Feb 2004
Participants: Teachers working with 9th-12th grade pupils with SpLD, recommended as good practitioners: 3 teachers at a regional comprehensive high school located in a Kibbutz 2 teachers working privately with secondary school students	
Data collection 1 School teachers: 27 observed lessons (45 minutes each); audio and video recordings; Private teachers: ~8 hours of audio recordings; Pupils: ~3 hours of interview	Feb – May 2004
Data analysis in the field Method: Noting themes and patterns, transcribing excerpts from data; preparing pupil and teacher interviews	May 2004
Data collection 2: Teacher Interview School + private teachers: ~ 6 hours of interview	June 2004

As Table 3.1 shows, the participants were five Israeli EFL teachers who were teaching pupils with SpLD, selected with a view to good practice. The data sources consisted of approximately thirty five recorded hours of classroom interaction and approximately nine hours of recorded interviews. The data collection consisted of two stages: analysis in the field and the final, thorough data analysis. Analysis in the field (see 3.8.2) allowed me to plan my acts regarding data collection (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002, p. 26), and the teacher interviews, in accordance with data that emerged from the classroom interactions (see 3.3.2).

3.3.1 Research questions and sampling

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), in qualitative research, the links between research questions and sampling do not always progress in a linear fashion. I began my research by asking a too narrow question ("Which interactions promote vocabulary learning?"). I contacted approximately ten teachers, all specialising in remedial instruction of EFL and recommended as good practitioners, presenting to them my research question and asking them to participate in my study. The result was that none of them agreed. Consequently, I started by observing the lessons of a colleague at the high school where I worked. We recruited two eleventh grade pupils with SpLD, especially for the purpose of my study. Very soon, however, I discovered that rather than teaching naturally, she was trying to appease my research question by devising vocabulary activities. I realized that rather than observing natural classroom interaction, I was observing an artificial context and decided to use her case as a pilot case. I therefore reformulated my research question to:

RQ1: In what ways do teachers, through their choice of verbal mediation, create and increase opportunities for pupils' potential engagement in EFL learning and development?

I contacted another five EFL teachers who were remedial instruction specialists and/or experienced in teaching high school pupils with SpLD. I selected teachers who had been recommended or known as good practitioners, as it was thought that more valuable data would result from observing good practice. This time they all agreed to participate. What helped in gaining the agreement of the five participants was having a previous personal connection with them or with their school management, which I had not had with the ten teachers I initially contacted. As will be shown later, the influence of previous contacts on data collection and analysis was that most of the participates wished to cooperate with me and contribute to the research not only during the data collection phase, but also a few months later, when I sent them extracts of data from their own classroom interaction and asked for their comments. Even though the sample was an 'opportuniny sample', the choice of both school and private teachers was representative in the sense that in my setting, private tutors contribute to the support of learners with SpLD. In addition, the fact that the teachers

came from different backgrounds (e.g. three of them were native speakers of English and two were native speakers of Hebrew; one of them was a special education teacher) made this sample demonstrative of the types of teachers teaching EFL to learners with SpLd. In addition, as will be shown in the next chapters, although most of the data in this study comes from school teachers, the private tutores provided contrasting examples of a number of instructional and interactional strategies in relation to the use of L1 and L2, and the teaching of conversation and wrting (see chpter 6).

As I have explained in 1.4, once I had begun to observe the teachers and analyse the data, I formulated two further questions: directly related to the first research question: *Do existing socio-constructivist frameworks allow an account to emerge of effective teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD learning EFL, and if so, how?* (RQ2), and *Are there specific types of interaction that appear effective in addressing the challenges posed by EFL learners with SpLD, and if so, what are they?*(RQ3). These two grounded questions emerged from the analysis in the field and final analysis processes.

3.3.2 Data collection methods

The sociocultural conceptual framework of this study and its qualitative, ethnographic methodological paradigm (see 3.2) guided my choice of the specific data collection techniques and forms (Davis 1995, p. 443). An essential procedure in ensuring rich description, as well as research credibility in qualitative research is to triangulate data collection methods by utilising multiple sources and techniques (Davis, 1995, 446). The data collection methods I used are explained below.

3.3.3 Classroom observation

Classroom observation is an established method for data collection in case study research (e.g., Miles and Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003), which I used with the three high school classes. This method was chosen because it provides an emic perspective, grounded in detailed recording of data, which enables detailed analyses of the particular interactions between the teacher and the pupils (Maybin, 2003).

Observations were undertaken by arriving to the classroom with the teacher, sitting at the back of the classroom taking field notes, audio or video recording. I used these three data collection techniques for two main reasons: firstly, as Wray, Trott & Bloomer (1998, p. 154) note, audio and video recording is a support to observations, as it saves the researcher from having to make frantic notes and risk missing important information. In addition, audio and video recording provides detailed data in relation to verbal and non-verbal interaction (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). The classroom observations and recordings were unstructured (i.e. I did not use a check list) in order not to impose my theoretical frameworks on the data but rather allow the data to emerge as naturally and flexibly as possible from classroom interaction (see Appendix 2 on p. 173 for an example of field notes I took).

During the first few weeks of data collection in the Kibbutz high school I felt very tense. I tried not to distract anyone's attention, nor talk to anyone other than my participant teachers. As I began to feel more 'at home' in the school, I realized that it was impossible and useless to pretend to be invisible. I did my best not to stand out or to disturb in any way. However, when a pupil asked me a question, I answered, and when I had an opportunity to collect valuable data, I used it. My decision not to pretend I was invisible helped me become less tense and more attentive to things around me. At the same time, I think that my on-going presence in the high school classrooms helped offset some possible problems. I began collecting the classroom data by taking notes for a couple of lessons. This was followed by the audiotape as well for another few lessons, and only then did I begin videotaping. The reason for introducing my research instruments gradually was that I wanted both teachers and students to get used to my presence in their classroom, and I felt that the videotape was the most intrusive instrument. An important means of reducing observer effect and the possibility of teachers putting on a display was the longitudinal nature of the research, as opposed to a 'one-shot' observation (Rea-Dickins, 2005) as I attended ten of the first and second teachers' classes and eight of the third teacher's classes. I audio

or video recorded whole lessons. Occassionally, however, I turned off the video, when I felt that some pupils were distructed by it. My focus was the teacher rather than the pupils, and decisions such as where to place the audio tape or hat t focus on when video-recording followed from this. I recorded pupil-pupil interaction only when it followed the teacher's instructional interaction. The fact that I had informed the pupils that my aim was to examine their teacher rather than themselves may have contributed to reducing my observer's effect on them. In the case of the private teachers, both them and I thought that my presence in the classroom would be too intrusive. Therefore, the private teachers recorded for me successive classes which I had not observed. Within case decisions are explained in more detail in 3.3.5.

3.3.4 Qualitative interviewing

Qualitative interviewing techniques aimed at allowing interaction between me, as an interviewer and the informants (teachers or pupils) and encouraging them to express opinions, ideas and feelings *they* considered important to effective teacher-pupil interaction (Mason, 2002a; Patton, 1980). The interview topics and issues were specified in advance, in an outline form, but the sequence of some questions was changed in the course of the interview, some questions were omitted and others emerged spontaneously from the immediate context (Patton, 1980, p. 206). The type of questions I used was mostly open questions (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002; Holliday, 2002; Patton, 1980). I attempted to undertake the position of a 'non-knower', asking genuine questions, such as: "Is there a way to speak more English during English classes in these groups?" or: "What in English lessons helps you promote your English?" Examples for my interview questions and the informants' responses are embedded in the findings sections (chapters 4, 5 and 6). Examples of interview guides for pupils and for teachers are provided respectively as Appendices 3 (p. 174) and 4 (175) . The pupil interviews were carried out during the last classes I observed, with two pupils of each of the school teachers, and took approximately half an hour each. The teacher interviews were conducted after I had completed the observation phase, in the teacher's house or in a quiet classroom. In addition, I occasionally asked the teachers for permission to turn on the tape recorder when, in the course of an informal conversation, they began talking about issues related to their interaction with their pupils.

Since interviewing followed the classroom observation phase, I was able to formulate my questions in accordance with data that emerged from the field (e.g. "Dorit has told me that you had done a project with a class on designing an advertisement. How did you do it?"). I also transcribed and typed selected data and used them as prompts to stimulate the interviewees' thinking and elicit their ideas and opinions in relation to effective classroom interaction. Appendices 3 and 4 (pp. 174-175) also provide examples of excerpts from classroom interaction which I showed the teachers and pupils, asking them whether or not they thought that interaction had a potential to promote EFL learning and why. In the teachers' interviews, I also played some tape or video recorded data and asked the teachers to comment on any aspect they found relevant to their teaching. This interviewing technique is adopted from the methodological strategy known as 'stimulated recall' (e.g. Gass & Mackey, 2000), aimed at recapturing thinking processes immediately after the interaction had taken place. In the current study, however, I showed or played the teachers extracts from their classroom interaction long after it had taken place, so this technique was used mainly as a prompt, to elicit their thoughts and ideas.

Underpinning my choice of interactive interviewing, as opposed to a structured questionnaire, was the assumption that in order to explore socio-cultural issues, talk must be interactive, contextual and interactional, and questions should seek for specifics rather than generalities, and may have a biographical orientation (Mason, 2002a,b). One limit to the interactive approach is articulated by Block (2000), who observes that interview data are seen not as reflections of memory but as voices adopted by research participants in response to the researcher's prompts and questions.

3.3.5 Within-case decisions

The methodological literature (e.g. Miles and Huberman, 1994) refers to within-case decisions regarding particular activities and times that are selected for observation and which have influence on the 'internal validity' of the findings. I discuss three key within-case decisions that I took below:

1. Classes and locations: In cases where teachers had more than one class/pupil suitable for the purposes of my study, I asked them to choose the contexts which they perceived as reflecting effective instructional interaction. Lessons were held in the classroom, and in the cases of private tuition, in the pupil's or teacher's houses. One of the school teachers also used the English centre and the computer room.

2. Time: This followed from the class decision, as the teacher's timetables were fixed. At the Kibbutz high school, I observed one or two lessons of each teacher every week. The two private teachers recorded successive classes for me, as specified in Table 3.2 below. They provide comprehensive rather than selective recordings.

3.4 Ethical considerations

In this study, I attempted to maintain 'ethical mindfulness' (Bond, 2000; Webster & Bond, 2002) by following published guidelines on ethics in education, as well as my internal moral guidelines in relation to good intent, honesty, and respect for others. This study was undertaken in line with the British Research Association (BERA) revised ethical guidelines (2004), and the British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL) recommendations on good practice (1994)[6]. Underpinning my ethical philosophy is the opinion that researchers "should respect the rights, interests, sensitivities, and privacy of their informants" (BAAL, 1994: section 6.1).Therefore, pseudonyms were used for participants, as well as other means aimed at participanting participants' anonymity and rights, as specified below.

In December 2004, two months before the outset of the study, a letter for consent was drafted and sent to the Israeli Ministry of Education. Without this letter I could not have gained access to state schools. Following a process of telephone conversations and revisions of the original letter, which extended over a period of approximately

[6] These guidelines are provided at: www.bris.ac.uk/education/research/network/ethicnet.

two months, the final draft of my consent form for pupils was confirmed by the Ministry of Education (see Appendix 5, p. 176). The letter described the study's aim, process and data collection methods. It recognized the right of any participant to withdraw from the research at any time[7], and emphasized the confidential and anonymous treatment of participants' data (BERA, 2004: section 23). Once the letter was approved, the Ministry of Education sent another letter to the county inspector and high school principal, stating that I was allowed to conduct my research.

According to the BAAL recommendations (1994, section 6.2) "when children under sixteen are acting as main informants, it is also necessary to obtain the consent of parents or other adults acting *in loco parentis*". Although all of the participants were over sixteen, I requested both pupil and parent written consent from the private pupils, because of the direct accountability of the private teachers to the parents. In addition, I got written consent from parents of six of the high school pupils to interview their children during one of the lessons.

While ethical issues regarding pupils were thoroughly considered, it was equally important for me to consider ethical issues regarding the teachers who generously (and bravely) agreed to participate. My main ethical dilemmas arose at the stage of data analysis as some data could present some teaching unfavourably. In cases where I wanted the informants' opinions as to whether my interpretations agreed with theirs, I involved them in the process of data analysis only regarding their own cases. I also consulted them when I thought they might not want me to present certain data (see Appendix 6 p. 177 for an example of email correspondence). My research participants were viewed not merely as tools through which I could accomplish a purpose: they were people who generously opened their doors and hearts for me, and sources of inspiration and growth.

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[7] Fortunately, there was only one case in which a pupil expressed uneasiness and requested that I stop videotaping. I immediately turned off the videotape and, at the end of the lesson, approached him, telling him that thence forth I would not direct my video at his direction. He responded to announcement by saying: "I was just joking, you can videotape me".

3.5 Conduct of Analysis

3.5.1 An overview of analytical practices and tactics

In this study I used a number of analytical practices and tactics (Miles & Huberman, 1994), as shown in Table 3.2. The division into main practices, and generative and confirmatory tactics is adapted from Yin (2005). Table 3.2 is followed by explanations of the strategies employed in analysing the data.

Table 3.2: Overview of data analysis

Data sources for analysis	
Teacher 1: field notes of 4 class observations; audio recording & field notes of 3 classes; video recordings of 3 classes; an interview[8]; notes/recordings taken during informal conversations Teacher 2: field notes of 1 class observation; audio recordings & field notes of 5 classes; video recordings of 3 classes; an interview; notes/recordings taken during informal conversations Teacher 3: field notes of 2 class observations; video recording of 6 classes; an interview Teacher 4: audio recordings of 3 classes; an interview Teacher 5: audio recordings of 5 classes[9]; an interview 6 Pupils: interviews (~30 minutes each)	
Main analytical practices	
analysing data in the field making summative comments transcribing data arranging and selecting data for analysis triangulating analytical methods and frameworks categorical analysis with MAXqda	
Tactics for generating findings	**Tactics for confirming findings**
noting patterns and themes subsuming particulars into the general clustering data making contrasts and comparisons using my own professional experience	checking for representativeness triangulation of sources, methods and analysts/interpreters revisiting interpretations after a 'cooling' period

[8] Teacher interviews lasted between 1-2 hours.

[9] Data from Case 5 consist of 4 recorded lessons. However, since the teacher sent me more recordings during the course of the school year after I had completed my data collection, I analysed another recording which evidenced the pupil's progress.

Below I explain the main practices I used in order to analyse the data and the tactics I used to generate and confirm findings.

3.5.2 Data analysis in the field

According to Punch (1998, p. 200), a major difficulty in the analysis of qualitative data is that methods of analysis are not as well known and transparent as methods of quantitative data. Therefore, qualitative data analysis methods need to be systematic, rigorous and describable. One way to achieve careful examination of the data is by beginning the data analysis process whilst in the field, during data collection, and prior to the thorough final data analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Analysis during data collection allowed me to base further steps in data collection, such as focus of observation or interviews with informants, on actual data which emerged from the fieldwork. Thus, while collecting the data, I began to note themes and patterns which emerged from them and, as a result, was able to focus on important behaviours while making field notes, or to focus the camera on significant elements. For example, noting that one of the teachers was using visual organizers on the whiteboard, I often focused the camera on them. In addition, as I have noted in 3.3.4 above, interviews with teachers and pupils were planned in accordance with data which had emerged from the observations. In this way I was able to use prompts from transcribed recordings or field-notes and to ground the interviews in meaningful contexts.

3.5.3 Summative comments

Analysis in the field also took the form of summative comments that I made while or after taking classroom observation notes, or immediately after having an informal conversation with one of the teachers. Most of these summative comments were written in my observation pad, mingled with my observation notes. Being summative in nature, they helped me focus attention on themes that emerged from the data. For example, on 11.2.04, I wrote "Irene does not refer to off-task comments", or: "Irene speaks very softly, sometimes lowering her voice to a whisper". This helped me remember ideas and impressions, some which were later generated into patterns and themes. Other summative comments took the form of brief descriptive summaries written soon after reading through my observation notes or after a conversation with

one of the teachers. These notes were written on a separate page in my observation pad, following the lesson they referred to. In this respect the latter functioned to subsume particulars into generals. An example of two such notes is given in Appendix 7 on p. 178.

3.5.4 Transcribing and translating data

Before transcribing I selected the data I considered relevant and of interest to my research questions. In this sense, transcription functioned as an initial part of the analysis. I used transcription and translation conventions which had been planned but were further developed and refined while transcribing the data. Initially, the selected data were transcribed verbatim. The transcription conventions were based on those recommended by Wray, Trott, and Bloomer (1998), but were adapted in accordance with the requirements of my data and my needs as an analyst, in order to allow comprehensiveness and readability and, at the same time, make the transcribing process practical and efficient. Full transcription conventions are specified in Appendix 8 on p. 179.

The transcription process involved taking a number of decisions:

1) *Transcription of relevant classroom interactions*. Since my research goal was to explore effective teacher-pupil interaction which opens up opportunities for potential EFL learning, I first transcribed all the data that I considered relevant to my research questions. My categorization of 'relevant' data, was in line with van Lier's (1988, p. 97) definition. van Lier suggests that in language learning, what is mostly important are, on the one hand, teacher's contributions that provide the fuel for learning, that illustrate linguistic skill, or that repair linguistic problems, and on the other hand, actual instances of pupils' actions that are oriented towards the goal of learning (i.e. ones that demonstrate participation, personal involvement and taking of initiative. My assumption that participation is related to opportunities for learning is based on the view that language grows through participation over time (e.g. Donato, 2000; Swain, 2000). Therefore, whenever the data reflected the above definition, I transcribed them. Data which were considered irrelevant to my research questions or which were redundant or inaudible, were cut out and transcribed as such by using three dots (...).

An example of data considered irrelevant is teacher's talk about administrative issues that are not connected to her subject matter, or pupil-pupil off-task interaction.

2) *Little punctuation.* Swann (1994) points out that punctuating a transcript gives the speech a particular interpretation, and therefore recommends using as little punctuation as possible to avoid putting a premature interpretation on the data.

3) *Transliteration.* The classroom and interview data in the present study is a mixture of English and Hebrew. Although my computer keyboard contains both Hebrew and English letters, my decision was to transcribe Hebrew words in English letters, because Hebrew is written from right to left and after a few hours of transcription I found that the shift in directions made the process technically complicated for me. I therefore devised a convention for Hebrew transliteration in English letters (see Appendix 9 on p. 180 for an example). However, as I progressed with the analysis of the cases, and was better able to select episodes which were most appropriate for my analysis, I became efficient and translated the data while transcribing it, without going through the tedious transliteration procedure.

4) *Translation.* Utterances that were originally in Hebrew and were translated by me into English and were put between brackets, [ ], to differentiate them from ones that were originally spoken in English. I initially considered 'back translation' to be a good method to ensure linguistic equivalence: having a native speaker of L2 who knows L1 well translate samples of the data back to L1, checking if equivalence of lexical and idiomatic meaning is produced, which would mean that the translation is accurate. Nevertheless, taking into consideration that Hebrew is my L1 and that my English is very good, such a process was thought to be unnecessarily time consuming. Therefore, I translated the data myself, and asked for assistance from a colleague whose English is an L1 where data included Hebrew idioms or slang to which I did not know the exact English equivalent.

3.5.5 Arranging and selecting data for analysis

The transcribed data were arranged chronologically, so as not to lose track of its position in case I needed to revisit the raw data. The data divided into broad units of *lessons* and included descriptions of the relevant contexts for each lesson, such as dates, lesson topics and setting, and episode numbers. I thought that arranging the data of each case in the order in which they happened would help me be organised and systematic, reduce the likelihood of overlooking valuable data, and enable me to be sensitive to the dynamics and contextualised nature of the interaction.

Within each lesson, certain *episodes* were selected for analysis according to their relevance to the research questions, and their capacity to provide valuable information in relation to my research questions. Nassaji & Wells (2000) and Scott (2001) chose in their research studies the episode as the largest unit through which to segment the stream of L2 classroom speech into units for analysis. For the purpose of this study, I adopt the definition of the *episode* as:

> *"made up of Sequences that, individually and cumulatively, contribute to the achievement of the activity or task goal. Each sequence consists of an ... exchange ... each exchange consists of obligatory Initiating and Responding moves and may also contain a Follow up move."*
>
> (Nassaji and Wells, 2000, p. 383)

When analysing lesons and episodes, I used three main analytical frameworks which helped me identify types of interaction which open up learning opportunities. These frameworks are explained below in 3.5.6.

3.5.6 Triangulating analytical frameworks and methods

I have used a number of analytical frameworks that helped me *describe*, *analyse* and *interpret* the data (Wolcott, 1994, p. 12). These are: *the teacher-pupil quadrant model* (adapted from Webster et al, 1996; Webster and Roe, 1998), and *the five components of classroom scaffolding* (Webster et al., 1996). These descriptive frameworks (which are described in detail in 2.3.2-2.3.3, pp. 16-21) have been applied to my data in order to discover whether meaningful findings in relation to the effectiveness of teacher-

pupil interaction are produced through these frameworks. In addition, through *narrative description* (Nunan, 1990), I describe episodes, events, actions, processes, situations and characteristics of people or of environments which are considered valuable to understanding the classroom interaction and how it opens up learning opportunities. Presenting the analysis in the form of narrative description contextualises the data and keeps the analyst from falsely analysing segments out of their context (Scott, 2001). Riessman (2005) suggests that narrative descriptions enable the researcher to think more creatively about the presentation and interpretation of their data because the narrative function is to establish an audience, to bring in the listener and to persuade.

I have also employed analysis of classroom exchanges which deviate from the canonical *IRF exchange* (Nassaji & Wells, 2000; Seedhouse, 2004), as well as *categorical and thematic analysis* of certain segments of data, such as utterances and patterns of behaviour (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; McDonough & McDonough, 1997; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 1993).

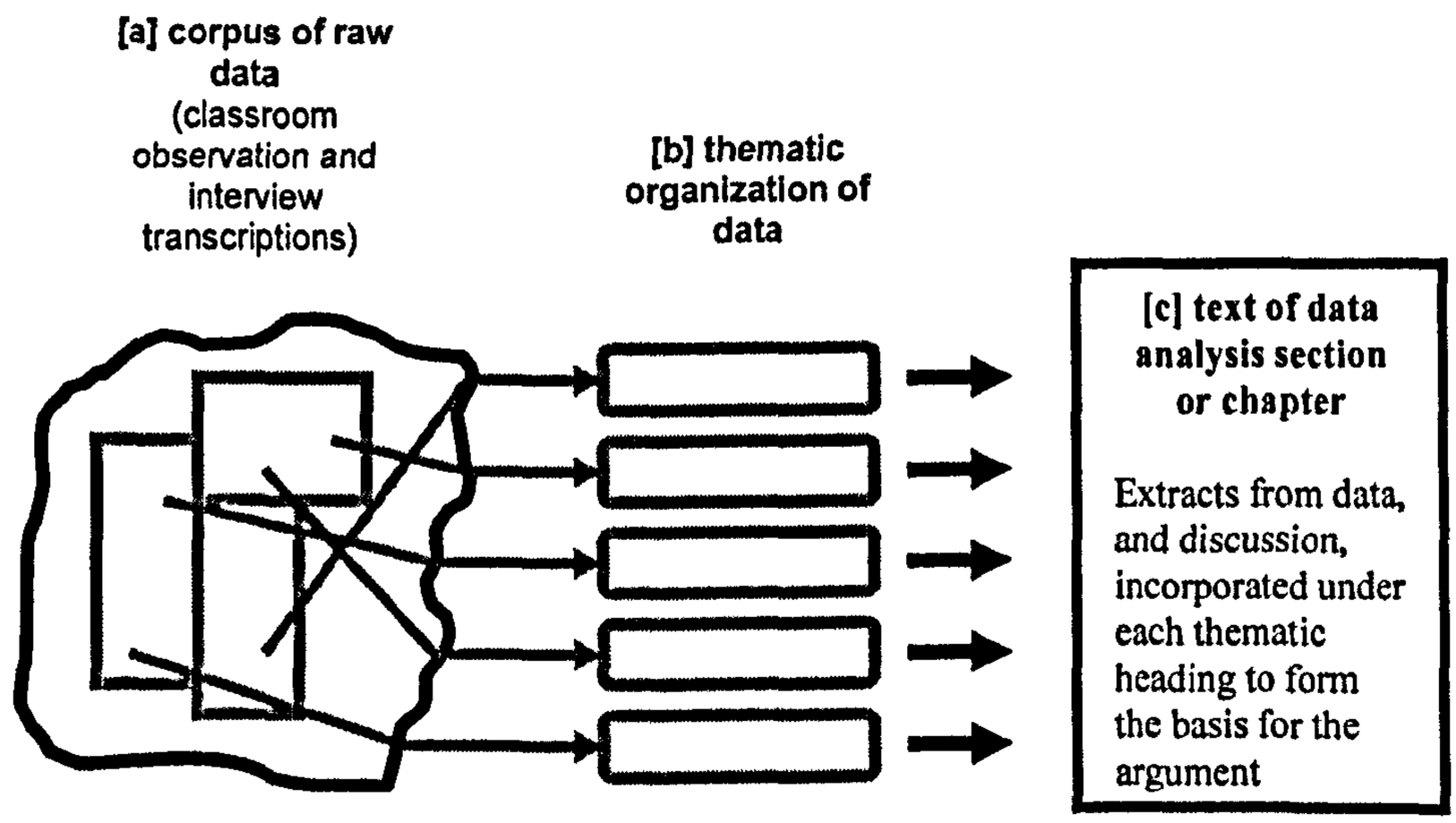
Narrative description, the *Teacher-pupil interaction model* and the *Five components of classroom scaffolding* framework were suitable for describing and interpreting lessons and long episodes. Analysis of *deviations from the IRF exchange* and *categorical analysis* helped me probe smaller units of teacher-pupil interaction, in order to identify teachers' acts which were critical for effective scaffolding. In addition, *non verbal interaction* was anlysed using six aspects of body movement which have been shown to carry meaning: gesture, proxemics (physical distance when interacting), body contact, posture and body orientation, facial expression and eye contact (Graddol, Cheshire & Swann, 1994, p. 147). Using the above mentioned frameworks, I described and analysed various aspects of verbal and non-verbal classroom interaction which allowed an account to emerge of effective teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD. In addition to the main analytical practices, I used tactics for generating and confirming my findings. These are explained below in 3.6.

3.6 Generating and confirming findings

3.6.1 Generating findings

Holiday (2002, p. 99) describes the process of generating findings as a series of steps in which there is a gradual move away from 'reality', represented by the corpus of raw data to a coherent argument in the actual text of a data analysis section or chapter. Holliday points out that this process is necessarily an individual construction, influenced by the researcher's own background and latent theory. This process is illustrated in Fig. 3.1.

Figure. 3.1: From data to text



(Holliday, 2000, p.100)

In the current study, the corpus of raw data was represented by classroom observation and interview data. Certain segments of these data appeared to link to each other and to each of my three research questions. I then *clustered* these segments together under headings, using a qualitative software MAXqda (see Appendix 10, p. 181, for an annotated screenshot and an explanation of how I used the software). For example, my classroom observation data showed that some teachers asked questions aimed at probing pupils' thinking processes (rather than assessing memory). Teachers also provided responses and feedbacks to pupils by further questioning them. As these interactional patterns reoccurred within and across cases, I clustered and organised them as sub-categories under a more general "thematic heading" (Holliday, 2002, p. 100): 'deviations from the IRF pattern'. I then looked at the interview data for further

explanations of how and why teachers used certain questioning, response and feedback strategies. In the final stage, when I wrote up the research, I included this thematic heading and incorporated extracts from data under it, thus forming a well-grounded basis for my argument (Holliday, 2002, p. 100).

While interpreting the data, my background and theoretical knowledge on issues regarding EFL and pupils with SpLD helped me to understand the function and effectiveness of certain speech acts (Graddol et. al., 1994, p. 120). For example, one of the teachers often responded to pupils' questions by asking them the same question (when a pupil asked, for instance, *How do I spell 'station'?* the teacher responded by asking: *How do you spell 'station'?*). Knowing that pupils with SpLD are inclined to be 'passive' learners, I interpreted the teacher's response as an attempt to encourage pupils to try out rather than be 'spoon-fed'. While using my own experience and beliefs when interpreting the data, in my analysis chapters I have attempted to distinguish where I speak from my own experience, or from interpretations which emerge mainly from the data. Holliday (2002, p. 137) notes that:

> *"adding the statement of experience brings personal presence and ownership to the discussion, which may indeed strike a chord with readers who have had similar experiences, also reminding them that this a 'real world' issue".*

In addition to using the above mentioned tactics for generating findings, the validity of these findings were checked in a number of ways, as outlined below in 3.6.2

3.6.2 Confirming findings

Acknowledging that subjective interpretations are inherent in a qualitative case study approach, I used several confirmatory tactics in order to increase validity of my findings. Firstly, data samples were considered *representative* (Miles & Huberman, 1994), in the sense that I observed a number of classes. The observations extended over a period of four months, and my visits to the classroom were carried out at a short notice. This strategy thus increased the likelihood of observing representative classroom interaction.

Secondly, I used *triangulation* of data sources and analytic methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Firstly, I triangulated via data sources. My data sources comprised five teachers and their pupils. In terms of methods, I used a variety of data collection methods, longitudinal observations (as described in 3.3 above), and a number of analytical frameworks, as described above in 3.6.1. Triangulation of sources and methods enabled me to look at whether a finding was supported by substantial evidence within and across cases. Secondly, to examine the reliability of my findings, I gave samples of my data to *other researchers*: two colleagues with research and EFL experience, asking them to categorize and/or analyse different episodes (one of them analysed two episodes and the other two whole lessons). Their analyses were then compared with mine and I adjusted my interpretations according to theirs. The second analysts' categorization and interpretations are embedded in the data analysis chapters 4 and 5. Such confirmation procedure has been used by qualitative researchers in order to increase the validity and credibility of their findings (e.g. Osborn, Broadfoot, Planel, Ravn, & Triggs, 2003 , 2003; Yin, 2005; Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). Appendix 11 (see p. 182) provides an example extract from a second analyst's data analysis.

In addition, I used a confirmation procedure called 'member check' (e.g. Lincoln & Guba, 1985). During the interviews, I showed to the teachers excerpts from their own classroom interaction asking them to reflect and respond to the data and to my analysis of it (see 3.3.4 above). Throughout the final data analysis process, I also sent excerpts of classroom interaction data to my informants, asking them to comment on them (see Appendix 12 on p. 183). The informants' responses are presented throughout the data analysis chapters (chapters 4-6). 'Member check' was considered confirmatory in the sense that it helped me better comprehend the particular contexts of my informants (Lincoln & Guba, 1989), and avoid a one-sided, researcher-driven perspective. It also enabled me to look at the extent to which there was congruence between my views (in the role of researcher) and those of my participants. Taking into account the informants' own interpretations was also considered significant from the ethical point of view as it gave the informants an opportunity to respond to my interpretation and for me to adjust my interpretations. While it was not possible for the second analysts and the informants to read a large corpus of data, I submitted to them samples of data that I had found significant for my analysis. It has been

acknowledged by qualitative researchers that triangulation of sources, methods and analysts maximizes both the breadth and depth of the analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Osborn et al., 2003), and thus increases accuracy and validity of findings.

Finally, after analysing and interpreting extracts of data I let my thoughts and ideas 'cool down' for a couple of days or weeks, and then revisited the data and my interpretations of them, checking that my analysis indeed emerges from the data and that it makes sense.

3.7 Data display

In the next three chapters (4-6), the data have been displayed in two ways:

Column layout is used for transcripts of recorded lessons and classroom observation notes, so that turn numbers, speakers and turns are made clear. A turn can consist of one word (e.g. Yes, Oh, Aha), a full sentence or a number of sentences. For the sake of anonymity I use pseudonyms to refer to teachers as well to individual pupils. Where pupil's identity is unknown he or she is referred to as 'Px'. When a number of pupils speak together they are referred to as 'PP' (see appendix 8 for transcription codes). Swan (1994a, p. 42) notes that column transcripts allow the analyst to track one speaker's contributions, look at the number and types of contribution made by a speaker, or track the topics they focus on. Extracts from observation notes include two columns: line number and observation notes. Extracts from transcriptions of recorded data include three columns: turn number (Turn No.), speaker (SP) and Transcription. Where analysis refers to long transcriptions, I have used an A3 page layout so that the reader can easily follow my references to line or turn number by looking at the right-hand side of the page.

Standard layout is used in field notes and interview data where the main aim is to explore ideas and opinions, rather than to examine number and types of contribution made by a number of speakers. References are provided to show where data evidence is located, for purposes such as data audit and researcher reference (e.g. 'Interview data, Ann, answer 29'; 'Diana, lesson 4, episode 2).

3.8 Summary

In this chapter I have presented the paradigm from which I am working: qualitative, interpretative research, which has its origin in the philosophy, theory, and methods of anthropology and subsequently has been adopted by linguistic anthropologists and other qualitative researchers in exploring issues associated with learning. I have provided an overview of the design and methodology I adopted and the rationale and principles underpinning them: a case study approach, aimed at a detailed examination of a particular, complex phenomenon, and the use of a number of cases, which have more potential for generalization than a single case study. I have explained the data collection methods and analytical frameworks, practices and tactics used in order to provide a wide, deep and multi-perspective analysis of my data, to increasing the accuracy and validity of findings. I have also discussed a number of ethical issues which emerged from the present research methodology and which I attempted to solve using existing ethical guidelines for researchers (BAAL, 1994; BERA, 2005), together with my personal morality and professional ethics as an educator. The findings from my research are presented in the next three chapters, and are organized as follows: chapters 4 and 5 provide within-case analysis of cases 1 and 2 respectively. Chapter 6 provides a cross-case comparative analysis of the five cases which comprise the current study. Comparing and contrasting between types of interaction in the large groups, and in the private, individual contexts aims at reaching beyond findings which are particular only to individual cases and producing explanations and arguments which are generalizable in some way to other classroom contexts of EFL and SpLD (see 3.2.2).

Chapter 4: Findings from Case 1 (Ann)

"That the teacher will actually help us as much as she can ... Not like other teachers, who only want to fail us. Like Ann, who wants our best, that we will succeed, and does all kinds of things that are not related only to studies."

(Interview data, Ann's pupil)

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided an overview of the study's research design and its methodology. In the following two chapters I present the findings derived from the analysis of data Cases 1 and 2 respectively. I regard these to be my main cases in terms of the quantity and quality of findings derived from them which illuminate the questions under investigation: to identify the types of scaffolding teachers use and to interpret how, through their verbal and non-verbal interaction, they create opportunities for learning. Another reason for selecting these two cases as main cases is because both of them are demonstrative of large group, school teaching, which is the most typical context where Israeli pupils learn EFL. The school context is also considered a more complicated context than the private one, due to the teacher's need to address both group and individual needs.

In each one of the main cases in chapters 4 and 5, I first use the 'Five components of scaffolding' and the 'Teacher-pupil interaction' frameworks (Webster et al., 1996, see 2.3.2 - 2.3.3 on pp. 16-21) in order to analyse large interactional units (a whole lesson). This decision reflects the first finding of the current study. While reading through the whole set of data from the five case studies, I saw that lessons which, to some extent, contained the five components of scaffolding clearly illustrated a variety of scaffolding practices, both in their structure and in their contents. For instance, in the following case study of the teacher Ann, lessons 1, 2, 5, 8 and 9 include the five components of scaffolding as well as the learning-driven teaching style to a much larger extent than other lessons, and were, therefore, subjected to more in-depth analysis. For practical reasons of limited space, I have selected in each of the main case studies one lesson which illustrates these two scaffolding frameworks. I then

used narrative description and analysed deviations from the IRF pattern to probe smaller units of teacher-pupil interaction in order to identify critical moves which may account for effective scaffolding. For transcription codes, see Appendix 8.

4.2 Background to the first case: Ann

Ann was one of three school teachers teaching at a Kibbutz comprehensive high school located in a central area of Israel. She was a female non-native speaker of English who had taught English for more than ten years. Ann initially qualified as a social science teacher but because, during her high school years, she spent a couple of years in an English speaking country, she was soon recruited as an English teacher. She had not gone through initial extensive EFL teacher training, but once in the field, she took a short courses in EFL teaching. According to Ann, her encounter with SpLD was also in service. She started teaching low-ability groups because "I was more attracted to those groups" (interview data, answer 1). In addition, Ann was a qualified instructor in the 'Feldenkrais Method' - a physical therapeutic method developed by Moshe Feldenkrais, aimed at developing awareness through movement. As will be shown, Ann incorporated the philosophy behind Feldenkrais with her EFL instruction.

In Israeli schools, where classes usually consist of between 35 to 42 pupils, grouping by ability in EFL (as well as in mathematics) is considered necessary. Low ability classes usually consist of smaller groups than intermediate or advanced classes. In Ann's case, her class was especially small in Israeli terms. It consisted of seventeen 12th graders in their last year of high school, preparing for the basic level (3 points) of the matriculation examination in EFL. This exam is considered the most high-stakes examination in the Israeli school system. A pass-grade on the 3 point level exam is a minimum requirement for a high school diploma, without which high school graduates cannot be admitted into higher education institutions and find their job prospects restricted. Sixteen out of seventeen of Ann's students had been diagnosed by educational psychologists or educational evaluators as having SpLD. Consequently, these students had special testing conditions, such as extended test-taking time, access to an electronic dictionary or having the exam texts read aloud to them. I started observing Ann's lessons four months before the exam took place, and therefore, the learning in the data took the form of review and practice.

4.3 Components of classroom scaffolding and types of interaction

In this section I present findings derived from the analysis of observation notes taken on 10.2.04 during two successive classes taught by Ann. The first lesson aimed to introduce a reading comprehension task to the pupils that they were to complete whilst watching an internet presentation. The internet activity itself took place in the second lesson in the computer room. This involved an interactive sight-and-sound presentation about the wall between Israel and Palestine. The participants were Ann and sixteen pupils (seven boys and nine girls).

4.3.1 Recruitment and management

In the first episode of her lesson (extract 4.3.1.1 opposite), Ann uses what Webster et al. (see 2.3.2) define as the first component of classroom scaffolding: 'recruitment and management.' Ann gains the pupils' attention by writing on the board the key word for the activity, 'SCANNING' (line 1), which is the main objective of their reading task, and immediately afterwards reminds them of the meaning of the word in relation to their task. She does so by recalling a metaphor she has used in the past in relation to this reading strategy: "Do you remember the tweezers? ... We pull out only what is important for us" (lines 2-4). Ann also chooses to provide her directions and meta-linguistic comments in Hebrew (Speech between square brackets [ ] indicates that it is translated from Hebrew[1]). When a pupil asks an 'off task' question (line 5), Ann does not ignore or reprimand him, but provides a reply, which also focuses the pupil's attention on the goal in hand (line 6). She immediately hands out the task pages, directing the pupils' attention to the resources. Next, she directs their behaviour (line 9) and reinforces the task objective by reading the questions from the task page, pointing to the information the pupils are expected to scan for (line 11). She then demonstrates how to do this (lines 12-13).

[1] The phenomenon of language switching, which frequently emerges from Ann's data, is also common amongst some other teachers who participated in this research, and will be therefore discussed in chapter 6 within a cross-case comparative analysis.

Extract 4.3.1.1: Recruitment and management

Line	Observation notes
1.	(Ann writes the word SCANNING on the blackboard and its Hebrew equivalent)
2.	Ann: ['Why do we do it? In order to pull out information. Do you remember the
3.	tweezers? It is just like pulling out information with tweezers. We pull out only
4.	what is important for us.'] (Ann writes on the board: 'A computer presentation')
5.	P: ['Why don't you bring us songs?']
6.	Ann: ['We finished with] listening [last year.']
7.	(She hands out task worksheets)
8.	P: ['What is] PRESENTATION'?
9.	(...) Ann: ['You can, and you should write on the sheets. Each one of you will work
10.	at his own pace.'] (She reads the questions from the task page)
11.	(...) Ann: ['Which word will we have to look for? A word or a number?] (pause)
12.	[Use a pen or a marker to highlight the word ... This is the word that we have to
13.	focus on.']

Ann utilizes the primary stage of the learning process in four ways: (a) to recruit pupils' attention to the incoming information, (b) to share with them the objectives of the lesson, (c) to relate the incoming information to past experience and thus make the information more meaningful for them, and (d) to help the pupils make associations (the tweezers metaphor) in order to project them into the incoming information (Lidz, 1991, cited by Guerrero & Villamil, 2000, p. 53). In terms of management, Ann directs pupils' attention to the resources, task objectives and how to manage the task.

The 'recruitment and management' stage is followed by a second stage which aims at representing and clarifying the task in hand.

4.3.2 Representation and clarification

In this phase (Extract 4.3.2.1 opposite) the pupils read the questions from their task pages (see appendix 13, p. 184) and translate the difficult words, while Ann assists them. The observation notes reveal a conversation pattern which departs from the conventional, highly controlled IRF pattern where teachers elicit, direct, nominate and correct or evaluate responses. Firstly, many questions regarding word meanings are initiated by the pupils themselves (lines 1, 6, 10, 15). Secondly, a recurrent pattern which emerges from Ann's responses to pupils is that her response move takes the form of a question (e.g. lines 2 and 7). Response in the form of a question points at strategy instruction through enhancement of self-questioning. In lines 1-2 and 6-7, Ann replies to pupils' questions by handing the question back to the questioner. In lines 11 and 12, Ann guides a pupil to use a word-guessing strategy by providing him with a simplified context, pointing at her sunglasses. This results in the pupil's understanding the term 'made of' and his attempt to guess the answer to the question ('Concrete?' line 15). The pupil's response suggests his attempts to guess the word meaning using the contextual clue Ann has provided him. In lines 16-17 Ann encourages a pupil to evaluate his guess by using the text. These instructional strategies appear to activate pupils' strategic thinking and elicit the answers from rather than 'spoon feeding' them.

Extract 4.3.2.1: Representation & clarification

Line	Observation notes
1	P: ['Why do they say] Gaza'?
2	Ann: ['Why does one say] Jerusalem [and not Yerushalyim?] [pause] [Why do we
3	say] Gaza [and not Aza? For the same reason that we say] Jerusalem [and not
4	Yerushalayim.' (pupil looks puzzled) 'I agree that you say Aza. Change the] G
5	[into] A, [but this is an interesting question. We will discuss it.'] (...)
6	P: ['What is] fence?'
7	Ann: ['What is] fence?'
8	P: (No reply)
9	(Ann gives the Hebrew equivalent) (...)
10	P: ['What is] made of?'
11	Ann: This is made of plastic.
12	Ann: (points at her sunglasses)
13	P: (pause)
14	Ann: You will have to find out.
15	P: ['Concrete?']
16	Ann: You will have to find out. ['You will have to translate all the underlined
17	words.'] (...)

My initial analysis of Ann's interactional exchanges in the above extract found that they depart from the typical IRF pattern and seem to activate pupils' thinking. However, the second analyst's (see 3.6.2) observation was different:

"It struck me the extent to which she initiates exchanges but then does not follow them through into formative assistance etc., although the potential to do this is there. I was wondering if this was your reading (i.e. that she does a lot of I, a little of R and not much F) or whether somehow either the decontextualisation (in my case) or the codes have skewed the performance?"

(Haines, 2006)

I therefore reconsidered the data of extract 4.3.2.1 above, in light of these comments, shifting my focus from Ann's questions and responses into her feedback moves. My examination then revealed that when Ann's questioning does not follow with a sign that the pupil has been prompted to solve the problem (as suggested, for instance, by the absence of reply in line 8), she provides the pupil with the right answer, rather than follow his/her (lack of) response through into formative assistance of how to guess the word's meaning from the context, or how to look it up in a dictionary. Thus, while questioning seems to have the potential to facilitate thinking and further engagement in learning, there is no follow-up in the form of checking whether or not the pupil has taken up and built upon Ann's strategic question. On the other hand, lines 10-16 demonstrate more explicit formative feedback which provides some valuable meta-cognitive strategy by prompting the pupil to read on and make sense of the text.

Other ways in which Ann tries to represent to pupils the types of strategies they need to use in order to complete the task are evident in the second part of the first lesson, as demonstrated by the extract 4.3.2.2 below.

Extract 4.3.2.2: Further representation & clarification

Line	Observation notes
18	Ann: ['Think for a second, what is] west'?
19	P: ['West'.]
20	Ann: 'Western side?'
21	P: ['Western side.']
22	Ann: ['The western side of the fence. Most Palestinians will stay on the western
23	side of the fence. Does it make sense to you?']
24	(Ann draws a map of Israel on the board and then writes BORDER and its Hebrew
25	equivalent, then she draws the compass card on the blackboard)
26	Ann: (...) ['You can answer partly in Hebrew and partly in English, or in Hebrew
27	only.'] (...)
28	P: ['Won't you be there with us?']
29	Ann: ['Of course I will. And Harold too.'] (The pensioner in charge of the
30	computer room)

In lines 18-23 Ann facilitates self-questioning by prompting the pupil to make sense of the text using his previous knowledge. In line 24, she provides pupils with geographical concepts in order to make it easier for them to understand the context of the text. The sense of assistance and scaffolding is emphasized by Ann's reassuring response to the girl who asks, "Won't you be there with us?" (line 28). "Of course I will. And Harold too", Ann replies (line 29). It appears that Ann integrates her knowledge of the difficulties her pupils have into her interaction and instructional activity in four ways: (a) reducing the steps involved in completing the task (she provides pupils with translations when it appears that they are unable to understand certain words from their contexts), (b) trying to promote strategic thinking, (c) recognizing their lack of world knowledge and helping them bridge some gaps, and (d) reducing their anxiety levels.

4.3.3 Further recruitment and management

While the first instructional session took place in the classroom and aimed at preparing the pupils for the internet task, the second took place in the computer room, where the internet presentation and task were carried out. Extract 4.3.3.1 (opposite) demonstrates how Ann helps the pupils to get started in the computer room and, once they are engaged in completing their task, elaborates on concepts previously introduced.

Reading through extract 4.3.3.1, it appears that components of scaffolding do not progress in a linear fashion but are intertwined in the learning mediation process. In this episode Ann directs and manages pupils' behaviour (1-7). Recruitment is expressed in this extract through the attractive sight-and-sound internet presentation which deals with a topic very much relevant to pupils' lives (lines 10-13). Ann manipulates the task to facilitate problem solving by reading out the passage for the pupils and translating difficult words (lines 13-15). Technical and organizational management seem to be important in this context where some pupils do not only have EFL difficulties but may have organizational problems or are 'computer illiterate'. Management is carried out through clear, economical verbal instructions: "Everyone should log in", "open Word" (lines 2, 17). Ann also uses questioning to monitor whether or not pupils are following directions and are using the resource effectively: "Where do we log in ... Does everyone have ... a pen?" (lines 2-5); "Do you know how to look up in a dictionary?" (line 18). Once the pupils seem to be engaged in completing the task, Ann recognises that this is the best time to hand over responsibility and she lets the learners work independently (line 19). At the end of the episode, she begins to walk around and provide help to specific pupils who apply for assistance (lines 20-22).

Extract 4.3.3.1: Further recruitment and management

Line	Observation notes
1	(The pupils sit down at the computers and begin working individually or in pairs)
2	Ann: ['Everyone should log in using their password (...) Where do we log in?']
3	(...)
4	Ann: ['Has everyone logged in? Who hasn't? (...) The task pages are here. Does
5	everyone have the task page? And a pen?'] (...)
6	P: ['Do you have another task page?']
7	Ann: ['But you wrote things on it.'] (...)
8	(After everyone logs in Ann goes to a student who did not manage to start. She
9	walks around, then starts the presentation. The presentation includes text and
10	pictures. The text draws the attention by its big fonts and bold titles. The
11	background is blue. Some words are underlined. The presentation shows faces of
12	twenty-four Israeli people who have been killed in terror acts. This subject appears
13	to 'speak' to the pupils.) (...)
14	Ann: ['Only the beginning is a bit difficult. We will go through it once.'] (She
15	reads out the text). 'THE SECURITY FENCE...SAVING LIVES...ISRAELI
16	SECURITY FENCE...' (Ann translates the first sentence)
17	Ann: (Shows a pupil how to open the dictionary) [Open 'Word'.] (She then shows
18	her how to look up a word). ['Do you know how to look up in a dictionary?'] (...)
19	Ann: ['At this stage I am letting you free. You will continue working'.]
20	(Ann asks the person in charge of the computer room to let students work each at
21	their own pace. Before, Ann told me that some of them are computer illiterate. She
22	then begins to walk around the room, helping pupils with the task).

4.3.4 Elaboration and mediation

In the second episode of this second lesson (extract 4.3.4.1 opposite) 'elaboration' is demonstrated in the way that Ann assists her pupils to adapt new concepts. New words, which have been introduced in the previous lesson are reintroduced and reinforced: 'concrete', in lines 18-19; and the word 'west' in lines 24-28. In addition, Ann directs pupils to use contextual cues (e.g. to focus on key words, lines 10, 18), and by prompting them to guess word meanings from their contexts (lines 10-14, 18-19 and 24-25).

The fourth component of scaffolding, 'mediation', is demonstrated in this episode both by Ann's effective use of both physical and symbolic tools (Vygotsky, 1978): the interactive computer presentation and her own verbal and non-verbal mediation. Throughout this episode she attends to individual pupils' questions and provides them with hints, so that pupils do not feel overwhelmed and discouraged. She turns to various pupils, responds to their appeals for help and sits by different pupils to assist them with vocabulary, dictionary work and word-decoding, (e.g., lines 10-12 and 18-19). There is a sense that the activity is motivating and challenging because the interactive sight and sound presentation is visually attractive and *novel* (Carbone, 2001) in comparison to typical classroom teaching. Ann also makes an attempt to make the contents relevant and meaningful for the learners: In line 26, a pupil associates the newly learned word – west – with where Ann lives. Ann, in turn, extends his comment by making a link to the Bible, singing a refrain of a well-known song that includes the word 'sea', which is biblical synonym of 'west' (lines 27-28). In lines 29-32, Ann connects the restriction of Palestinians' rights to the discrimination against blacks in America.

Extract 4.3.4.1: Elaboration and mediation

Line	Observation notes
1.	Ann: [Correct or not correct? According to the presentation. Look for] 'final
2.	border' [It is the key word.] (Sits besides a student)
3.	Ann: Yes or no? [Is there a dividing fence? Now you carry on.]
4.	(Pupils work on their task on their own or in pairs. When Ann sits besides a pupil
5.	to help she does not respond to other pupils' questions (...) She reads out a few
6.	sentences and translates the words 'chain' and 'made of'.)
7.	Ann: [Does your chatting mean that you have finished? If there's a problem call
8.	me.] (…)
9.	P: [What is this word] 'concrete'. [What is] 'concrete'?
10.	Ann: [Wait until it appears on the screen.] … MORE THAN 95% IS A CHAIN
11.	LINK FENCE AND NOT THE CONCRETE BARRIER USUALLY SHOWN ON
12.	TV. [It's a kind of material.]
13.	P: [Iron.]
14.	Ann: [Concrete.]
15.	(Ann approaches another student - the one who told her during the break that she
16.	thought that the task was too difficult for her to cope with. Spends more time with
17.	her) (…)
18.	Ann: [But what is written here?] MOST OF THE FENCE IS MADE OF
19.	CONCRETE. [Is this right?] (…) (Turns to another student)
20.	Ann: [Yes, how are we doing?]
22.	P: [We are making progress. We have finished everything but missed that
23.	question.]
24.	Ann: [So go back to it.] (…) [It's the western part. Think logically. Is it reasonable
25.	that] MOST PALESTINIANS (…)
26.	P: [West is where Ann lives.] (Ann indeed lives in a Kibbutz, by the sea)
27.	Ann: [Right, the sea is indeed the west.] (She sings a refrain of a well-known song
28.	that includes the word sea, which is biblical synonym of 'west') (…)
29.	Ann: [Don't translate each and every word.] FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT. [Do
30.	you know the word] to move? Movement? (She uses a hand gesture) (…)
31.	Ann: [You are very close.] Freedom of rights (…) Blacks in America wanted equal
32	rights. THE RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

In her comments on her interaction in extract 4.3.4.1 above, Ann referred to her second qualification as a Feldenkraise instructor. She told me that she had incorporated the philosophy behind the therapeutic field of Feldenkrais in her EFL instruction.

"It is nothing that I do consciously ... Listen, in Feldenkraise, there is something called 'a supporting witness'. Sometimes, the mere presence of you by the student is enough for him to feel the security and carry on working, and he knows that if he falls there is someone to support him. This finds expression also at a situation where small children want the parent to sit by them when they do homework...Sometimes the parent does not have to do anything except for being there...I see myself many times in the role of a supporting witness. A supporting witness is when someone walks on a string...and you give him a hand."

(Interview data, Answer 30)

Acting as a 'supportive witness', can be seen, metaphorically, as contingently offering more specific instruction or help when the pupil is in trouble, and stepping out once he or she shows an ability to carry on independently. In extract 4.3.4.1, Ann hands over the responsibility to the pupils and they work independently, alone or in pairs, while Ann mediates and elaborates.

Both second and third analysts categorized this elaboration and mediation phase of Ann's lesson as learning-driven, while the first lesson was viewed by them as more teacher-dominated. It may be that allocating excessive time to recruitment and management resulted in an excessively teacher-driven lesson. An appropriate balance must be sought between the different components of scaffolding, including activities and tasks likely to result in learning-driven instruction (in this case, the actual computer presentation task, where pair and individual work is characterized by a collaborative assisted performance).

4.3.5: Finishing

The final component of teacher scaffolding, 'finishing', is reflected in the last episode of the this lesson (see extract 4.3.5.1 below), and is concerned with drawing together pupils' classroom activity.

Extract 4.3.5.1: Finishing

Line	Observation notes
1.	(Ann goes around to look at pupils' work.) (...)
2.	P: [We have finished. We finished everything.]
3.	Ann: [Did you translate all the words?]
4.	P: [Yes.]
5.	(Ann goes on helping those who haven't finished, translating words, showing how
6.	to type a word. Two students ask her to translate a word for them from Hebrew into
7.	English. She asks for the context of the word, so that her translation will fit it.)
8.	P: [Ann can we go?]
9.	Ann: [Have you finished?]
10.	P: [No.]
11.	Ann: [But when will you hand it to me? I don't want you to forget about it.]
12.	(After most of the pupils have gradually left the room, Ann sits with the last pupils
13.	to help ...)

The interaction above suggests that in addition to having pupils' work and progress monitored and checked, with personal interaction and feedback, summative assessment of outcomes is also used. 'Finishing' takes the form of ensuring that most pupils have completed the task and of collecting their assignments for summative evaluation. It is necessary to recognize that while Ann attempts to assist pupils, activate their thinking and meta-cognition and hand over responsibility for completing the task throughout the whole instructional session, her teaching is largely orientated towards promoting in pupils strategies which may facilitate them on the matriculation exam (e.g. reading strategies, guessing words from contexts and dictionary use). This 'washback' effect (Bachman, 2000; Scott, 2005) is apparent in Ann's teaching, and observed by the second analyst, who notes that "she is more focused on teaching them

strategies to pass an exam than teaching them to use language" (Haines, 2006). This observation touches upon a central dilemma: does focusing on teaching pupils with SpLD strategies to pass external exams have much constructive effect on their language development? Research findings have indicated that strategy instruction may be effective in enabling learners understand how to select, deploy, and monitor appropriate strategies (e.g. Alderson, 2000; Purpura, 1997; Swanson, 1990). However, it has been suggested that assessment which is embedded in classroom activities accords more closely with the learner's language development and thus, potentially, impacts on it more (Gardner & Rea-Dickins, 2002; Kazulin & Grabb, 2001; Rea-Dickins, 2001; Torrance, 1998). The formative outcome of dynamic assessment is demonstrated and further discussed in 4.5.3.

In the following section I probe smaller units of classroom interaction in order to identify critical moves which may account for language scaffolding.

4.4 Deviation from the I-R-F sequence

As noted in 2.3.1, research studies have found out that the basic IRF structure can be recruited by teachers for a wide variety of functions and that a relatively minor change in the traditional exchange sequence may have a significant effect on pupils' learning (Gibbons, 2003; Nassaji & Wells, 2000). The current data reveal that Ann's use of questioning, response and feedback moves may account for her scaffolding in three ways.

4.4.1 Process-oriented questions

It has been argued that questions which do not demand display of knowledge or rote repetition, but rather aim at prompting or leading thinking, have greater potential to extend pupils' learning (e.g. Nassaji & Wells, 2000; Webster et al., 1996). Ann's classroom interaction data often reveal process-orientated, rather than product-oriented, questioning. Her questions endeavour to increase strategic thinking, as illustrated in the following extract:

Extracts 4.4.1.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Ann	[What is there in the text that tells you that it is the form that you need? You are playing it by ear, but I want you to explain why.]
2.	Px	It is.
3.	Ann	[That's right. This is how I want you to work.]

(Lesson 7, lines 30-33)

The above example indicates a questioning style which aims to probe pupils' thinking processes and attempts to make them extend their thinking. The next section illustrates how, in her response to pupils' questions, Ann demonstrates a similar interactional style.

4.4.2 A response in the form of a question

A recurrent pattern in Ann's classroom interaction is a tendency to provide a response to a pupil's question by posing the same question back to the pupil. According to Ann, it is her natural tendency not to supply an answer immediately, "but I do it so automatically. I am not didactic each time I do it" (Interview data, Answer 24). The following extract illustrates this instructional pattern:

Extract 4.4.2.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Keren	But what is 'were knowing'? Is it in the future?]
2.	Ann	[It doesn't matter. Why can't know get ing?] (3 secs)
3.	Tamar	(***)
4.	Ann	To know [Which group of verbs does it belong to?]
5.	Keren	[Stative verbs.]

(Lesson 9, episode 8)

In turn 2, Ann attempts to increase awareness of explicit grammatical knowledge by pointing at an important linguistic component. In turn 4 she prompts recall of a grammatical rule. Keren's answer in turn 5 indicates that Ann's scaffolding has resulted in her pupil's induction of the grammatical rule. The exchanges suggests that

scaffolding succeeds when a response in the form of further questioning aims to increase awareness and prompt recall of knowledge that the pupil is assumed to have, by emphasizing important linguistic features which the pupil might not notice (in this case 'ing' and the concept of 'stative verbs'). This assumption is further confirmed in the pupil interview by both of Ann's pupils, as demonstrated in the following extracts.

Extract 4.4.2.2

"It is good that she is providing a response in the form of a question because it is important to know first of all what the pupil thinks about the right answer. It seems to me that he will absorb it better if she first asks him what he thinks."

(Pupil interview, 1:13)

Similarly, another pupil pointed to the potential effectiveness of response in the form of a question:

Extract 4.4.2.3

"Yes, because in this way I actually answer myself. It helps me think about it again."

(Pupil interview, 2:5)

Data indicate that a response in the form of a question may, however, be met with a pupil's inability to come up with an answer. This suggests that when the questioning does not assist in increasing linguistic awareness, a follow up move in the form of explicitly pointing at important features for the pupil to focus on may be most effective.

Other follow up moves which are likely to open learning opportunities are discussed below.

4.4.3 Formative follow-up

Data reveal how Ann's follow up moves provided formative assistance to pupils, as demonstrated in extract 4.4.5 below.

Extract 4.4.3.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Ann	[We look at the title of the] cloze. [What does it do? What does it do?] (looking at each one of the pupils)
2.	Keren	[You know, with the cloze passage, I don't understand at all.]
3.	Ann	[What does the title, Keren, do? In any] text?
4.	Tamar	[Gives the background.]
5.	Ann	[How?]
6.	Px	(**)
7.	Ann	[It evokes our world knowledge.]
8.	PP	(laugh)
9.	Tamar	(**)
10.	Ann	[It is not a matter of believing or not believing.]
11.	Keren	[This is what it does!] (pupils laugh)
12.	Ann	(nods) [It's automatic. It is as if we do in] slow motion, [what happens to us in our minds.]
13.	Tamar	[to read from the Bible] (**)
14.	Keren	(to her friend, smiling) [Except when I am asked to quote and then I must look in the book.] (smile)
15	Ann	[Let me ask you a question. When you read a text in this area that you are familiar with (**) you also bring information, you have lots of knowledge.]

(Lesson 8, episode 2)

Ann initiates the first move by explaining to the pupils how to get started (turn 1) and then represents a reading strategy, i.e., looking at the title in order to predict the main idea of the text. Even though Karen's response (turn 2, "You know... I don't understand at all") is, in fact, an initiation of a new IRF sequence, Ann maintains her own agenda, further questioning Keren (turn 3). Tamar's response (turn 4) to Ann's question suggests that Ann's representation has worked formatively. Ann then clarifies the activity. First, in turn 5, she develops Tamar's reply, eliciting more information from the pupils ("'How?"). Then, in turn 7, she paraphrases Tamar's account ("It evokes our world knowledge"). Next, she corrects misinformation (turn 10) and further illuminates the concept (turn 12: "It's automatic... what happens to us in our mind"). In the next section, I further refer to extract 4.4.5 above and make explicit the formative impact of Ann's questioning on the pupils' meta-cognitive and linguistic awareness.

4.5 Scaffolding meta-cognition and language awareness

As illustrated in the previous section, extract 4.4.3.1 above illustrates how Ann prompts her pupils to think about and discuss concepts such as schemata and background knowledge, knowledge of the world and reading purpose (Alderson, 2000). In this section I provide more evidence which indicates Ann's focus on increasing meta-cognitive skills and language awareness in order to promote learning strategies.

4.5.1 Reading strategies

Extract 4.4.3.1 clearly demonstrates that rather than focus pupils' attention solely on the language per se, Ann attempts to promote their reading comprehension strategies, and thus gives them a tool which may compensate for their limited reading comprehension. First, in turn 1, Ann refers to the tactic of predicting a text's contents by its title. As a result, Tamar brings up the concept of general knowledge (turn 4), and both Tamar Keren (in turns 13 and 14) make a link between their reading difficulties in EFL and their difficulties in reading the Bible (which is typical in poor readers as the Bible's language is complicated). Ann's decision not to control the dialogue proves a good one in light of Keren's initiation in turn 14 ("Except when I am asked to quote and then I must look in the book"). Keren's remark suggests, very much to the point, that with certain types of test questions it is impossible to bypass the obstacle of reading and lean solely on meta-cognitive skill. At this point Ann misses an opportunity to build on Karen's response and elaborate the idea and she sticks to her own agenda by talking about the importance of using world knowledge while trying to make sense of the text.

Classroom data reveal that Ann's interaction indeed focused on meta-cognitive thinking and strategy learning, such as skimming, scanning, self-questioning or summarizing. Research studies have revealed that poor readers do not possess knowledge about these strategies and are often not aware of how and when to select these strategies and tailor them to the requirements of the task (e.g. Alderson, 2000; Alderson, Clapham, & Steel, 1997). Therefore, instruction which promotes these strategies may be effective in facilitating EFL in pupils with SpLD.

4.5.2 Grammatical awareness

The interaction below demonstrates a collaborative corrective feedback process in which the teacher's "gradual implicit to explicit feedback" mediation formatively impacts the learners' responses (see Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994, Appendix 1, p. 174).

Extract 4.5.2.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Tamar	What's this?
2.	Ann	[The verb]. Asked, ed. [It's past tense.]
3.	Tamar	[So it's the past.]
4.	Ann	[Good, but I have to see it. This is what I'm saying. (turns to Sharon) In the first sentences you have to ask yourself where the verbs are.]
5.	Tamar	Oh, so here (**) in the past. (**) Is it past?]
6.	Ann	[[Normally it is.]
7.	Keren	[Like you are speaking and then you say-
8.	Ann	Yesterday, tatatatatatatata... today. (2 secs) [And then they change it, but you must have something that tells you to change it, because if there isn't, there is no reason to change.]
9.	Tamar	[Oh. I understand.]

(Lesson 8, episode 6)

Extract 4.5.2.1 above shows how Ann gradually increases the pupils' awareness of the target grammatical features (turns 2 and 4), before providing a final meta-explanation (turn 8). The successful closure of this instructional interaction, confirmed by Tamar's feedback: "Oh, I understand!" (turn 9), suggests that increasing grammatical awareness through gradual mediation provided by the teacher and co-construction of a ZPD with the learners can be appropriated by the learners to promote their linguistic awareness and to arise development.

The subsequent episode provides fuller evidence (which accords with Aljaafreh & Lantolf's findings, 1994) that the type of collaborative gradual corrective feedback described above may cultivate grammatical awareness.

Extract 4.5.2.2

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Ann	[Now we are dealing with graphology] Graphology. (...) EVEN THE GREEKS IN THE OLD DAYS
2.	Tamar	[in the old days]
3.	Ann	[Now tell me what it is:] know, were knowing or knew.
4.	Keren	Knew.
5.	Ann	[Why?]
6.	Keren	[old days.]
7.	Ann	[Explain to them why it's past]
8.	Keren	[In old days they knew]

(Lesson 9, episode 7)

The above extract suggests a marked reduction in the amount of help needed by the pupils to regulate their own grammatical awareness strategies. Already in turn 2, Tamar points at and translates the precise tense marker, and in turn 6, Keren immediately arrives at the correct form without needing Ann to isolate the location of the clue. The gap between the pupil's performance in the above two extracts suggests the pupil's ZPD.

An additional strategy Ann used in order to promote syntactic and linguistic awareness is linguistic playfulness, as demonstrated in the next section.

4.5.3 Linguistic playfulness

Extract 4.5.3 (opposite) provides evidence of how Ann uses language playfulness in order to increase linguistic awareness and provide for the pupils a mnemonic strategy. In turn 7, she mentions "sheep and goats" and, later, "two goats" (turn 9) in order to relate to a concept she has used in the past to instruct pupils that if they see a word which is part of an idiom, they should look for its counterpart inside the brackets (e.g. '*as* good *as*'). Ann uses the Hebrew phrase "two goats" because the English word 'as' is equivalent in sound to the Hebrew word 'goat'. By doing this Ann uses linguistic playfulness, which has been found to increase awareness of language meaning and form (Sullivan, 2000, see 2.4.2). In addition, she prompts mnemonic strategies: visual imagery and acoustic resemblance, two mnemonics which have been found to promote recall (e.g. Mastropieri & Mushinski Fulk, 1990; Swanson, 1990). Tamar's correct responses in turns 2 and 8 suggest that Ann's linguistic playfulness has been effective for her learning.

An additional perspective applied to language playfulness is noted by Vygotsky (1978, p. 104). According to Vygotsky, in play "a new relation is created between the field of meaning and the visual field – that is, between situations in thought and real situations". By prompting the learners to visualize abstract linguistic patterns as goats and sheep, Ann increases the likelihood that they will remember them. From my experience as a didactic assessor, when requested to recall lists of words, and asked "How did you remember that?", dyslexic pupils often use novel non-verbal mnemonics, such as visual imagery of an object, a picture or a 'mental movie'.

The following section discusses concept of formative classroom assessment in relation to EFL and SpLD.

Extract 4.5.3.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Ann	A COMPUTER CAN MAKE AN UGLY PERSON BEAUTIFUL AND IT CAN MAKE A BEAUTIFUL (2 secs) UGLY. [But here you already know that it won't be] people [it will be?]
2.	Tamar	Person.
3.	Ann	Person (smiling at Tamar). [Why?]
4.	Keren	[Why not] people? [I would write] people.
5.	Ann	[We have a pattern.] OK?
6.	Keren	(**)
7.	Ann	(...) [It is connected to the sheep and the goats and all that] OK? Here, too, you can know the answer.] (...) WITH THE AMAZING TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE TODAY IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW [brackets] IS REAL, AND WHAT HAS BEEN CREATED.
8.	Tamar	[What.]
9.	Ann	What. (Nods, then turns to Sharon) [This is exactly 'two goats'. We have here 'two goats'. It repeats itself ...
10.	Tamar	(**)
11.	Ann	[So we have] what [and] what. (3 sec) [These are the things that one can think of when seeing that something repeats itself. How will we know that it repeats itself? Only if we read without stopping.]

(Ann, lesson 8, episode 3)

4.6 Scaffolding language through formative classroom assessment

Classroom data reveal that Ann's classroom interaction was characterised by assessment followed by instruction strategies. Questioning and probing learners within small group instruction assesses pupils' knowledge, but also explores their learning processes and promotes their thinking and problem-solving skills. In addition, Ann's classroom assessment included formative feedback on the pupils' written and oral work. I suggest that formative feedback cultivates new learning cycles. Torrance & Pryor (1998, p. 153) suggest that formative assessment is characterised by open questions aimed at prompting meta-cognition.

Extract 4.6.1 (opposite) represents this tendency in Ann's classroom assessment practice. Even though the episode evolves around a cloze exercise and focuses on two test items, the interaction shows that Ann uses the activity in dynamic and formative ways to probe pupils' understanding, asking questions aimed at probing understanding (e.g. "Why can't 'know' get ing?" in turn 5). She also checks language awareness: "Don't you see the difference between know and knew?" (turn 13), and fosters it though language playfulness which has been previously presented to the girls: "This goes to the goats' section"[2] (turn 17). In addition, she checks meta-linguistic strategies by asking questing such as: "What do you do to help yourself?" (turns 3); "And if you don't know the difference between this and that what do you do?" (turn 24). These questions aim at probing and increasing meta-cognitive strategies. Formative assessment in which instruction is embedded is the core of Vygotsky's dynamic assessment theory because it treats a pupil's current aptitude and proficiency as likely to be changed in the future: What the learner turns out to be able to do with the assistance of the teacher points towards his or her zone of potential development (Lantolf and Poehner, 2004, p. 51).

Finally, in the following section I will discuss the last theme that has emerged from Ann's data: scaffolding through collaborative peer learning.

[2] See section 4.5.3 on linguistic playfulness

Extract 4.6.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Ann	[Now I'm asking you because I think that the problem is there. You look at the brackets but you don't know to say that this is present and that is in the past, am I right?]
2.	Sharon	[You're right.]
3.	Ann	[What do you do to help yourself?] (3 secs)
4.	Keren	[But what is] were knowing? [Is it in the future?]
5.	Ann	[It doesn't matter. Why can't know get ing? (3 secs)
6.	Tamar	(***)
7.	Ann	To know [Which group of verbs does it belong to?]
8.	Keren	[Stative verbs.]
9.	Ann	To know [to know. Is it right that it's not an action?]
10.	Tamar	Aha. So all the senses (...)
11.	Ann	[To know is a thinking act (touches her head) If I don't know but I do remember that 'know' is a verb that does not get ing, I quickly rule it out. This one can't be. There isn't such a thing. I am left with deciding between this and that. I go to the dictionary. Right?]
12.	Sharon	(**)
13.	Ann	[Don't you see the difference between know and knew?]
14.	Sharon	[I see but]-
15.	Ann	[You'll hear it on the tape. You are listening to it. While you're listening you can mark it out.]
16.	Keren	[This is what I know best.] (...)
17.	Ann	SOME ARE ... THAN OTHERS [This goes to the goats' section] (The girls all look at their texts, thinking for approximately 15 secs)
18.	Tamar	[I think] better.
19.	Ann	(Nods for yes. Tamar and Keren are smiling) [Why?]
20.	Tamar	(***)
21.	Keren	[I have looked for] better [but there isn't.]
22.	Ann	[There is. Do you remember the pairs? This belongs to the goats' section] older than, smaller than. [You can't say] good than. SOME ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS, SOME ARE LONGER.
23.	Tamar	[Here,] longer.
24.	Ann	Good! So what goes with longer? [This or that? And if you don't know the difference between this and that what do you do?]
25.	PP	[Dictionary.]

(Case 1, lesson 9, episode 7)

4.7 Encouraging collaborative peer learning

Having to balance the needs of individual pupils and the needs of the whole group, Ann often encouraged collaborative group work. Extract 4.7.1 (opposite) illustrates how Ann encouraged a group of three pupils to work collaboratively (turn 2). The interaction which followed suggests that collaborative peer work may be an effective way of promoting pupil-pupil scaffolding. Turns 3 and 4 provide evidence of the pupils' collaborative learning and explicit grammatical awareness, which suggests that Ann's initiation has worked. Moreover, Sharon, who up to now has been reluctant to work without Ann's assistance (as expressed in turns 1 and 6), becomes more active in this episode and even makes the best guess (turns 12-13). Although the current investigation focuses on teacher-pupil interaction, rather than peer-interaction, this example provides some evidence of collaborative learning and suggests that encouraging pupils to scaffold each other may indeed result in language development. Ann's classroom interaction data reveal that she encouraged peer and group collaboration both in the classroom and in the computer or English room. This approach accords closely with Vygotky's development theory which asserts that a more capable peer can provide guidance for a less capable one and thereby extend his or her learning development.

Researchers in the field of sociocultural approaches to L2 learning have explored the notion of 'mutual scaffolding' among learners (e.g. Donato, 1994, 2000; Ohta, 1995). Their findings show that pupils are capable of providing guided support to their peers during collaborative learning and that scaffolding occurs routinely as pupils work together on language learning tasks. Moreover, in the process of peer scaffolding learners can expand their language knowledge and extend the linguistic development of their peers. All participants benefit during the peer collaboration: the more advanced learner has a chance to adjust, refine and experiment with his or her own language through the interaction, while, at the same time, using his or her strengths to help the less capable peer.

Extract 4.7.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Sharon	[I need someone to read for me.]
2.	Ann	[The girls will read for you (...) Do it together. One of you will read for the others] (Ann walks around the room assisting other pupils)
3.	Keren	(...) Did [is past (***)]
4.	Sharon	[Yes. Also (*) is past] (...)
5.	Ann	[Yes?]
6.	Sharon	[It won't work. I mean, **really**.]
7.	Ann	[Play the pool. I want you to play the pool.]
8.	Keren	[I did] will, [she] 'did', [and she went for the third.]
9.	Ann	[Yes?]
10.	Keren	[No, I'm just joking.]
11.	Ann	[Where? In the first?]
12.	Sharon	[What do you mean, just joking. Really. She said] did, [she said] will [and I said] am.
13.	Ann	[You were right.] (points to Sharon)
14.	Keren	(laughs) [She didn't say anything at all. I said] will [she said] did [and she took what was left.] (turns to Tamar) [Tamar, did you see that?]
15.	Sharon	[I said] am.
16.	Ann	[So she took what was left.]

(Ann, lesson 9, episode 5)

What is missing from Ann's data, however, is an intentional attempt to design tasks which promote peer and group collaboration. This lack may be explained in two ways. First, the fact that the data were recorded shortly before the matriculation examination meant that she had little time for activities detached from the exam format. Secondly, Ann, like many teachers, may have had a preconceived assumption that due to their poor language proficiency and skills pupils with SpLD are less likely to benefit from peer and group work. This approach emerges from the interviews with the other teachers as well as from Ann's interview:

"I had to lower my expectations once I started working with the guys who have lots of difficulties in producing tangible outcomes from things that they create by themselves. It hardly exists. So, sadly, I had to separate from that creative part."

(Interview data, answer 1)

However, in a case study that I conducted (Cohen, 2003b, see 2.5.2), I found that peer and group work opens up opportunities for participation and increases motivation amongst pupils with SpLD. I therefore believe that tasks which are well designed for peer and group collaborative work may lead to pupil-pupil scaffolding in classrooms of pupils with SpLD.

4.8 Summary

This chapter has presented the findings of one of the main cases of this study which has focused on Ann and the way in which she scaffolds her pupils through instructional interaction. Firstly, it has been suggested that Ann's lessons provide evidence of the five components of scaffolding (see 2.3.2) and that embedding these components in her instruction indeed opened up opportunities for a larger variety of scaffolding practices than lessons which do not contain these components. Secondly, in terms of the quadrant framework of teacher-pupil interaction (see 2.3.3), it has been found that as a classroom activity progresses and the elaboration, mediation and clarification components are expressed, the interaction provides more opportunities for dialogue and scaffolding. During such episodes learning-driven interaction emerged. Thirdly, it has been demonstrated that slight deviations from a pre-planned agenda, and from the IRF classroom sequence lead to scaffolding. Scaffolding emerged when Ann asked facilitating, process-oriented questions, replied to pupils'

questions by further questioning them and when follow up moves took a form which provided formative assistance to pupils. Formative follow up moves were also found to result from her aiming at dynamic, rather than evaluative assessment of knowledge and performance. Instruction intended to increase meta-cognitive and language awareness was found to promote collaborative, reciprocal learning. Finally, findings suggest that allowing and encouraging pupils to work in collaboration may increase participation and motivation.

The next chapter presents the second case study which has been selected for in-depth analysis.

Chapter 5: Findings from Case 2 (Irene)

"Thanks to her, my English has improved a lot ... It's not like coming, teaching and going. She cares about pupils, that they will succeed."

(Interview data, Irene's pupil)

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I presented the findings derived from analysis of data of Case 1. Below, after initial background information on the second teacher and the class she taught, I present the findings derived from the data of Case 2. Similarly to chapter 4, in this chapter I first use the 'five components of scaffolding' (2.3.2) and the 'teacher-pupil interaction model' (2.3.3) as analytical frameworks in order to analyse a whole lesson. I then use descriptive analysis and analysis of deviations from the IRF pattern to probe smaller units of teacher-pupil interaction in order to identify critical moves which may account for effective scaffolding.

5.2 Background

Irene was one of the three teachers I observed at the Kibbutz high school. She was a female, non-native speaker of English who had taught English for nine years. She initially qualified as a Special Education (SE) teacher and taught Hebrew grammar and literature. Her career had included teaching soldiers with socio-economic problems and severe learning difficulties, and children at an asylum for children with mental problems. She had also worked as a class tutor at a high school for youths with SpLD and juvenile problems. When she applied for a job at the Kibbutz high school, she was first told that they did not need a SE teacher. However, after agreeing to teach English to SE classes, she started a second career as an English teacher. During her first years as an EFL teacher, Irene taught SE classes only. Later, she began teaching mainstream pupils with SpLD who studied EFL in low-ability groups. Once in the field of EFL teaching, Irene took a number of short training courses in EFL. In her interview she notes: "I started from zero, and through autodidactic learning I started

training myself in English and began working as a SE teacher who teaches EFL" (Interview, answer 1). Irene had also taken courses in art therapy. As will be shown in this chapter, her background knowledge in SE and in art therapy may have influenced her classroom instruction and instructional activities.

The class I observed was the lowest proficiency level 10th grade stream. According to Irene, 95% of pupils within the class were defined as having average or above average intellectual abilities and 5% were classified as SE pupils (in the sense that they had low IQ scores). The class consisted of sixteen pupils, all assessed as pupils with SpLD, some of whom had ADHD. The pupils were referred to Irene from another class soon after the beginning of the school year because the other teacher had not been able to cope with their behavioural problems and it was thought that, as a SE teacher, Irene would be able to address their educational needs.

In the analysis below, I first employ the five components of classroom scaffolding and the teacher-pupil interaction quadrant model to analyse a transcription of a whole lesson.

5.3 Components of classroom scaffolding and types of interaction

In this section I present findings derived from analysis of a video recording of lesson 7. The interactional activity studied evolved around a listening comprehension task in which the pupils had to listen to a monologue and a conversation played on a tape about activities in Tel Aviv and to check boxes in a chart. The following analysis demonstrates how Irene incorporated in her lesson the component of scaffolding.

5.3.1 Recruitment and management

The interaction in the first episode clearly focuses upon recruiting pupils' attention and introducing them to the activity, as demonstrated in extract 5.3.1.1 below.

Extract 5.3.1.1: Recruitment & management

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Irene	Please take out books, notebooks, pens (...) [We'll soon see who is going to the library to bring the books.]
2.	PP	[I want, I want, Irene...]
3.	Irene	Today is the twenty second of March (writing the date on the board) Let's just check attendance and then we'll start] (...) Please open your notebooks. We will write something before we get the books from the library (...) We will prepare ourselves (...) OK. Page 58 (begins to draw a chart on the whiteboard) [And leave a space of two lines at the top (...) one is wide.]
4.	Px	[Oh, do we draw a table?]
5.	Irene	[Yes (...) and four shorter spaces.]
6.	Px	[And four narrower spaces?]
7.	Irene	[Exactly...] (to another student) [You draw a table. Look (...)]
8.	Px	[I don't know how to draw it. Can you show me?]
9.	Irene	[Do you have a ruler or do you do it by hand? (...) [You are quick, Dan (...) it looks like you have copied it very nicely.]
10.	Px	(**)

By modelling on the whiteboard how to draw a chart which functions as a graphical organizer (turn 3), Irene recruits the pupils' attention. At the same time, she verbalizes the directions using both English and Hebrew (turn 3). The pupils' responses in turns 4, 6 and 8 suggest that their attention has been engaged. The chart drawing task, albeit not extremely novel, serves as a slight deviation from the typical EFL tasks, which are usually based on verbal stimulation. Therefore, it functions as both visual stimulation which attracts the pupils' attention and as an activity with which pupils with writing or verbal comprehension problems can cope relatively easily. Language mediation is represented in this first episode by Irene's guidance, prompting and encouragement. In turn 9, Irene responds to a pupil's appeal for help by saying: "Do you have a ruler or do you do it by hand?" Then, she encourages another pupil: "You are quick, Dan (...)". All the above described strategies which constitute part of the recruitment phase enable Irene to make it easy for the pupils to engage with the task and herself to move smoothly to the second aspect of the instruction role: representation and clarification, which is demonstrated in extract 5.3.2.1 below.

5.3.2 Representation and clarification

The second episode of the lesson (opposite) illustrates how Irene represents and clarifies the task for the pupils, assisting them to draw some learning plan or lesson organizer, aimed at developing independence (Swanson, 1990; Webster et al., 1996, p. 74). She first clarifies the purpose of the grid she has drawn (turn 1). She then uses a reminder (turn 5) to link pre-existing knowledge to the present information. She addresses pupils' questions about how to get started and how to proceed (turns 3, 8, 15 and 19). When a pupil initiates an off-task comment (turn 10), Irene neither ignores nor reprimands him. While referring to his comment as a legitimate part of classroom interaction, her response is aimed at mollifying rather than agitating the atmosphere (in turn 11, she refers to the ambulances rather than the stabs). This strategy appears effective in light of the observer's comment in turn 14: that the pupils copy the grid from the board and look attentive and engaged in their task. Throughout this phase, effective scaffolding is also reflected through Irene's ability to reduce the complexity of the task by providing verbal explanations and clarifications to the whole class as well as to individual pupils.

As shown in the previous chapter (see 4.3.3), it appears that components of scaffolding do not always progress in a linear fashion but are intertwined in the instructional mediation process. For instance, during this second phase of scaffolding, Irene provides a pupil with an individual task, recruiting his attention and managing his behaviour (turn 14). Attending to the specific needs of individual pupils within the group seems to be a recurrent pattern in the data of both Ann and Irene and will be further discussed in chapter 6, within the cross-case comparative analysis.

Extract 5.3.2.1: Representation & clarification

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Irene	[Well done ... Leave out the wide one. Here you write] Mr Dadon (she draws the grid on the board. The horizontal columns are titled 'Activities' and the vertical columns are titled 'Names'.]
2.	Px	Dadon.
3.	Irene	Yes. Here. Mr Dadon, Mrs Dadon.
4.	Px	Dana.
5.	Irene	Right. Dana and Tali (...) When you have the books we'll see that we start a new unit. Last time we talked about Eilat and we talked about diving. What's the meaning of the word diving?
6.	Px	[Diving].
7.	Irene	[Remember?] And we read about diving and we listened to a passage about diving. Now we will talk about a different place in Israel. We will talk about somewhere in the middle.
8.	Px	[Why do you do (**)]
9.	Irene	[The wider (...) I number the characters.]
10.	Px	[Have you heard what happened in Rehovot?]
11.	Irene	No, what happened?
12.	Px	[Someone was stabbed five times in his stomach.]
13.	Irene	[When I came this morning I saw many ambulances (...) Open the books. Copy.] (...)
14.	Irene	(The pupils copy the grid from the board they all look attentive and engaged in copying. She approaches the pupil who gets individual work and organizes the books on his desk, handing him his worksheet and telling him:) [First you write the date and your name and translate the words at the top of the page.] (He gets the magazine 'Time Out' and a task sheet.)
15.	Px	(asks a question regarding the table on the board.)
16.	Irene	(touches the board, indicating with her hands where he should write the words and verbalizes the instructions.) Open page 58 and let's read (...)
17.	Px	(The pupil who works individually asks her something.)
18.	Irene	(approaches him, pointing at what he has to do and explaining verbally.)
19.	Px	[I didn't understand what to do.]
20.	Irene	(approaches him and explains to him what he should do.)

5.3.3 Elaborating

The focus of the instruction in the third episode (opposite) is on elaborating existing linguistic frameworks. Irene begins by writing on the whiteboard five phrases which contain both familiar vocabulary (e.g., 'shopping', 'going'), and vocabulary items which may be less familiar (e.g., in turn 1, 'restaurant', 'cinema', 'wind surfing'). According to Webster et al. (1996, p. 75), linking new ideas with concepts pupils have already worked on or know constructs "strategic conceptual bridges". Irene also creates such bridges by marking and accentuating those features of the task which may be more relevant to the pupils than others (Webster et al., 1996, p. 76). For instance, in turn 6, after she has marked the word 'restaurant', she highlights its relevance to pupils' real-life contexts by saying: "It's one of the most important words when you go abroad ...". Next, still in turn 6, she bridges what the pupils have already learned with what they are about to learn ("We have left Eilat and now we are in a different city"). In addition, she prompts the pupils to use a mnemonic ("Look at the word and picture it in your mind"), directing them to activate their visual (rather than auditory) memory. Turn 12 provides a further illustration of a strategic conceptual bridge between pupils' previous knowledge and the new concepts, where Irene refers to the familiar use of the word 'action' in film-making. This strategy has been found effective when teaching pupils with SpLD (e.g. Larkin, 2001, p. 33; Swanson, 1990).

The next episode of this lesson (see section 5.3.4.1 below) reflects the mediation phase, where the pupils' learning activity "is brought into juxtaposition with the written language which both organizes and represents that activity" (Webster et al., 1996, p. 77).

Extract 5.3.3.1: Elaboration

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Irene	(writes five phrases on the board which the pupils copy: Shopping in Dizingov Sitting in the sun Wind surfing Eating in a restaurant Going to the cinema) [Noam, page 58, grid, section three] (...)
2.	Iddo	[No, it has to be number five.]
3.	Irene	[Iddo, what would I do without you?] (...) (Some pupils say out the Hebrew equivalents of the phrases and Irene writes them on the whiteboard, next to the English phrases.) (...)
4.	Irene	EATING IN A RESTAURANT. What is restaurant, Amir?
5.	Amit	[Restaurant.]
6.	Irene	[It's one of the most important words when you go abroad. If you don't know the word you will not know how to ask where there is a restaurant, or read it from the signs]. (She writes the word on the board.) [Look at the word and picture it in your mind.] (...) Now we are going to see what the new unit is about. Open the book on page 54. (She is holding the book open in front of her, displaying the page they have to look at). We have left Eilat and now we are in a different city.
7.	Px	Tel Aviv.
8.	Irene	Good. Tel Aviv.
9.	Px	[In Tel Aviv.]
10.	Irene	In Tel Aviv. [Good. But before we have the word] action. [What is] action?
11.	Px	[Action.]
12	Irene	[Right,] action [is action. Right. They say in movies] action. [To make the actors act] (...)

5.3.4 Mediation

In the third phase of the lesson, mediation is demonstrated by using a number of physical and symbolic tools (Vygotsky, 1978): a textbook, an audio recording, a chart which she has drawn on the whiteboard and which the pupils have to complete while listening to the tape, and her own language mediation. In this way, Irene not only provides the pupils with a variety of opportunities to engage in language learning, but also enables them to use different sensory routes (auditory, visual and tactile).

Extract 5.3.4.1 below demonstrates that, on the surface, the interaction in this phase appears teacher-dominated because it does not represent natural or 'genuine communication' (Nunan, 1987, p. 137, see 2.4.1). However, in terms of the quadrant model, it would be too simplistic to describe the interaction as 'teacher-driven', as demonstrated below.

Extract 5.3.4.1: Mediation

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Irene	WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TEL AVIV? TEL AVIV THE CITY THAT NEVER STOPS. [We even had a few days ago big posters-]
2.	Px	[Tel Aviv, a city that doesn't stop.]
3.	Irene	[Right, right.] Tel Aviv is a city that never stops. [Why do we have 's' after the word stop?] (She points at the word in the page she is displaying.)
4.	Px	[It's plural.]
5.	Px	(**)
6.	Irene	[No, no. In English we don't have plural for verbs. We add it because it's] (3 secs)
7.	Px	[past.]

The interaction above shows how Irene puts the text in a real-life context for the pupils (turn 1). In turn 3, her response to the pupil's initiation ("Right, right") suggests that she maintains human contact and interaction with her pupils beyond the text and its didactic aims. She provides opportunities for pupils to nominate themselves, take risks and make mistakes. When a pupil fails to provide the right answer to the grammatical question Irene has posed in turn 3, Irene neither provides

the right answer, nor nominates another pupil, which are evaluative acts , implying a search for the right answer Rather, in turn 6 she provides a 'starter', ("We add it because it's..."), and uses an effective pause to allow other pupils to provide an answer. Only after a third pupil's trial (turn 7) proves incorrect does Irene provide an answer (turn 8 in extract 5.3.4.2 opposite), albeit somewhat misleading, as the 's' distinguishes third-person rather than present. Effective mediation is further evident in the second extract from this episode (5.3.4.2 opposite). In turn 11 a pupil provides a correct response ("More"), and Irene praises the correct answer and switches to English, perhaps to encourage pupils to respond in English. This act is followed by a sequence of six self-nominations from pupils who make contributions to the conversation (turns 13, 15, 17, 19, 20 and 22). When Irene provides feedback to the pupils' responses, she translates words they have offered in Hebrew into English. However, there is evidence of inconsistent language switching. In turn 17, for example, when a pupil responds in Hebrew ("[Museum]"), Irene praises him and puts the word into English: "[right], the museum" (turn 18), but in many cases she uses Hebrew for no apparent reason, which may be seen as a missed opportunity. The phenomenon of shifting from L2 to L1 and vice versa represents a recurrent pattern across cases in the present research, and will therefore be discussed in the next chapter (see 6.7).

On the whole, however, it appears that many opportunities of scaffolding are effectively used by Irene. For instance, when in turn 21, a pupil initiates an answer slightly off-task ("Entertainment, Irene"), Irene encourages him by extending his answer, giving it validity (perhaps in response to the personal appeal by name) and expanding on it by creating a bride between the text and real-life contexts: "Yes. A movie actor ... who wants to promote himself will move to Tel Aviv" (turn 23). Although she has allowed some deviation from task, which fosters interaction, she soon returns to task (turn 21), giving reason ("We don't have much time"). As a further instance of scaffolding in the shape of formative feedback, in turn 25 Irene evaluates a wrong answer in an encouraging way. The confusion between words which have some phonemic/spelling. resemblance ('twin' and 'between') allows Irene to model the auditory and the orthographic difference, focusing the pupil's attention on the salient features of the words.

Extract 5.3.4.2: Mediation

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
8.	Irene	No. It shows that it is present. It describes something in the present.][[No. It shows that it is present. It describes something in the present.] EVEN AT 3 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING THE ROADS ARE BUSY (...) THERE IS MORE TO SEE AND DO IN TEL AVIV THAN IN ANY OTHER PLACE IN ISRAEL.
9.	Px	[That there is a lot to do.]
10.	Irene	More than.
11.	Px	[More.]
12.	Irene	[Good. More than other places in Israel.] What places do you know in Tel Aviv?
13.	Px	[the port.]
14.	Irene	[The port] Port.
15.	Px	Promenade*
16.	Irene	[Promenade.] (Irene approaches the student who works individually and bends down to look at his worksheet and help him.)
17.	Px	[Museum.]
18.	Irene	[Right], the museum.
19.	Px	[Shopping mall.] (...)
20.	Px	[There is a parking problem.]
21.	Irene	[Right, there is a problem with] parking. It's the first Hebrew city. [It's the first Hebrew city, right?]
22.	Px	[Entertainment, Irene.]
23.	Irene	[Yes. A movie actor or a theatre actor who wants to promote himself will move to Tel Aviv.] (...)[Because we don't have much time], return to page 58. MR AND MRS DADON, THEIR 16 YEAR OLD SON AND THE TWIN [what is] twin?
24.	Px	Between
25	Irene	Between, [a nice error] between is [between]. Twin. Look how it is written: [twin] (...) AND THEIR TWO DAUGHTERS DANA AND DANIELLA ARE SPENDING TWO DAYS IN TEL AVIV. They came=

In the third extract of this episode (5.3.4.3 opposite), pupils' initiations are accepted as positive contributions to the overall success of the lesson. For instance, when, in turn 30, a pupil "takes the risk" to correct Irene's mistake, Irene, in turn 31, acknowledges the pupil's contribution, and thanks the pupil, paying attention not just to the teaching material but also to the social conventions of polite interaction. She then directs the pupils' attention back to the task in hand (turn 31), explaining and clarifying it in more detail. Her clarification results in pupils raising difficulties (turns 32 and 33) to which she provides further explanations.

The second analyst's analysis (see 3.5.6) of extracts 5.3.4.1-3 is embedded in the above discussion. It accords with my interpretation of the data, viewing the pupils' responsiveness to Irene as a result of her "ability to build an interactive environment around and beyond the task" and to create "comfort without losing track of the task" (Haines, 2006). However, the second analyst's interpretation has directed my attention to the following problems in the interaction:

"I also note that there is little or no interaction between Ps, only between T and individual Ps, so the opportunity for scaffolding between/amongst Ps, if realistic, is not exploited. A major feature is the lack of time, mentioned in 23, which may be the reason for shortened explanation of some language points. The code-switching between Hebrew and English is another feature of the lesson. She does this inconsistently when (I assume) repeating the correct answers of individual Ps for the rest of the class."

(Haines, 2006)

These problems regarding peer interaction and code-switching will be further discussed in the next two chapters within the cross-case analysis (6.7), and when discussing the findings (7.2.3.7 and 7.2.3.7).

Extract 5.3.4.3: Mediation

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
26.	Px	[for shopping.] Shopping.
27.	Irene	[For shopping. Let's listen -]
28.	Yael	[You made a mistake.]
29.	Irene	[For shopping in Tel Aviv.]
30.	Yael	[It's not Daniela it's Dalia.]
31.	Irene	[I made a mistake. Thank you, Yael.] (...) OK. The Dadon family is coming to Tel Aviv for two days and they are talking about what they are going to do in Tel Aviv. Each one of them is going (...) to do a different thing. (Points at the table she drew on the board: Activities and names.) [You have to check (...) which of those things each one of the characters is planning to do in Tel Aviv. Let's start.] (...) (Irene plays the listening comprehension passage and the pupils begin the fill in the missing information on the chart they have copied from the board.) [Note that another character appears in one of the dialogues but you have to refer only to the family members.]
32.	Px	[Irene, they didn't mention Dana and Dalia.]
33.	Irene	They are Ofer's sisters. [Maybe they didn't mention their names but they use titles like Ofer's sisters.]
34.	Px	[They didn't mention the parents.]
35.	Irene	[They talk. They say I go, not she goes (...)

5.3.5 Finishing

Finally, the fifth component of classroom scaffolding is evident in this lesson by allocating time for the pupils to check their own answers and ask questions, and by Irene's final remark: "We will check it on Wednesday" as shown in turn 37 below.

Extract 5.3.5.1: Finishing

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
37	Irene	OK. Try to listen again.] Second time. (She plays the listening comprehension text one more time and the pupils check themselves and complete the task. Meanwhile Irene is walking around. She approaches the pupil who works individually, checking his worksheet and correcting his answers. Then she turns to the whole class, saying:) [It is a complicated passage from the point of view that in parts of it, she is talking about herself and in parts she is talking about others. (The bell rings.) [We will check it on Wednesday.]

The 'finishing' episode demonstrates how Irene helps pupils check their own answers by playing the tape one more time, walking around and helping individual pupils complete the missing information in their grids. It is worth mentioning that data emerging throughout Irene's lessons reveal that the 'finishing' component of classroom scaffolding usually took the form of checking pupils' work while they were engaged in their tasks and involved encouraging or corrective feedback on pupils' learning processes and products (e.g., lesson 6, 26.2.04). More product-oriented assessment of pupils' work took the form of checking work collectively (e.g. lesson 5), or collecting worksheets or notebooks, and returning them on the next lesson with some positive personal feedback on the pupils' efforts (or a smile sticker), or comments on what can be done to improve (e.g. lesson 4). According to Irene, checking pupils' work and giving them positive feedback created motivation in the pupils to complete their tasks (fields notes, 19.2.04).

In sum, extracts analysed in this section illustrate a number of classroom scaffolding practices which seem relevant to pupils with SpLD and when included in the structure of the lesson increase opportunities for assistance and effective verbal and non-verbal mediation. The lesson described in 5.3 above represents other observed lessons in that the first component of Irene's lessons always involved recruiting pupils into the task

and providing them with understanding of the task's relevance and of it's basic concepts and procedures, so that they can begin. Once the pupils began working on the task independently, Irene turned to address individual needs and provided specific assistance in writing, word decoding, and higher-level comprehension skills. This type of scaffolding accords with what recent literature on L2 and SEN has described as provision of appropriate learning opportunities in literacy: explicit instruction of strategies and various elements of literacy, such as text comprehension, and understanding of links between words, sentences and the text (e.g. Frederickson & Cline, 2002, p. 325).

In the next sections I present and discuss two patterns which emerge from Irene's data: scaffolding pupils' organizational skills and scaffolding pupils' attention.

5.4 Scaffolding organisation skills

Pupils with SpLD often have difficulty with digesting large quantities of text within specific timescales, and with preparing and organising written work (e.g. Carbone, 2001; Chaiker, Kyllonen & Tirre, 2000; Ostler, 1997). A prominent pattern which emerges from Irene's classroom and interview data is a conscious attempt to embed organisational strategies in her classroom pedagogical interaction. In her interview, Irene said that many of her pupils do not possess organisational habits and therefore, with new classes, the first two or three months are a period of "serious struggle" for the teacher aiming to provide them with organisational skills and effective work habits (Interview data, answer 2). According to Irene, in training the pupils to be organised, she "put[s] a mirror in front of their faces: It is the second time you have come to class without a pen. You know that on the third time I will report on you." (Interview data, answer 3). This technique works for her because:

Extract 5.4.1

"They always see my other side right from the beginning ... I show them right away that I have a lot of respect for their problem, because I recognize their problem after one or two lessons - the ones who don't want to copy and never copy from the board, I tell them: 'Write down the title', and I immediately come and sit beside them and *write for them ...Which means that I don't only give instructions and tell them to cope with them. I come to them with a lot of support but with many demands ..."*

(Interview data, Irene, answer 3)

The data reveal a number of ways in which Irene provided for pupils' organisation skills. These are exemplified below.

5.4.1 A routine lesson structure

As noted above, pupils with SpLD often have difficulty in planning and carrying out activities within a time framework. Irene's data suggest that she addressed this problem by keeping a routine lesson structure which included first recruiting pupils' attention and managing working procedures and then presenting new concepts (e.g. vocabulary, grammar, reading skills), and asking pupils to copy the target language items to their notebooks. Next she introduced the learning tool(s) (e.g. text, map, song, dialogue on tape recorder), and finally used mediation by means of verbal and non-verbal assistance (e.g., providing explanations, reading text, walking around and writing for individual pupils). According to Irene,

Extract 5.4.1.1

"on the one hand, every lesson has different contents. On the other hand, there is the structure ... there is this framework into which I bring something new each time. ... a routine"

(Interview data, answer 30).

One way of introducing her pupils to the above described routine is by sharing with them her lesson plan. The extract below exemplifies how Irene listed her agenda on the blackboard at the beginning of a lesson.

Extract 5.4.1.2

11:40: Irene writes on board in Hebrew:
On the agenda:

a. Few words about the tests
b. Reading today's passage
c. Worksheet + listening to a song
d. A conversation
e. Handing out tests

(Field notes, lesson 3)

The above 'time-structuring' strategy directs pupils to monitor their own pace and complete tasks within defined time limits.

5.4.2 Procedural strategies

Procedural strategies are defined as strategies which assist pupils to 'draw up some form of learning plan or lesson organizer, aimed at developing independence' (Webster et al., 1996, pp. 74-75). Questioning is one strategy to help pupils construct procedural strategies for themselves, as illustrated in the following excerpts:

Extract 5.4.2.1

Irene: What do we have to do before listening to the tape?
Px: Answers Irene in Hebrew.
Irene: [Right. Maybe it's a grid, and maybe it's multiple choice questions.]

(Field notes, 11.2.04)

Extract 5.4.2.2

Irene: [What do we do before we read a passage?]
Px: [Read the questions.]

(Field notes, 23.2.04)

As suggested by the above examples, questioning can become a component of scaffolding in that it helps pupils' understanding how they are going to pursue an activity and why. In the above excerpts it is suggested that questioning is used to increase pupils' awareness of the importance of paying attention to the type of question or task they are required to do. In the above extracts Irene focuses the pupils' attention to the significance of their pre-reading/listening task. I consider this questioning strategy especially important for facilitating these learners' reading skills, because whenever intrinsic motivation in reading or listening is low, teachers might attempt to manipulate the reader's sense of purpose by giving the objective of reading particular passages (Alderson, 2000). It has been shown that objectives that direct students' attention to aspects of text they would otherwise ignore have been shown to be somewhat effective in enhancing comprehension, for example, scanning for specific information, or skimming for the main idea (Alderson, 2000; Alderson, Claphan & Steel, 1997).

Moreover, it appears from the data that when procedural strategies are used habitually and collaboratively, in the sense that pupils are constantly activated to think of and to come to know the purpose of certain procedures, these strategies become part of the classroom discussion routine, as demonstrated in the following excerpt:

Extract 5.4.2.3

Irene: [Answer the first question.] Do people still buy their records?
Translate the question into Hebrew. Idan, first stage.
Noam, first stage [Those who need the second stage may do it, but it is not necessary.]

Px: (To a peer): [Firstly, you translate the question into Hebrew, and secondly, you write the answer in Hebrew and then in English.]

(Field notes, 19.2.04)

In the above excerpt, the strategy of translating a question into L1, writing the answer in L1 and only then writing it in English, is aimed at providing pupils with some scaffolding in the form of L1. When encouraging her pupils to do so, Irene helps them to reduce independently the difficulty of unfamiliar vocabulary (both in the question and in the answer). Moreover, the use of questions in the L1 may be more 'authentic' in that students are likely to ask themselves questions of L2 text in their first language (Shohamy, 1984). The element of choice that Irene presents ("Those who need the second stage may do it, but it is not necessary."), contributes to the collaborative dialogue between her and her pupils.

5.4.3 Scaffolding writing

Poor hand-writing and organisation on paper and spelling difficulties often result in avoidance of writing or refusal to write. In order to help pupils perceive the written input in an ordered way and to assist them manage their own writing, Irene constantly used neat and well-organised writing on the blackboard, enabling pupils to find their way with the written material, and allocate their energies to the content rather than the arrangement. When asked to define classroom environments which promote learning and concentration, one of Irene's pupils referred to silence and neat writing on the blackboard as two main factors:

Extract 5.4.3.1

"If the teacher writes something, it should be written neatly on the blackboard. It shouldn't be messy ... I need organization on the blackboard so that I can write neatly myself."

(Pupil interview 1:9)

Irene also used a small quantity of written input that pupils were required to copy to their notebooks. For example, a vocabulary list consisted of approximately five to six words. Grammar rules consisted of one principle and two to three examples. In addition to reducing the quantity of writing, Irene occasionally sat beside pupils and wrote for them because it gave them

Extract 5.4.3.2

"kind of momentum and then when they feel that half the page is already done they continue on their own."

(Interview data, answer 18).

According to Larkin (2001, p. 33), writing and penmanship tasks are laborious for some pupils with SpLD and therefore, when asking pupils to dictate their ideas while the teacher writes them on paper enables pupils who have difficulty with written expression to generate ideas without worrying about how to convey them on paper.
In addition to writing for pupils, Irene modelled correct writing, as illustrated by the next excerpt:

Extract 5.4.3.3

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Irene	(Stands besides a pupil looking while he is writing, saying something.)
2.	Px	(...) [Ah! I don't know either. I wrote 'g' by mistake.]
3.	Irene	Bends over the girl's worksheet and demonstrates how to write q.) Look, that's our line [this is our line]. You start like a g. 'g' is like a walking stick, but q is like tail.] (Another student is looking too while Irene is demonstrating. She then goes to the other pupil and writes in his notebook, verbalizing the stages of drawing the letter.)

(Lesson 6)

According to Irene, she did not only assist pupils physically by writing for them or by modelling how to write correctly, but also talked with them about the strategies they should use, in order to increase their awareness of their difficulties and how to cope with them, giving them "sort of small lectures on LD":

Extract 5.4.3.4

"... For example, a student who writes the words on the left hand of the notebook and continues the answers on the same line, on the right instead of continuing under the words (...) I will approach such a student and tell him: 'You know, studies show that when there is a difficulty like you have then one of the difficult things is to read a long line, and what you are creating here for yourself is long lines."

(Interview data, answers 3-4).

Such scaffolding strategies may account for the fact that throughout Irene's lessons, most of her pupils were observed to write in their worksheets and seemed willing to use their notebooks. According to Irene, an additional factor which might assist pupils' organisation is her demand that they use a notebook rather than a binder, because when using binders:

Extract 5.4.3.5

"they lose track of left and right, they put pages back to the wrong place, the pages tear out (...) and to a pupil who says: 'I have been using a binder for years', I reply: 'No problem, get a plastic punched pocket and put your English notebook inside it."

(Interview data, Answer 2).

The data reveal that Irene demanded that pupils used their notebooks, using directives and comments along the lines of: "Please open your notebook", or: "You are supposed to open your notebook". She also trained pupils to use the notebook as a resource for reference. This is demonstrated in the following extracts:

Extract 5.4.3.6

Irene: [Tomorrow we are going to have a test. Do you have the list of the words? ... You weren't here so you have to complete the word translations by tomorrow.]

(Lesson 1, lines 7-8)

Extract 5.4.3.7

Irene: [Remember that we talked about this] S, [that if we don't have the word] does ... [We spoke about it on the 19th November, at the beginning of the year, those who want can open the notebook and look. In third-person singular, if there is no] 'does' [in the sentence, we add an] S [to the verb.]

(Lesson 4, lines 128-131)

Providing pupils with the aforementioned organisation tools resulted in pupils' sense of order and security in relation to the teacher's expectations from them on tests, as suggested by the following interview extract:

Extract 5.4.3.8

"They can never complain to me – we haven't learned this. I have never received such a complaint. Since I know that they have organization problems, they always get printed materials. I print for the class what will be on the test. I write down the dates because their notebook is organized – they have the dates. ... I make sure that their preparation for the test will be fair and give them a chance to succeed."

(Interview data, answer 6)

5.4.4 Graphic organizers

In addition to assisting and training pupils be organised and keep track of written input and instructions, Irene used simple visual organizers to assist pupils find their way with the written input. A graphic organizer has been defined as visual representation of knowledge which structures information, or arranges important aspects of a concept or topic into a pattern using labels (Bromley, Irwin-DeVitis & Modlo, 1995, p. 6). Irene used graphic organizers in order to assist pupils orientate themselves through written or spoken data.

For instance, she used charts in which students were asked to check information which they listened to on a tape. She used different coloured chalks to emphasize different pronouns in sentences in order to teach how 's' distinguishes third-person. She wrote the parts of speech in a sentence within separate boxes. Baxendell (2003, p. 47) reviewed the literature on the effectiveness of graphic organizers for general and SEN pupils and reported that graphic organizers, when effectively used (i.e. coherently, consistently and creatively) help pupils see how ideas or concepts are organised within a text. They provide concrete representations for structuring abstract

ideas and help pupils see the sequence or hierarchy of concepts. Thus, pupils are better able to understand relationships between information and to arrange it to facilitate retention and recall (*ibid*).

Some pupils, however, especially those with non verbal learning difficulties who have visual-spatial problems may find it hard to copy graphic organizers. For such pupils, verbalization of the steps involved in writing the organizers may help. As demonstrated in the following excerpt, verbal structuring was used by Irene to assist pupils' visual-spatial orientation:

Extract 5.4.4.1

Before listening to the passage played on the cassette, Irene draws on the blackboard a grid with nine lines and three columns. She also explains to the pupils how to draw it: 'Copy the grid. Make the first column wider because we have more to write and the other two shorter'.

(Field notes, 22.3.04)

Representing concepts both visually, verbally and graphically constitutes for me evidence of effective mediation for pupils with SpLD who may need to use more than one sensory route (e.g. visual, auditory or tactile) in order to compensate for deficient routes (e.g. Hickey, 1977).

5.5 Strategies for improving attention

Irene seemed to take the concept of multi-sensory instruction (e.g. Hickey, 1977) beyond its simplistic interpretation. In addition to the traditional instructional tools, such as textbooks, notebooks, worksheets and dictionaries, Irene used a variety visual and auditory stimulations, such as coloured markers on the whiteboard (for example to differentiate the English word and their Hebrew equivalents) charts, songs and conversations played on tape recorder, videos, pictures, maps and text shown on an overhead projector. In addition, on worksheets she used organizers and 'eye catchers' such as boxes, large fonts, bolding arrows, and exclamation marks (see Appendix 14 on p. 185 for an example worksheet), as well as often asking pupils to use a colour marker in order to highlight words she wanted to draw their attention to. These tools may promote pupils' attention and retention by highlighting important linguistic

features, improving the student's organization and preventing her or him from skipping items (Carbone, 2001; Cherkes-Julkowski et al., 1997). In her interview, Irene notes that while the visual stimulators are attractive enough to draw the pupils' attention, she made sure that they do not pull them off task. For example, she reported that when showing a video with an observation task about gorillas who were brought up in captivity and are about to be set free, she referred to the English by giving pupils simple tasks such as to listen to how Jane used to call the gorilla (Interview data, answer 21).

Classroom data suggests that when novel tools were used by Irene, they seemed to increase pupils' attention, as evident in the following extracts:

Extract 5.5.1

Irene turns on the CD player. The students are very silent while listening to the narrator reading. It is the last chapter of the story - a monologue about a soldier who got injured and is in a wheelchair.

(Lesson 1, field notes lines 64-67)

Extract 5.5.2

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Irene	(...) We are going to read a text together (...) Let's see our text (She uses an overhead projector to show a text on The Beatles. It's a simple text, with a picture, but the overhead projector attracts their attention.)
2.	Px	[Irene, turn off the light.]
3.	Irene	(She reads out loud the text and the students listen silently.) By the way, for the italicized words we have -
4.	Px	[Translation.]

(Lesson 2: 31-34)

The above data indicate that when the teacher deviates slightly from her customary instruction procedures, and presents traditional texts through novel tools (e.g. a tape recorder or an overhead projector), the level of pupils' attention may increase significantly.

Another non-verbal technique of attracting pupils' attention emerge from Irene's interview. In her interview, she said that on one of her SE teaching training courses she learned about how to physically move around in the classroom and about the advantages and disadvantages of standing on the side of the room, or standing in the middle or at the back of the classroom. She claimed that she was aware of the advantages of locating herself in the classroom as a technique to attract the class's attention. For example, standing in the middle and being silent for 5 seconds "can cause a change. Everybody is kind of shocked, pushing each other with the elbow, and it concentrates them." (Interview data, answer 7)

Finally, a strategy for facilitating pupils' attention which emerges from the data of this case is Irene's use of economical speech in the classroom. In his interview, when asked what advice he could give to teachers, Irene's pupil said:

Extract 5.5.3

"They shouldn't speak at length too much. They should speak for a practical purpose. Because if you speak and speak and speak, the student does not hear everything that you are saying, and not even the important things. If you speak too much the student loses you very quickly."

(Interview data, pupil 4:15)

In her interview, when shown the above extract, Irene responded:

Extract 5.5.4

"Not speaking briefly and to the point. This is a disease most teachers suffer from. This is something which I try all the time to put under control ... I am still working myself on this."

(Ann, answer 14)

Irene's classroom data also suggest that during the recruitment phase of the lesson she talked more in order to introduce and explain the topic, link it to real-life contexts, give examples and tell personal anecdotes in Hebrew, which indeed, seem to recruit pupils' attention to and interest in the topic. However, when explaining vocabulary, grammar rules or correcting pupils' errors, her talk was economical and to the point. According to Walsh (2002), to many teachers, silence may be threatening, an indication that they have less control or that they are not doing their job. In fact, it is

the converse which is true. Handing over responsibility for participation and talk to pupils and increasing waiting and listening time to encourage pupils to participate and speak have been found to increase learners' attention, participation, and thus learning potential (*ibid*).

5.6 Summary

In this chapter I have presented an analysis of data derived from Case 2. Findings suggest that Irene integrated her knowledge and experience as a SE teacher into her EFL classroom interaction using four major effective scaffolding strategies. Firstly, the focus of the interaction in the first episode of every lesson was clearly on recruiting pupils' attention and motivation, introducing them to the activity and directing them in how to carry out the task. Attention-gaining strategies usually involved visual stimulation and recruitment involved different procedural strategies and clear directions to make the task comprehensible and manageable for the pupils.

Secondly, once the pupils' attention was recruited and they were engaged in the task, Irene was able to use effectively tools such as verbal guidance and explanation, oral or written modelling, and systematically attend to the specific needs of individual pupils within the group by actively shifting from a teacher-fronted position, where she modelled for the class and directed the whole group, to individual tutoring. Thirdly, Irene assisted pupils to construct bridges between the new concepts she was teaching and their own background linguistic and world knowledge and often put the text or the instructional topic in real-life contexts for pupils.

Finally, classroom interaction revealed that Irene paid special attention to scaffolding organization and writing skills. These involved using a structured lesson plan and familiarizing the pupils with it by routinely using the same lesson structure and by introducing the lesson agenda to the pupils at the beginning of every lesson. In this way pupils knew what was expected of them and how to plan their time.

In the next chapter I present a cross-case comparative analysis of the five cases under investigation.

Chapter 6 Cross-Case Analysis

"Excellent teaching is being very constantly aware of the choices and their appropriateness ... What is excellence for all students is absolutely essential for students who have an extra burden, extra problems."

(Interview data, Sue, answer 22)

6.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters I presented Cases 1 and 2, the main cases of this study into effective teacher-pupil classroom interaction. In this chapter, I have chosen to present a cross-case comparative analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2003). This is done partly for efficiency and economy of presentation, but mainly because the cross-case comparative analysis has a capacity "to facilitate cross-contextual generalities" which go beyond "explanations which are idiosyncratic", or particular only to a single case (Mason, 2002a, p. 8, see 3.2.3). The categories will be presented in a pyramidal order – from categories which are directly related to language teaching and learning (e.g. vocabulary, reading, speaking and writing), to those which are related to classroom instruction in general (e.g. organization strategies, affective factors) which are thought to account for effective interaction in the classroom of pupils with SpLD. The data sources which are included in the following analysis are as follows (also see table 3.2).

Case number & Teacher's pseudonym	context	Instructional hours used for analysis
1: Ann	17 twelfth grade high school pupils	10
2: Irene	16 tenth grade high school pupils	9
3: Dorit	16 tenth grade high school pupils	8
4: Sue	private instruction of a ninth grade pupil	3
5: Diana	private instruction of a tenth grade pupil	5

In addition to the above sources, the analysis hereafter is based on teacher and pupil interviews.

Case 3 teacher (Dorit) was the third teacher who taught at the Kibbutz school. Dorit was a native speaker EFL teacher who had gone through remedial instruction training in Israel and taught a group of sixteen tenth graders, most of whom assessed as having SpLD. Case 4 teacher (Sue) was a native speaker of English who had been initially trained as a social worker and later took training in EFL teaching. In her interview, she said that her first encounters with pupils with difficulties was because:

"Children with SpLD wanted me to teach them ... I didn't know anything about learning disabilities at the time. And then they found me and once they found me and I found them, then I realized that that was the path that I was now going to go down."

(Interview data, answer 1)

She then specialised as a remedial instructor and educational assessor, and soon became a teachers' teacher, training in-service EFL teachers on remedial instruction state programmes. Sue tape-recorded for me three instructional sessions with a ninth grade boy with SpLD whom she taught privately. Case 5 teacher (Diana) was a teacher at the Berlitz Institution where she taught beginner and advanced groups of adults. Two years before I began conducting my research, I started referring to her high school pupils with SpLD, and received very positive feedback from them and from their parents about the learners' progress. Diana collected for me more than fifteen sessions she tape-recorded for me over two years, from which I selected five for in-depth analysis, which also indicated the pupil's progress over time.

In this chapter I attempt to show and explain how the teachers enabled their learners to become actively and collaboratively engaged in EFL activities aimed at developing vocabulary, reading, writing and speaking and suggest some aspects of EFL learning that appear particularly relevant to pupils with SpLD.

6.2 Scaffolding vocabulary learning

Researchers as well as practitioners are well aware of the fact that the higher the learners' involvement with vocabulary learning is, the better their chances are of retaining the words in their memory (e.g. Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Read, 2000). According to Laufer & Hulstijn (*ibid*), involvement load has three dimensions: *need, search* and *evaluation.* These concepts are used below as labels for instructional

interaction used by teachers when attempting to increase pupils' involvements in vocabulary learning.

6.2.1 Creating a need to learn words

The first component which affects involvement in vocabulary learning is *need*, which is the motivational, non-cognitive dimension of involvement, based on a drive to comply with the task requirements. Need can be moderate, namely, imposed by the teacher, or strong, when self-imposed (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

Data from the cross-case analyses revealed different ways in which teachers, both as designers of vocabulary tasks and as language mediators, attempted to create self-imposed need in their pupils to comply with vocabulary tasks. One effective way to increase need was to evolve vocabulary tasks around topics which are relevant to pupils' lives and identities. This seemed to create more motivation amongst the pupils to comply with the task demands. For example, in chapter 4, section 4.3 I described a task given by Ann on the topic of the wall between Palestine and Israel, which engaged the pupils in word translation and guessing words from context. Similarly, Irene's vocabulary tasks evolved around topics such as a story about a soldier who was injured (lesson 1), music (lessons 2 - 4), or the Jewish holocaust (lesson 9). When task requirements involved speaking on a topic, the topics which appeared motivating for pupils to speak were those concerned with personal matters, such as talking about a test a pupil has passed successfully (Sue, lesson 1:1), a book/story a pupil has enjoyed reading (Diana, lesson 1:1), or what sort of food a pupil likes to eat on family picnics (Diana, lesson 3:3).

Beyond attempting to design tasks whose topics will be motivating, the data reveal that teachers used language mediation to increase pupils' self-imposed motivation, as illustrated by the following extract.

Extract 6.2.1.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Irene	What is restaurant, Amir?
2.	Amir	[Restaurant.]
3.	Irene	[It's one of the most important words when you go abroad. If you don't know the word you will not know how to ask where there is a restaurant, or read it from the signs.] (She writes the word on the board.) [Look at the word and picture it in your mind.]

(Irene, lesson 7, episode 2)

The interaction above suggests that in attempting to promote vocabulary acquisition, the teacher focuses on the pupils' need ("It's one of the most important words...") as well as on linguistic aspects of the word ("Look at the word and picture it..."). The importance of self-imposed need to learn words was emphasised by Irene, who noted in her interview that she did not

Extract 6.2.1.2

"write on the board the difficult words but rather the important words. If there is a very difficult, complicated word, but it is really unimportant for them to learn it, I don't write it ... basic words are important."

(Interview data, answer 28)

These data reveal that rather than teaching vocabulary lists just because certain texts contain them, selecting words that are perceived as relevant to pupils and raising their awareness of the importance of certain words seem to increase pupils' levels of engagement in vocabulary tasks. In contrast to interaction aimed at creating self-imposed need in pupils, when task topics seemed to be detached from pupils' interests and real-life needs, pupils appeared uninvolved and reluctant to comply with the task requirements. In Case 3, for instance, classroom interaction was characterised by individual tasks composed of photocopied articles and vocabulary worksheets, with no attempt to create self-imposed need in pupils. Rather, the teacher tried to impose external need by presenting the vocabulary tasks as exam-type tasks. Such instruction belongs to the 'resource-driven' quadrant (Webster et al., 1996, see p. 20 on section

2.3.3), in the sense that the teachers had little interaction with pupils and pupils proceeded through worksheets independently. On one occasion, however, Case 3 teacher was observed to use a text on Halloween and link it to the equivalent Hebrew holiday which was approaching, asking the pupils what they planned to dress up as. The result was that the vocabulary which the teacher had planned to teach and the new words which emerged from the conversation stemmed from the pupils' real need to communicate: a strong self-imposed need was established.

The second and third components of involvement in vocabulary learning are cognitive (information-processing) dimensions: attention and search.

6.2.2 Searching for meaning

Designing vocabulary tasks to direct attention to the relationship between a word's form and meaning is defined by Laufer & Hulstijn (2001) as *search*. Data emerging from this cross-case analysis suggest ways in which teachers interacted with the pupils to create opportunities for pupils to search for word meanings. Irene, for instance, notes: "I promote the Oxford Dictionary, and I think that gradually I have managed to make them and the dictionary become friends" (Interview data, answer 28). Common to all the school teachers was an attempt to create a need in pupils to search for word meaning, either in the dictionary, by designing written tasks that explicitly required pupils to infer word meanings from context (see, for example, Appendix 13 for Ann's internet presentation task), or by designing tasks aimed at motivating verbal interactions, such as role plays (see Extract 6.6.2 below), or focusing conversation on topics that the pupil is interested to talk about and thus creating motivation in the pupil to find the English word form in order to express meaning. According to Diana:

"These are young people that you have to motivate, stimulate, interest. You have to make them think that learning is life. That learning is living."

(field notes, 30.4.04)

In the large group context, teachers appeared to create in the pupils a need to communicate by using various strategies, as demonstrated in the following extract. The extract is taken from a lesson which took place on the Jewish Holocaust Day. After attaching pictures to the board, Irene creates interaction which evolves around one of the pictures, developing the need for the pupils' talk.

Extract 6.2.2.1

Turn No.	Sp.	Transcription
1	Irene	(showing a picture) What do you see here?
2	P1	[David's shield]
3	P2	This is a house.
4	P3	This is a Jewish home.
5	P4	[A synagogue]
6	Irene	[But he is right. He is saying that it is a Jewish home and we see it according to the symbol. It is called a] synagogue.

(Irene, lesson 8)

It is clear that the visual prompt, the link to a real life context (Holocaust Day) and Irene's question ('What do you see here?') all create a need to search for words in order to express meaning. Even though Irene's attempt to elicit the word 'synagogue' from the pupils is not successful, the interaction does create the need to search for the word, as evidenced by the pupils' contribution of other lexical items, both in Hebrew and in English. Irene does not correct P3 who paraphrases the word synagogue into "a Jewish home", apparently because his English paraphrasing is an attempt to overcome lack of vocabulary knowledge. Her encouragement of such attempts is evident by her response in turn 6.

Read (2000) points out that L2 learners attempting to express themselves in speech or writing may avoid using a specific lexical item either because they simply do not know it or because they are not confident about producing it with its correct pronunciation, spelling or grammatical form. He argues that learners "have a particular need for meta-cognitive strategies in communicative situations because they have to overcome their lack of vocabulary knowledge in order to function effectively" (p. 34). Read refers to paraphrasing and simplification of the word or expression as a particular meta-cognitive strategy that learners use. Encouraging the use of this

strategy by pupils with difficulties seems to be constructive as many pupils with SpLD react to lack of vocabulary by either avoidance or the use of L1, rather than by strategic compensation in L2.

6.2.3 Evaluating words in relation to context

The third component of 'vocabulary involvement load' in vocabulary learning is *evaluation.* Research studies show that learners with SpLD experience difficulty in using high order meta-cognitive strategies which involve self-regulation mechanisms, such as checking, monitoring and evaluating during an attempt to learn or solve problems (e.g. Alderson, 2000; Swanson, 1990). Vocabulary evaluation involves checking the meaning of a given word in relation to other words in order to assess whether it does or does not fit the context. Data from cross-case analysis reveal that teachers used instructional interaction to promote evaluation of vocabulary use. This was done, for instance, by referring pupils back to the text to check their answer after they have tried to guess a word meaning (see, for instance, Extract 4.3.2.1 lines 14 and 16). Another way of promoting evaluation strategies was by increasing learners' awareness of the availability of several options when using language, and encouraging them to make educated choices when distinguishing between the options and selecting one of them, as illustrated in the following extract:

Extract 6.2.3.1

Turn No.	Sp.	Transcription
1	Diana	I am very happy to **come** to NY or to be in NY?
2	Gil	Be.
3	Diana	So, it's either 'the weather is good for **a** tourist', or 'the weather is good for tourists.' If it's only one tourist it's good for a tourist=
4	Gil	**a** tourist. It's tourists.
5	Diana	Very good sentence.

(Diana, lesson 4)

In the above extract, the degree of evaluation is moderate as the learner is provided with two options from which he has to select the most appropriate. Nevertheless, some tasks demand a strong degree of evaluation, for instance when the learner is required to produce original language, for which he possesses partial equivalence

vocabulary and has to evaluate whether or not the vocabulary produced is used appropriately in the context. In the current data, the school pupils were observed to produce original language when participating in a role play (e.g. Ann, lesson 5), or when filling in the missing words in a passage. When collaboratively checking the results of their 'reading and writing' task (Ann, lesson 10), Ann encouraged them to evaluate their answers in relation to the context.

6.3 Learning by imitation

It has been argued in chapter 2 that repetition, reproduction and completion of predetermined responses where the context is more apparent to the teacher than to the pupil preclude real learner development (e.g. Webster et al., 1996; Nassaji & Wells, 2000). Data from the current research reveal a qualitative difference between two kinds of repetition: *rote repetition*, where the pedagogical focus is on repeating items until they were remembered, as opposed to *imitation*, where pupils imitate the teacher's spoken or written language, the importance and meaning of which they appeared to understand. It was found that when a pupil performed rote repetition during a private lesson (e.g. Case 5, lesson 2) and mechanically read alone lists of words or long sentences, he seemed not to understand what he was reading as he mispronounced many of the words. Moreover, his tone of voice was low, and he was mumbling and yawning. On the other hand, when the same teacher modelled reading of short chunks of text (i.e. 2-4 words at a time) which was familiar to the pupil (lesson 4), and the pupil imitated her word pronunciation and intonation, his reading and understanding appeared to develop and resulted in the pupil's ability to go well beyond the limits of his own word decoding when working alone. When the same teacher incorporated in her lessons some direct instruction of phonics, she did it effectively by incorporating it into a *meaningful* reading task (i.e. communicative, comprehensible and goal-directed), rather than presenting isolated letter-sound correspondences. Similarly, when the same pupil was engaged in a meaningful activity which involved imitating grammatical patterning, the interaction appeared to engage the pupil's attention sufficiently to create a need to imitate the linguistic patterns modelled by the teacher. This is illustrated in the following extract which comes from a lesson which focused on looking at pictures and using adjectives, opposites and comparisons.

Extract 6.3.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1	Diana	Are these good drawings? These are drawings. Yes? These are two drawings.
2	Gil	Yeah.
3	Diana	So are these good drawings? What's this?
4	Gil	Car.
5	Diana	A car. Are these good drawings? No! No. It's a big car with small wheels. Are these good drawings? No! The wheels are too small. Are these good drawings?
6	Gil	No. The w... we
7	Diana	Wheels.
8	Gil	wheels too w ...
9	Diana	Small=
10	Gil	=Small. The wheels are too small.
11	Diana	So it tells you what's the matter [what's the matter.] The wheels are too small. What's this?
12	Gil	Home
13	Diana	A house.
14	Gil	House.
15	Diana	Right. Is it a good drawing? No! No. Why?
16	Gil	Door. The, the door her too her
17	Diana	Is too
18	Gil	Is too small (...)
19	Diana	Is this a good drawing?
20	Gil	No!
21	Diana	Why?
22	Gil	The hair, hair is too long.
23	Diana	Good. The hair is too long.

(Case 5, lesson 3, episode 2)

The above extract shows that the pupil's imitation of words and linguistic patterns is embedded in a meaningful context of looking at pictures and trying to make sentences and conversation as per the exercise. Although the pupil's hesitation comes from his difficulty in reading words, remembering words and their opposites and forming sentences (e.g. turns 6, 8 and 12), the teacher makes the activity meaningful and motivating by going beyond the exercise to create a conversation (e.g. turns 1, 3, 5, 11, and 15). Turns 16, 18, 20 and 22 demonstrate how this interaction results in extending the pupil's ability to accurately and meaningfully use the words and the grammatical patterns.

Amongst the school teachers, Irene and Ann never demanded from pupils chorus rote repetition of isolated words or phrases. Rote repetition characterized some of the interactions of Case 3 teacher (Dorit), and seemed much less effective. It seems to me, therefore, that a pedagogic distinction should be drawn between mechanical, rote repetition resulting from externally imposed order to repeat a linguistic item until it is remembered, as opposed to imitation which stems from the pupil's self-imposed need to repeat the teacher's words in order to extend his/her ability. *Imitation*, as opposed to rote repetition, is not thought of as purely mechanical process but part of the process of learning, since "a person can imitate only that which is within her developmental level" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 88).

6.4 Increasing attention to grammatical concepts

While not arguing that explicit grammar teaching is essential for pupils with SpLD, in this study I seek to gain insight into effective grammatical instruction by observing it in social interaction (Donato and Adair-Hauck, 1992). The following extract is considered one which exemplifies efficient grammar instruction in that , embedded in broader contexts, the instruction leads to pupils' active involvement in the grammar learning process. Within a lesson on the Beatles' song 'Hey Jude', Irene gave her pupils a task containing sentences from the song, which she used to review the rule of adding 's' to verbs in third-person singular (see Appendix 14). Contextualizing the exercise created motivation in the pupils to complete it and resulted in effective instruction of the rule, as illustrated in the following extract.

Extract 6.4.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1	Irene	**Does** it make?
2	Px	[Without] 's'?
3	Irene	[Without 's' because] 's' [because the] 's' already appears here in Does. We don't repeat twice.]
4	Px	Oh!
5	Irene	(...) Do you feel?
6	Px	[I get confused when it's] do [and when it's] does.
7	Irene	[... Fine, it is] she, [so here it's] does. [Good.]

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
8	Px	Irene, Irene, come (...) [Is it like that?]
9	Irene	(Irene walks around and checks their worksheets while they are working. All the students are engaged in their work, a few pronounce the phrases out loud 'Do you'/'Does she'...) Do you? [Only with a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence. In the middle of a sentence you don't need a capital letter, OK? Unless it's a name] (...) [It's nice that you dropped it because we already have the 's' here.]

(Irene, lesson 5)

It is clear from the above excerpt that the pupils are engaged in learning how to use verbs in third-person singular and that the teacher's scaffolding assists them to become aware of and to understand the grammatical rules. Turns 1 and 5 show the teacher's modelling of the correct pattern. Turns 3, 7 and 9 provide short explicit explanations which focus on logical explanation rather than abstract rules or rote repetition. That her modelling and explanations are understood by pupils and extend their ability to carry on independently is revealed by their active engagement and participation, shown by the utterance 'oh' (turn 4), the initiation of questions which are to the point (turns 2, 6 and 8), and by their imitation of the pattern (turn 9).

Thus, the following three factors may account for increasing pupils' attention and engagement in grammar learning: (a) embedding grammar instruction within the broader context of a topic which appeals to the pupils, (b) using short, simple tasks (in this case, the exercise was composed of four sentences of approximately four words each), and (c) providing simple explanations which make grammar rules comprehensible, rather than asking pupils with memory deficits to memorize abstract rules, or load pupils who have attention deficit disorder with long meta cognitive explanations.

Pupils' attention and involvement also occurred when teaching was carried out in the form of questioning, particularly by asking a pupil the kind of questions "he can ask himself while working on the material on his own" ('member check', 27.10.04). This is illustrated below.

Extract 6.4.2

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Sue	Not to forget the passive. When should you pay special attention to the passive? When your subject is not a person.
2.	Amit	(**)
3.	Sue	[It could be a person but when it's not, give it a special attention.]
4.	Amit	[If they speak about a table]
5.	Sue	[Exactly. What can a table do?]
6.	Amit	[When they say that the table is broken. It didn't break itself.]
7.	Sue	[Exactly.]

(Sue, lesson 1, episode 2)

In addition to the use of questioning to promote enquiry in the pupil, we can see here the teacher's attempts to construct logical explanations directed at the learner's general reasoning ability (turns 1 and 5). This interaction reflects what I previously referred to as explanation which focuses upon the logical aspect of grammar (rather than on the abstract rules and rote-memorization of rules), and reflects the teacher's understanding of pupils' difficulties (in this case, their difficulty to remember abstract linguistic items). In contrast, it was found that when grammar instruction was detached from meaningful context or discussion, apart from discrete sentences used to exemplify the rule, there was no joint activity or meaningful interaction between teacher and pupils. In such cases, the teacher used monologic explanations which looked like a drill taken from a traditional grammar exercise book (e.g. Case 3, lesson 1), rather than conversation used as a way to involve the learners in a meaningful, contextualized dialogue or a collaborative problem-solving process. My data show that effective instruction of grammar involved a dialogue which built on pupils' prior relevant grammatical knowledge, while collaboratively reconstructing and extending this knowledge.

6.5 Interactive composition

The dialogic nature of teaching and learning is at the heart of the socio-cultural perspective. Written composition, however, is viewed by many teachers as a solitary, unidirectional process with little room for communication between teacher and pupil (e.g. Nassaji & Cumming, 2000). The following analysis illustrates how dialogic instruction of written composition was carried out by two private teachers. In the instructional conversation shown in extract 6.5.1 (opposite), Sue integrates reading and speaking into the writing process. First, as Larkin (2001, p. 33) points out, "accommodation" in allowing the pupil to dictate the composition to the teacher enables the pupil who has difficulties with written expression to generate ideas without worrying about how to convey them on paper. This scaffolds the pupil's ability to write and achieve success quickly, as writing and written expression are difficult tasks for him.

In addition, Sue uses another four strategies to scaffold her pupil's writing: First, she uses a text from which to generate ideas for the pupil to use in writing (turns 1, 13 and 22). Then, she conducts a dialogue with the pupil about these ideas (e.g. turns 3, 5, 15 and 17). Next, she elicits ideas from him and paraphrases them into simple words so that he can not only understand but also reproduce them (e.g. turns 7 and 23). Finally, they collaboratively reconstruct the ideas, while Sue assists by providing a 'starter' (e.g. turn 3), suggesting (e.g. turn 7), explaining (turns 15 and 19) and paraphrasing (turns 17, 21 and 23). Rather then delivering ideas and forms to the pupil, this teacher, through the process of reciprocal writing, negotiates ideas and meanings. She does this by taking the role of an adult listener, using phrases like "Aha, tell me!" Or "OK" (e.g. turns 5 and 9), rather than providing all the answers. She also asks the pupil his opinion and provides suggestions rather than presenting one option and imposing it on the pupil (turns 21 and 23). This instructional conversation style appears to engage the pupil in the task, as evident in his initiations and contributions (e.g. turns 10, 12, 14 and 16), which indicate that he is involved in a meaningful learning experience.

Extract 6.5.1

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1	Sue	So, what do you want to say about birthdays? Why don't we read this first and then we'll write it in your own words. (Reading out a paragraph) Ok. That's an important thing. So how can we write that into simple English?
2	Amit	Birthdays [**]
3	Sue	OK, so how did these start? Celebrating birthdays -
4	Amit	Started when the (pause)
5	Sue	Aha. Tell me!
6	Amit	When the - When people began to understand
7	Sue	Celebrating birthdays began, or started?
8	Amit	Started
9	Sue	OK
10	Amit	When people began
11	Sue	Oh, I knew I wrote began.
12	Amit	to understand the time -
13	Sue	OK. Let's go on. IT BECAME IMPORTANT TO KNOW THE EXACT MOMENT DATE AND YEAR OF ONE'S BIRTH.
14	Amit	[But was it important because there were many who dealt with that?]
15	Sue	Yes, because that was essential (...)
16	Amit	They have a horoscope there.
17	Sue	Yea. If you didn't have a horoscope -
18	Amit	You are -
19	Sue	Yeah. You were not important because you didn't know what to do or I don't know. It was like: Oh! you don't get your horoscope, Oh no!
20	Amit	So every people need to know -
21	Sue	So every one. Every one?
22	Amit	Aha. (Reading from the text) THE EXACT MOMENT DATE AND YEAR
23	Sue	How about the exact time?
24	Amit	OK.

(Sue, lesson 2 episode 2)

Similarly, data from another private teacher (Diana, lesson 4) show how the teacher used a traditional writing task, which the pupil had to do in preparation for his matriculation examination, in a way that created a dynamic, formative assessment embedded in instruction procedure, as illustrated in extract 6.5.2 opposite.

Extract 6.5.2 exemplifies how Diana first gives a static composition assessment, allowing her pupil the accommodation of dictating the composition to her, so that he can generate ideas without worrying about writing and spelling. She then reviews the composition with him, mediating for him the language required in each item. She incorporates the pupil's language into her own language, rather than suggesting concepts and forms which are far beyond his level (turns 2, 4, 6 and 8). She also makes an attempt to activate him by suggesting options and encouraging him to choose between them (turns 2 and 4), thus promoting a collaborative learning experience.

In both extracts 6.5.1 and 6.5.2 it appears that the effectiveness of the writing instruction lies in (a) assisting pupils by physically writing for them, (b) teaching styles which integrate reading, speaking and written expression, while preserving the meaningful context, (c) appropriating pupils' language into the teacher's and building on it (Nassaji & Cumming, 2000), (d) creating a dialogic, collaborative experience where the teacher suggests, interpret asks and provides options to choose from, and (e) incorporating dynamic assessment elements in the instruction, by extending the pupil's ZPD (Vygotsky, 1987; Feuerstein & Hoffman, 1979).

It is acknowledged that in large-group contexts, rather than in one-to-one teaching contexts, collaborative teaching of writing may be more difficult, as teachers have to assist a group of pupils. Therefore, it is not surprising that the data regarding the instruction of written expression derive from the private teachers only, and it may be that group teachers avoid teaching writing in a dialogical, dynamic way and rather provide pupils with writing tasks and static assessment. Similarly, data in relation to EFL speaking reveal that in the SpLD school classroom very little conversation took place in L2, while in the private classroom both the teachers and the pupils spoke more English. The next section discusses how teachers managed to create opportunities for conversations in L2.

Extract 6.5.2

Turn No.	SP.	Transcription
1.	Gil	(dictates a letter to the teacher while she writes it down verbatim.) Dear mum and dad, I very happy to coming to NY. The weather is good for tourist. Don't down rain but not so hot. I found restaurant Koshers and I very happy to eat meat (how do you say abroad?) not in Israel.
2.	Diana	So now you want me to correct it. Dear mum and dad I very happy to coming to NY. And the word is I **am** very happy. Do you have a different colour pen? So I am very happy to **come** to NY or to **be** in NY?
3.	Gil	be ...
4.	Diana	So it's either 'the weather is good for **a** tourist', or 'the weather is good for tourists.' If it's only one tourist it's good for **a** tourist=
5.	Gil	=a tourist. It's tourists
6.	Diana	Very good sentence. DON'T DOWN RAIN. You could say: It has not rained
7.	Gil	Aha.
8.	Diana	It has not rained (writing down her corrections) (...) I FOUND RESTAURANT KOSHER. It's I found a Kosher restaurant
9.	Gil	Yeah! laughs
10.	Diana	That's right. You're OK

(Diana, lesson 4, episode 1)

6.6 Scaffolding conversation

Case 5 (Diana) follows a pupil who started learning English possessing very limited conversation abilities, and developed them impressively during a course of two years which included one or two hours of individual tuition per week. The teacher's ability to get her pupil attuned to understanding and speaking English may be explained by the fact that she and her pupil used L1 very seldom, only after modifications of meaning and paraphrasing of language did not lead to comprehension. Her ability to be consistent in using mostly L2 may be explained by the fact that she knew relatively little Hebrew and that her pupil knew that the use of L1 may not result in a better communication. The other teachers, on the other hand, shifted easily from L2 to L1. Extract 6.6.1 (opposite) shows how, in spite of the pupil's limited conversation abilities, Diana manages to elicit information from him and greatly extends the interaction.

Diana introduces the topic of English learning at school, and asks a question to which she supposedly knows the answer. However, in turn 2, her question turns out to be one to which the pupil is able to give an unexpected answer, as evident by her genuine question in turn 3 and her comment in turn 15. Her question in turn 3 allows an exchange sequence in which the pupil, using basic vocabulary and inaccurate linguistic forms, can express information which is new to the teacher and which further arises her genuine interest. She facilitates his interaction by acting as a genuine listener, using 'yeah's' with interrogative intonation to expresses interest and request further information (turns 5, 9 and 13). When she initiates a direct repair in this context ("at school", turn 7), it appears to the pupil to be a clarification or confirmation of his message, and he uses the correct form as a first part of his response (turn 8). By taking up and building upon Diana's clarifying and confirming utterance, the pupil indicates that Diana's feedback move facilitated his conversation.

Extract 6.6.1

Turn No.	SP.	transcription
1.	Diana	You learn English at school?
2.	Gil	Yes and no.
3.	Diana	Why yes and why no? (4 secs)
4.	Gil	The level.
5.	Diana	Yeah?
6.	Gil	The level. (3 secs) Level school.
7.	Diana	At school.
8.	Gil	Level at school and I level three.
9.	Diana	Yeah?
10.	Gil	In English.
11.	Diana	Right. OK.
12.	Gil	And school
13.	Diana	Yeah?
14.	Gil	In five.
15.	Diana	This is ridiculous, yeah? So it's hard.
16.	Gil	And now in three level.
17.	Diana	Good.

(Diana, lesson 1)

A different instructional style emerges from school classroom data in relation to conversation. In the large group context conversation in L2 was hardly evidenced, and promotion of conversation skills was practiced in the form of tasks, rather than as an integral part of classroom conversation. The interaction in extract 6.6.2 (opposite) demonstrates how Ann creates a simulation of a real-life conversation situation as part of a role-play task while preparing her pupils for the oral matriculation exam. The interaction reveals that when the learner's utterance is not clear, Ann repeats it using interrogative intonation ("prices?" in turn 15; "Lots of food?" in turn 21), which suggests negotiation of meaning and an invitation for the pupils to respond. She also models language, paraphrasing the pupil's incorrect talk and modelling the correct one (. turns 3, 5, 13). Throughout the whole conversation, Ann keeps her language simple, using simple words and structures to maximize comprehension (turns 3, 13 and 17). Moreover, she makes concessions by accepting the pupil's grammatical mistakes as valid contributions (turns 4, 10 and 14), focusing on conversational communication rather than accuracy.

Ann also provides extended wait time for the pupil to think (turns 3, 5 and 21). Extended wait time for the listener to absorb what the teacher has said and/or to process his/her own speech is considered important for pupils with SpLD in light of the vast body of research which emphasizes the difficulty such pupils have in processing linguistic input rapidly (e.g. Fawcett & Nicolson, 1994; Nocolson & Fawcett, 1995). As a result of these studies, one of the most common testing accommodation for pupils with SpLD is extended test-taking time. However, extended wait time during everyday classroom interaction is equally important in learning (see Walsh, 2002, Table 2.1).

Extract 6.6.2

NO	SP	Interaction
1	Ann	... OK. There's a very good restaurant on Oxford street. It's next to the first stop light that you see.
2	Elad	How the [how do you say price] price?
3	Ann	How are the prices? It's not a very cheap place. But the food. The meat is very good. (6secs) Take your time. (5 secs).
4	Elad	If I want to go to eat junk food. Cheap. Where I need to go?
5	Ann	OK. If you want to eat junk food there are many places. All over Oxford street. Oxford is the main street in London ... (4 secs). So far you're doing very well (...) The questions are good. You have put thought into them, but the fluency is lacking. There's no sense of conversation. Think more in terms of conversation.]
6	Elad	[But it's difficult.]
7	Ann	[The kinds of questions you have asked so far were in two domains – the kind of food and prices.]
8	Elad	[But I don't know how.]
9	Ann	[What more?]
10	Elad	And the place of the price very [low – how do you say?]
11	Ann	Low.
12	Elad	Low.
13	Ann	OK. You want a place to eat where they have good prices. All the fast food places are very cheap. Right?
14	Elad	What price?
15	Ann	Prices?
16	Elad	Yeah.
17	Ann	Well, in, for example, the meat restaurants the prices could be higher.
18	Elad	If I want to eat something good
19	Ann	What is something good?
20	Elad	A lot.
21	Ann	Lots of food? (3secs) It depends.
22	Elad	Yes, but all (***)
23	Ann	All kinds of food?
24	Elad	Yes

(Ann, lesson 5, episode 3)

A comparison between extract 6.6.1, and 6.6.2 reveals that the private, one to one conversation reflects more closely natural communication, while the classroom practiced role-play task reflects simulated conversation. Other data from Ann's practiced role-play tasks suggest that she created bridges between the pedagogic mode and the natural mode through asides embedded in the conversation. Her meta-linguistic comments stimulated meta-cognitive awareness in the pupils, which was evident in their own comments. For example, when Ann suggested that the pupil should pay more attention to Ann's replies as they embedded clues for what the pupil further could ask, one pupil commented: "It's a strategy" (lesson 5, episode 4). Moreover, Ann's meta-cognitive aside resulted in her interlocutor's appropriation of the method to expand his talk, providing another two questions.

The comparison between school and private instruction in relation to instructional conversation brings me to the next topic which is the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom

6.7 Use of L1 in L2 classroom

As indicated in 3.5.4, utterances that were originally in Hebrew, and were translated by me while transcribing the data, were put between square brackets, [ ], to differentiate them from ones that were originally spoken in English. Cross-case comparative analysis reveals that school teachers used more L1 in the L2 classrooms of pupils with SpLD than private tutors. Furthermore, while private tutors used L1 in a reasonably consistent way, mostly for the purpose of vocabulary translation, grammar explanations or meta-cognitive discussion of the strategies a pupil has used or should use in the future, school teachers were much less consistent in their L1 use. In addition to the above purposes, they used L1 for managing behaviour, giving directions, and providing explanations beyond the task requirements, such as background information on a text. When asked about the large-scale use of L1 in the L2 classroom, both school teachers and pupils expressed similar opinions regarding the pupils' past experiences of classrooms where they understood nothing because only L2 was spoken. According to Irene, the fact that L1 is spoken by the teacher gives the pupils:

Extract 6.7.1

"a big sense of security that with me they will understand what's going on in the classroom. And they tell me that they remember how, with other teachers, they used just to sit in class without understanding what the teacher was talking about"

(Interview data, Irene, answer 24).

This view is reinforced by some pupils who suggested in their interviews that their past experiences in classrooms where only L2 was spoken were negative ones (Ann's pupil, interview 2:5), and that "if the class is on a low level of English the teacher should embed a lot of Hebrew while speaking and not a lot of English" (Irene's pupil, interview 2:14). Where pupils have the extra burden of having SpLD, teachers may feel that:

Extract 6.7.2

"if the price I pay for speaking English (...) is losing one pupil or another, I'd rather not pay that price."

(Ann's interview, answer 31)

From a social-constructivist point of view, input alone is not enough for language acquisition. Therefore, when L1 may facilitate thinking processes, completely avoiding it may deny struggling learners an invaluable learning tool (Ellis, 1994, cited by Lio et al., 2004, p. 608). However, my data reveal that teachers often used L1 for no apparent reason. It may be that pupils could benefit from more exposure to L2 as well as more opportunities to converse with their teacher in English. Two teachers suggested potential solutions. According to one of the private teachers, rather than saying, "Now we are going to speak English", at which pupils "immediately freeze", she often says to pupils: "Can you bring me your book, go upstairs and bring me something - simple things so their ears become attuned to the language" ("member check" commentary, Diana). Similarly, Irene was observed to frequently give instructions in English. In her interview, she pointed out that she tried to:

Extract 6.7.3

"get them into *routine with instructions. Also instructions that they will have on their matriculation examinations next year: I try to say these things in English so that they get to know the instructions. They might not know what to do on the exam if they don't understand the instructions.'*

(Interview data, Irene, answer 27)

Finally, being aware of when and why a teacher uses L1 may be a step towards making more educated choices. Sue observes that:

Extract 6.7.4

"there is always an issue of choice and economics, so if I'm trying to get a grammar point across, by the time students understand – and even high achievers – (...) they are pretty tired out by the time"

However, she admits that she is

"too fluent in Hebrew and many times I do it for my own comfort (...) It took me a while to admit that a lot of times I was switching into Hebrew because it was easier for me (...) and now I think I do stay more aware."

(Interview data, Sue, answer 18)

It appears that increasing awareness of the functions of L1 in the L2 classroom is especially important for teachers of pupils with SpLD, so that language shifting does not become arbitrary and inconsistent and does unnecessarily deprive learners of opportunities to attune to hearing, understanding and using English.

Moving on from categories directly related to FL teaching and learning, the next two categories account for more general factors which appear to contribute to effective interaction in the EFL classroom.

6.8 A constructive approach to difficulty

Essential to effective learning are opportunities for pupils to take risks and make mistakes (Webster et al., 1996, p. 42). This approach to learning is also well documented in the applied linguistics literature (e.g. Donato, 2000; Nassaji & Wells,

2000; Seedhouse, 2004; Walsh, 2001). The classroom interaction as well as the interview data suggest that teachers related to pupils' difficulties with understanding and respected and responded to their mistakes and errors as an integral part of the learning process. For example, one of the pupil interviewees said that, unlike his current positive experience with Irene who understood the difficulties faced by pupils with SpLD, two years before, he had an English teacher

"who didn't understand at all what learning disabilities are, and I had many clashes with her and I was hurt by her a lot: 'How come that you don't manage? What? It's very simple.' Those sort of things. One should get to know this thing of learning disabilities."

(Irene's pupil, interview 2:16)

Creating a classroom dialogue which legitimizes rather than discourages risk-taking and mistake-making is revealed in the current data in four main ways.

6.8.1 Viewing mistake-making as a valuable contribution to teaching and learning

The view held by the teachers, which emerges from their classroom interaction and interview data aligns with Ann's view who said that: "If a student is anxious about not knowing, he will neither participate, nor learn" (Interview data, Irene, answer 25). According to Ann:

Extract 6.8.1.2

"... I tell pupils that I am much more concerned with what they don't know than with what they do know. If I don't know what they don't know I will not know what to teach. And I look for errors ... The errors and incorrect answers are diamonds for me. They are what I need. They look at me as if I have fallen from the sky."

(Interview data, answer 21)

One way of communicating this view to the pupils through classroom interaction is through 'error-analysis'.

6.8.2 Error-analysis

The teachers did not only send a message to their pupils that their mistakes were legitimized, but they also used pupils' mistakes formatively, providing corrective and explanatory feedback, as exemplified below.

Extract 6.8.2.1

Turn No.	Sp.	Transcription
1.	Irene	Line 10 - the word 'still'.
2.	Px:	[to steal]
3.	Irene	[Nice, a nice error, but it is spelled differently.] (She writes the words on the whiteboard)

(Irene, lesson 6)

By legitimising the pupil's mistake and focusing his attention on where the mistake stems from (i.e. homophones), Irene encourages his attempt to contribute to the classroom conversation. Such feedback resulted in pupils' self-nomination and contributions which was evidenced throughout her classroom data. This approach was also evidenced by the private teachers, as demonstrated in the next extract.

Extract 6.8.2.2

Turn No.	Sp.	Transcription
1	Sue	[What did you say here?] Back?
2	Amit	To back to the dream.
3	Sue	[In English] back [is not a verb]. You can say] to go back to the dream (...) It's right that it has the meaning of going back but from the point of view of parts of speech it's not like in Hebrew. It can be] 'go back', 'get back'. [Actually you need a verb,] And then back joins the verb and gives the meaning but 'back' itself is not a verb. There always has to be a verb before it.] (...) [It's what we call 'an educated guess'. It shows that you were creative, that you didn't just throw to the air a wild guess.] ... From the point of view of your trial you made a trial that I understand but here what interfered was the Hebrew.] But very good. Really nice. Much better.

(Sue, lesson 2)

From the teacher's feedback and meta-linguistic comment in turn 3, it is clear that the learner was not able to produce the exact L2 equivalent due to insufficient vocabulary/grammatical knowledge. Nevertheless, the teacher emphasizes the importance of his involvement in searching for the word and trying to make an educated guess. Therefore, even though the product was incorrect, she encourages the process of thinking and making educated decisions. According to Sue, who also worked as a teacher trainer on a remedial instruction programme:

Extract 6.8.2.3

"Something I think that is very, very important and I do talk about it with my teachers is error analysis ... I think error analysis is greatly lacking ... Where is it coming from within the student. Are you putting an X on his values, on his opinions because the sentence didn't look right in English?...did he make a mistake of not understanding this particular tense at all, or was it just that he just forgot to add the am or the is or the are. How do you differentiate when you grade it? "

(Interview data, Sue, answer 21)

By legitimizing mistakes and focusing pupils' attention on where they stem from, and by providing formative feedback, the teachers appeared to create a non-threatening atmosphere which enabled pupils to 'take risks' and participate in the classroom conversation.

6.8.3 Talking about difficulty

Another way that teachers can reduce anxiety amongst pupils and increase understanding and cooperation is by talking openly about pupils' difficulties, as demonstrated in the following extract:

Extract 6.8.3.1

"I am very open with them, and I put their difficulties on the table and we talk about what they have (...) It always comes up somehow. For example, I can tell a student who taps on the table, all year long, I was unable to make him stop it. I make a sign in my hand and it's a sign for him to turn it lower. I can tell such a student: You know, there are students sitting in this classroom with attention problems (...) Do you know what it is like for a student with attention problems? What you are doing is that you completely distract him (...) I speak with him at the end of a lesson or have these

little chats while they are engaged in individual class work and the other students are absorbed in their work. It is always short – It is very important that it is short. Two minutes while I'm sitting beside him helping him."

(Interview data, Irene, answer 4)

The data suggest that the Irene's knowledge about and sensitivity to her pupils' difficulties opened up an opportunity for pupils to talk honestly about their problems. This is demonstrated by Irene's written dialogue with pupils, carried out as part of formative assessment. The following extract is from field notes taken while having a conversation with Irene (after lesson 4):

Extract 6.8.3.2

"During the recess Irene shows me the feedback she has written to her pupils on their tests. For example, to a student who got 42 she writes: 'Dear X, you have to work faster on a test. You didn't prepare yourself appropriately for the listening task. Well done on the vocabulary exercise. Keep on trying. If you want a second chance for this test come to see me! Irene.' Another pupil replied to Irene on the test page: 'Irene, it was very difficult for me, probably because I don't practice reading English texts'. Irene tells me that if someone writes to her she will always respond."

6.8.4 Designing tests with a view to difficulty

Data from interviews, as well as written materials Ann and Irene have shown me, suggest that these teachers designed tests with a view to pupils' difficulty, allowing pupils to get the most out of themselves. Their tests were sensitive to pupils' specific memory, reading and writing difficulties in that they included, for example, only what the pupils had recently learned and practised in class. The test layout was clear and organized (e.g. large fonts and spaces, boxes and underlines), and pupils felt that the purpose of the tests was to assess what they knew rather than fail them, as evidenced in the following extract.

Extract 6.8.4.1

"I finished it [the test] with a feeling that I had made the grade. I felt that I had got the most out of the things I could do, and I felt, at last, after many years, that I had been feeling inferior, that at last I reached a level at which I could feel good about myself."

(Interview data, Irene's pupil: 2)

It seems to me that designing tests with a view to pupils with SpLD's needs is crucial for these learners' success and self-esteem. This view is powerfully expressed by one of the private tutors, who reports that:

Extract 6.8.4.2

"Many tests I see are all so cramped that the kids can barely read them and there is never enough room on the lines for them to write, and this may all seem very technical, but I think it's more than that. It's part of the tension that builds up in the test. It's part of the wrong energy of the test. I think that a test should simply be- a student knows that this test is going to reflect what he has already done and what he already knows. It's going to be reflection, like looking into the mirror. And what most tests look like is like when you look at these crazy mirrors, so you look, and you look all fat or you look all skinny – you're shrunk. And you go: Ah! You know that it isn't you but you go Ah! Maybe you do look like that. Wait! So that's what tests do to all, I think, to people. But some people can take it, and some people can't. But then we get into all kinds of specific, you know, like test anxiety, and they have to go to psychologists and to courses to get over test anxiety. You know, it's like we keep creating all these problems."

(Interview data, Sue, answer 17)

Another factor which was found to reduce anxiety amongst pupils and promote effective interaction in the classroom is teacher sensitivity to the needs of individual pupils. Even though it is clear that the larger the classroom is, the more difficult it is to address the needs of individual pupils, data reveal that teachers found ways to balance group and individual needs. These are discussed in the next section.

6.9 Balancing group and individual needs

The question: 'How can I help individual pupils who have special difficulties, while I am teaching the whole class?' is a question posed by many teachers, especially those teaching classes which include pupils with SpLD. Data from classroom interaction, as

well as interview data, demonstrate that two of the school teachers consistently used a variety of teaching modes, techniques, resources and approaches in order to accommodate individual as well as group needs within the classroom.

6.9.1 Integrating group and individual instruction

Classroom data from Ann's and Irene's cases reveal that the teachers used a lesson structure, which integrated group and individual instruction. Their lessons often began with a teacher-fronted 'recruitment and management' and 'representation and clarification' phases and then handing out a task and walking around the classroom to assist individual pupils. To accommodate the needs of one non-reader who lagged behind the class level, Irene provided the pupil with individual materials geared to his level. In her interview, she described how she addressed his needs:

Extract 6.9.1.1

"Throughout the years I have built up materials, starting from the abc and then combinations with vowels and then three letter words. No more than that. Once in every few lessons I let the class leave ten minutes earlier. I explained to them and they respected it. I told them that Amir was working on an individual programme and that once in every few lessons I would ask them to leave earlier and would sit only with him. "

(Interview data, Irene, answer 29)

The importance of individualized attention within the big classroom also emerges from the interview with one of Irene's pupils, as exemplified below:

Extract 6.9.1.2

"To help pupils. To sit with them face to face. To try to find time for ten minutes with X and ten minutes with Y. I like individual work better (...) It's important to come, and ask how you are doing, and be interested in the pupil."

(Interview data, Irene's pupil 2)

Ann, in her turn, often used the English centre or the computer room, which provided adequate resources and setting for individual instruction. In chapter 4 I have described how Ann has successfully used an internet presentation to engage her pupils in

language learning during one of her lessons. On two other occasions (lessons 4 and 7) she used the learning centre that contained a wealth of materials and was a rich and stimulating learning environment. During the lessons that took place in the English centre, Ann walked among pupils, sat next to individual learners or very small groups and provided individualized assistance. It is worth noting, however, that the data from those two lessons reveal that some of the pupils appeared to idle the lesson away, gazing vacantly, chatting in L1, or playing card games on the computer. These findings suggest that for some pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and little intrinsic motivation, structure, management and guidance in their lessons are essential in order to acquire learning.

6.9.2 Accommodating different learning styles

As I have shown in chapters 4 and 5, Ann and Irene used a variety of learning aids to recruit the attention and accommodate the different learning styles of their pupils. In addition to the traditional tools: blackboard, textbook and notebook, they used tools such as: computers, tape recorder, overhead projector and games. For example, one of Ann's pupils said in her interview that a nice experience she remembered from Ann's classes was that Ann brought some unique objects to class, asked pupils to touch those objects blindfolded and try to guess what they were by asking questions in English (Interview data, Ann's pupil 2). The teachers also used visual and auditory stimuli such as songs, pictures, a sight and sound internet presentation, grids and maps. By providing a variety of visual, auditory and tactile stimuli to the pupils and by practicing both teacher-fronted as well as individual instruction, the teachers created and integrated different forms of experience and stimulation in order to address the different learning styles, or areas of ability, of their pupils (Gardner, 1993, cited in Fredrickson & Cline, 2002, p. 236). This awareness is explicitly expressed by one of the private teachers, Sue in the following extract from her interview.

<u>Extract 6.9.2.1</u>

"If anything, I would say that we are a learning disabled culture, and I mean it, because we are a culture that has not yet accepted the fact that people are different! (...) because if we take the whole scale of intelligences (...) we take Gardener, we take other intelligences, we talk about at least ten, eleven intelligences up till now. Why

would God mean for a problem in one intelligence, let's say like music. Why would God create people so that people who had problems in their musical intelligence would just be considered people who are not talented in music, but people who have problems in their verbal intelligence are handicapped? How does that make sense? It doesn't make sense. To me it doesn't make sense at all ... "

(Interview data, Sue, answers 5-6)

The idea of allowing children the choice to use their different cognitive styles is expressed by Sue when referring to her approach to testing and evaluation:

Extract 6.9.2.2

"I think that everybody deserves choice in their lives, no matter what it is that they are doing (...) I absolutely encourage choice. I don't know how feasible it is for a teacher to sit down and design totally different tests for different people, that seems too much work for the results, but I would give choice on tests, maybe different levels of questions, maybe from different intelligences. And I think it's also respectful of our students, of not always telling them what it is, how it is that they need to do things (...) I do need to see this, but I'm giving you several options of how you can show me or how you can use that information."

(Interview data, Sue, answer 17)

Sue's view accords with current socio-cultural and Vygotskian perspectives to SpLD, suggesting that the more flexible and responsive teachers are to their pupils' various cognitive and learning modes, the better will they accommodate pupils' different needs and facilitate their learning progress (e.g. Fredrickson & Cline, 2002, p. 237).

6.9.3 Solving personal problems in private

A third strategy which emerges from classroom and interview data, and which may account for effective classroom interaction, is teachers' attempts to solve personal and behavioural problems in private, rather than in front of everybody. This strategy supported calm, positive classroom interaction, with fewer behavioural problems (which are characteristic to pupils with ADHD).

Classroom and interview data reveal that Irene talked with pupils in private about behavioural difficulties and made 'small deals' with them which both teacher and

pupil had a responsibility to keep. Ann pointed out that some pupils with SpLD have difficulty in distinguishing between matters which are appropriate and inappropriate to discuss in a lesson. Therefore, being consistent in solving pupils' personal issues in private appeared to help teachers avoid behavioural problems. Ann noted that consistency in what a teacher says to pupils or demands from them was especially important in the context of pupils with SpLD because "to a large extent they suffer from mistrust of the adult world" (Interview data, Ann, answer 14).

Classroom data suggest that when the teachers were consistent in their own positive practices, conducts and demands upon themselves as well as upon their pupils, teacher-pupil interaction was affected positively, as there seemed to be a bond of trust between the pupils and their teachers.

6.10 Summary

In this chapter I have provided a cross-case comparative analysis of all of the classrooms observed, aiming to draw an overall picture which facilitates cross-contextual generalities and goes beyond explanations which are idiosyncratic to single cases. Some of the major trends emerging from this chapter are concerned with different ways in which teachers scaffold learning of vocabulary, reading, grammar, writing and conversation. I have also drawn a distinction between repetition and imitation, and provided a comparison between the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom and between private and class tuition. Finally, I have discussed two more general factors which appear to contribute to effective interaction in the EFL classroom: formative evaluation and feedback to pupils' difficulties, and balancing group and individual needs in the classroom. In the next and final chapter I provide a summary of the findings with special reference to each of my research questions

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

"A child is not a vessel to be filled but a lamp to be lit."

A Hebrew proverb

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I provided a comparative analysis across all of the classrooms observed. In this final chapter, I return to the main conceptual frameworks which underpinned this research and its main aims. I then return to each of my research questions, analyse the extent to which they have been answered in this study, and provide possible explanations for the findings. This is followed by a reflection on this study's limitations. Finally, I discuss the contributions and implications of this study for further research, professional practice and educational policy.

7.2 Summary of the study and its findings

Traditionally, research in the intersection of L2 and SpLD has adopted the positivistic paradigm, focusing on issues related to cognitive deficiencies, or effectiveness of intervention programmes (see 2.5.2). These issues are important, but they are only part of the complexity of the phenomenon of how L2 is learned by pupils with SpLD. The socio-cultural perspective this research has adopted offers an alternative way of looking at how language is learned (see 2.4, pp. 38-39), shifting the attention from the learners' cognitive imperfections to the teaching context and the teacher (see 2.5.2, pp. 39-44).

Since my literature review has indicated that empirical research which has taken a sociocultural, Vygotskian perspective to exploring the phenomenon of L2 and SpLD is meagre (see 2.5.2), the main aim of this study was to contribute to this field by investigating how teachers, through their choice of verbal mediation, created and increased opportunities for pupils' potential engagement in EFL learning (RQ1). The

study adopted an ethnographic, qualitative, multiple case-study approach to researching classroom interaction of five EFL teachers, with a view to exploring good practice (see 3.2 - 3.3). Data were collected through classroom observations, audio and video recordings and interviews with teachers and some of their pupils (see 3.3.2 - 3.3.4). Close investigation of sustained goal-directed teacher-pupil interaction aimed at identifying, analysing and explaining ways in which teachers promoted EFL learning. In the process of data collection and analysis, other research questions emerged, aiming at (a) assessing the validity of existing sociocultural theoretical frameworks (RQ2), and (b) identifying the specific types of interaction that appeared effective in addressing the challenges posed by EFL learners with Sold (RQ3). I now return to each of the research questions and its findings.

7.2.1 Verbal mediation and learning opportunities

The first research question, which guided the design and analysis of this study was:

RQ1: In what ways do teachers, through their choice of verbal mediation, create and increase opportunities for pupils' potential engagement in EFL learning?

Findings show that critical to opening up opportunities for pupils to use EFL, express their ideas and difficulties, and engage in EFL activities, were teachers' questions and feedback moves which deviated from the traditional instructional IRF style (see 2.3.1). These results are in line with previous findings (e.g. Cullen, 2002; John, 2003; Nassaji & Wells, 2000). Open-ended and process-oriented questions (see, for instance, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.3 and 5.4.2) appeared to open up opportunities for collaborative discussions between teachers and pupils, in which higher levels of active cognitive processing (e.g., searching for and evaluating language) were emphasized to a greater extent than rote repetition or recall answers. These questions appeared to be structured to facilitate pupils to become intrinsically involved in the academic activity (Cummins, 1984, p. 230); to link new linguistic information to pupils' pre-existing knowledge and real-life experiences, and to probe pupils' reading strategies, and meta-cognitive awareness. These questions also appeared to elicit from the pupils relatively complex responses, both in terms of the amount of pupils' discourse, self nomination and meta-cognitive discussion (see, for example, 4.3, 4.4.1

and 5.3). This result indicates that pupils with SpLD benefit from questions which encourage high order thinking and creative discourse, despite their language deficiencies.

Another important factor that was found to facilitate EFL learning was teachers' non-evaluative, process-oriented and formative feedbacks. These were often in the form of further questioning the process by which the pupil had reached his or her answer, or asking for clarification. These types of feedback appeared to encourage pupils' self-nomination and to extend the conversation cycle. Other types of non-evaluative feedback were expanding on the pupils' response (e.g., 5.3, and 6.6), linking it to real-life experiences (e.g. 4.3, 5.3.), or adding comments aimed at increasing meta-linguistic awareness (e.g., 4.5, 6.4). When a teacher's question did not result in an answer, teachers did not appear to nominate other pupils to provide the 'right' answer. Nominating pupils appears, by itself, an evaluative act, suggesting that the teacher is searching for a correct answer. Instead, effective scaffolding took the form of providing 'starters' (e.g., a word or the first sound of a word), further questioning, providing L1/L2 equivalent, or reading for the pupil (see, for example 4..3, 5.3 and 6.3).

Non-evaluative feedbacks were also reflected in teachers communicating to pupils that they viewed their mistakes as a valuable part of a learner's development. Teachers expressed this perception by introducing concepts such as 'nice' or 'educated' mistake and by explaining to pupils where their mistakes resulted from (see, 4.6, 5.3 and 6.8.2). Where this type of feedback took place, there seemed to be a bond of trust between the pupils and their teacher: a classroom atmosphere which sent the message teachers' questioning aimed mainly at teaching and assisting rather than merely assessing (e.g., Rea-Dickins, 2001). Non-evaluative or encouraging feedback aimed at sending pupils a message that the classroom is safe for a pupil with SpLD to 'take risks' and contribute (Rex, 2000).

An interesting extension of previous research findings in relation to the IRF sequence (see Nassaji & Wells, 2000 on p. 15, and Table 2.1, on pp. 27-32) comes in this study in the form of a teacher (Ann, in case 1) who often provided a response in a form of a

question (see 4.4.2). She did it, for instance, by handing the question back to the pupil when he or she asked for a word meaning, in order to stimulate the pupil's meta-cognitive awareness of strategies such as self-questioning, guessing and evaluation. This tactic sometimes worked well and indeed made pupils try to make an educated guess or revisit the text. At the same time, data suggest that when using such a questioning technique, it is important to be sensitive to the pupil's response and check if the teacher's response in the form of a question has indeed led the pupil to an attempt to solve the problem independently (see 4.4.2). If it has not, a follow-up in the form of a direct answer or a cue may be more constructive.

These deviations from the traditional classroom exchange reflected teachers' beliefs that classroom dialogue should encourage self-questioning (see 4.5), risk-taking and mistake-making (see 6.8). This perspective on teaching and learning resulted in both teacher and pupils making moves that contributed substantially to the co-construction of learning.

7.2.2 Validity of findings to existing socio-constructivist frameworks

The second set of interesting findings resulted from my attempt to examine the validity of existing sociocultural frameworks in the investigated contexts of pupils with SpLD learning EFL. As mentioned in 7.2 above, the second RQ, which has emerged in the process of data collection and analysis, is:

RQ2: Do existing socio-constructivist frameworks allow an account of effective teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD who study EFL, and if so, how?

Findings reveal that 'learning-driven' interaction (see Figure 2.1, p. 19 and p. 21) emerged from many instructional episodes in cases 1, 2, 4 and 5. This instructional style was found to facilitate EFL learning in pupils with SpLD, as it included contextualised discussion, teachers linking instructional information to real-life contexts, and substantial teacher support (see, for example, 4.3 and 5.3). Learning-driven episodes were characterized by learning which is facilitated rather than

controlled by the teacher. The teacher's questions were process-oriented and aimed at assisting rather than assessing. Pupils' responses were not expected to comply with the teacher's agenda but, rather, contributions were appreciated and praised, regardless of their degree of correctness. Overall, teachers maintained human contact and interaction with their pupils beyond the text and its didactic aims. Teachers were sensitive to pupils' needs and contingently offered more specific instruction or help when a pupil signalled that he or she was in trouble (see 2.3 for definitions of scaffolding).

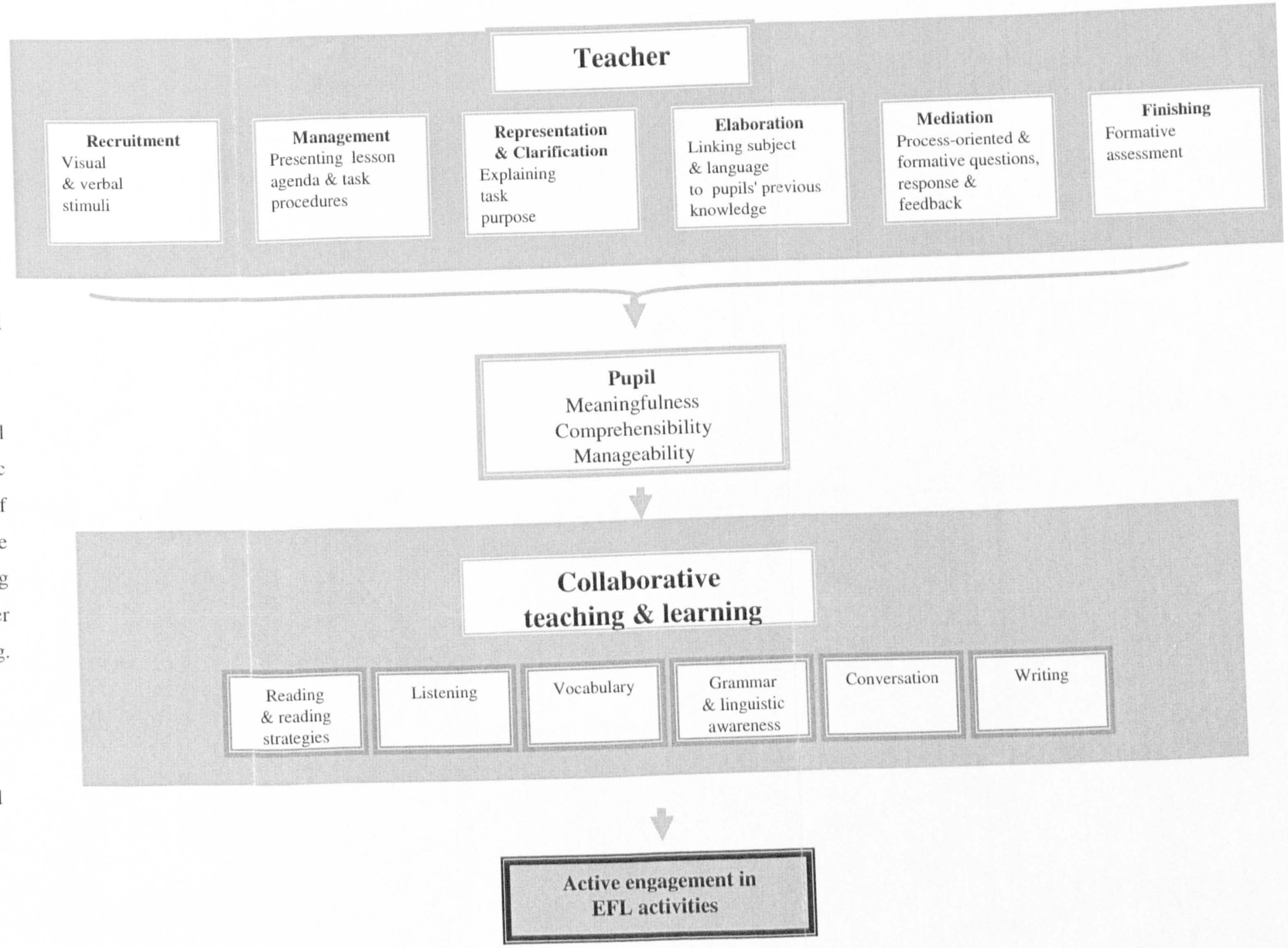
This type of interaction appeared to be crucial in opening-up opportunities for pupils with SpLD to engage in and cope successfully with EFL tasks. These findings contrast with previous studies which have shown that teachers of learners with language difficulties tend to use 'teacher-driven', high controlled instructional interaction (e.g., Heineman-Gosschalk, 1999; Webster & Roe, 1998). The current findings also contrast with some EFL teachers' views that pupils with SpLD and/or ADD/ADHD should be highly managed and controlled, otherwise the lesson will get out of hand and there will be more off-task conversation than an English lesson (see, for example, Zohar, 2006 in 2.5.2). In the current study, learning-driven instruction was characterised by a teacher's ability to naturally allow off-task, and beyond-task conversation, and make smooth transitions back to the task (see 4.3 and 5.3).

Another set of findings that emerge from the current data reveal that effective use of the five components of classroom scaffolding (Webster et al., 1996, see 2.3.2) appeared to lead to pupils' engagement in EFL learning. Lessons which contained all, or most of these components, appeared to open up more opportunities for learning (see sections 4.3 and 5.3). This result may be explained in that by using the components of classroom scaffolding the teachers created and increased in the pupils' sense of *meaningfulness, comprehensibility* and *manageability* (Antonovsky, 1987) of the learning activities and goals. Antonovsky (1987, cited by Margalit, 1998) has identified these three capabilities as general prerequisites for successful coping with difficulties, defining them as csense of coherencec. According to Antonovsky (*ibid*), to optimize the chances of successful coping with difficulties, the learners must feel that they understand the task, are capable of succeeding at the task, and view the task

as a challenge (Margalit, 1998, p. 174). Research studies have found that these capabilities are significantly low amongst individuals with SpLD compared to their high-achieving peers (e.g. Margalit, 1998; Margalit & Efratti, 1996). Building on these studies, I conducted an empirical investigation (Cohen, 2000) to examine the notion of 'sense of coherence" amongst high school pupils with SpLD learning EFL. The results showed that amongst 160 high school pupils, the group of 80 pupils with SpLD experienced significantly lower levels of 'sense of coherence' in relation to their EFL learning, as compared with the group of pupils without SpLD. I also found a significant correlation between 'sense of coherence' and EFL vocabulary recall, and that 'sense of coherence' was a good predictor of vocabulary recall.

Findings emerging from the current study's classrooms of cases 1 and 2 (see 4.3 and 5.3) suggest that using the five components of scaffolding may have facilitated pupils with SpLD's feeling that EFL activities and goals are meaningful, comprehensible, and manageable causing pupils to becaome active participants in goal-directed learning activities (e.g. listening speaking, Reading and writing), demonstrating participation, personal involvement and the taking of initiative (van Lier, 1988, see 2.4.1). These interrelationships are depicted visually in Figure 7.1 on p. 146.

Figure 7.1: Effective teacher-pupil interaction in EFL



In Figure 7.1 (opposite), I suggest a causal link between three influences that have emerged from this study's data and which have been found to promote EFL learning. These are: Teachers' effective use of the five components of classroom scaffolding, pupils' "sense of coherence", collaborative learning and teaching of EFL skills, all resulting in pupils' active participation in EFL activities. From a sociocultural perspective, the "participation" (Sfard, 1998; Swain, 2000, p. 103), represented by pupils' engagement in EFL activities, opens up opportunities for potential language learning and development.

In the recruitment phase, teachers were found to use different verbal and visual strategies which appeared to increase attention and intrinsic motivation amongst the pupils and, thus, provide a sense of 'meaningfulness' to the task (see 4.3.1 and 5.3.1). Effective recruitment of pupils' attention is a valuable strategy when teaching pupils with SpLD, in light of current psychological models which refer to attention as a primary component of information processing (e.g. Rocksfroh & Schweizer, 2001; Tsal, Shalev, & Mevorach, 2005).

The management phase, which addressed pupils' need for structured and simple instructions and directions (see 4.3.1 and 5.3.1), addressed learners' need to understand what is expected from them ('comprehensibility') and to succeed in doing it ('manageability'). In this phase teachers often introduced their lesson agenda, and reinforced "procedural strategies" to assist pupils to "draw up some

146A

In the 'management' phase teachers often introduced their lesson agenda, and reinforced "procedural strategies" to assist pupils to "draw up some form of learning plan or lesson organizer, aimed at developing independence" (Webster et al., 1996, p. 75). By discussing with pupils what they already knew about similar tasks and prompting them to predict what might happen during its course, task goals and meanings became apparent to the pupils (see 4.3.2 and 5.3.2). During that phase teachers also clarified how to organize the task, which addressed the need for manageability, minimizing unnecessary complexity and reduced confusion and anxiety.

The third component of classroom scaffolding, 'elaboration', appeared, again, to readdress pupils' need to understand the task and its meaning (see 4.3.3 and 5.3.3). This component of scaffolding involved linking new information to pupils' pre-existing knowledge of the world and of the subject matter, making them understand the new information better and making the information become more meaningful to their life experiences. For example, a teacher used 'trailer' by briefly summarizing in Hebrew previous chapters of a story, and telling what the current chapter was going to be about, locating it in a chronology of events and making its content and topic relevant to the pupils who might have forgotten what they learned in the previous lesson. Teachers also linked new linguistic forms to more familiar form. (e.g., 'action' as used in film-making), or made links to more familiar L2 words and to cognates. Pupils' lack of sense of meaningfulness was also facilitated when, at the 'elaboration' phase, teachers' marked and accentuated features of the task which might be especially relevant to the pupils (e.g. highlighting the importance of certain vocabulary items to pupils' real-life needs when having to use L2).

Effective use of the first three components of classroom scaffolding resulted in pupils operating beyond their current capabilities and becoming more independent. This enabled the transfer of responsibility for task completion to the learners (Wood and Wood, 1996, see 2.3), and thus, teachers could move from their teacher-fronted position and walk around the classroom, sitting next to individual pupils and supporting them in their reading or writing, or addressing the needs of specific pupils who lagged behind the class. This stage reflected the 'mediation' component of classroom scaffolding, as it contained verbal and non verbal mediation, aimed at

helping pupils cope successfully with their L2 literacy tasks (see 4.3.5 and 5.3.4). During that stage teachers addressed specific questions and approached pupils who had got off track, thus maintaining 'comprehensibility' and 'manageability' of the task. The verbal mediation component of classroom scaffolding did not occur merely at this stage, but also throughout the lesson, reflected by teacher's initiations, questions, responses and feedback moves (see, 4.3, and 5.3). As I have mentioned in 7.2.1 above, these teachers' moves were effective when reflecting process-oriented and non-evaluative goals. Effective mediation was also reflected by the kind of tasks and texts the teachers selected for their pupils and the ways they manipulated the tasks. Teachers facilitated 'comprehensibility' and 'meaningfulness' of "cognitively demanding" tasks (Cummins, 2000, p. 68) by providing conceptual bridges (see Webster et al., p. 1996, in 2.3.2) and "contextual cues" (see Cummins, 2000, p. 71). Occasional reinforcement or practice of particular context-reduced and cognitively undemanding points (Cummins, 2000, p. 68) was found effective when contextualised in broader and meaningful contexts (see, for instance, grammar and phonics instruction in 6. 3 and 6.4).

The final component of classroom scaffolding – finishing – which is drawing together pupils' classroom activity and reflecting on quantity, process and quality, also addressed pupils' sense of coherence (see, for example, 4.3.5 and 5.3.5). This last stage aimed at checking and commenting on pupils' work and products, giving pupils a sense of purpose and challenge ('meaningfulness'). At that stage teachers gave feedback in formative and encouraging ways (see 6.8), never intimidating pupils, and focusing more on learning processes rather than products, which addressed pupils' need to feel they could manage the academic demands. Teachers used formative assessment strategies while pupils were engaged in their classroom work or after they have completed a task (e.g., Rea-Dickins, 2001; Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000). They also used encouraging feedback on the pupils' efforts and products through feedback statements such as: "You managed nicely", "You asked a variety of questions" (see 5.3.4 and 6.6). Assessment which was more product-oriented, but which appeared to be essential for pupils' need for challenge and motivation to complete their tasks, was carried out by checking work or exams collectively, embedding in the assessment further questioning of the process through which pupils have come up with answers and explaining misunderstandings (which addressed pupils' need for

'comprehensibility'). Alternatively, teachers collected worksheets and notebooks and returned them to the pupils with some positive comment, evaluation of the quantity and accuracy of work and what can be done to improve, or a smile sticker (see 4.3.5 and 5.3.5).

As figure 7.1 shows, by creating in their pupils sense of meaningfulness, comprehensibility and manageability, teachers were able engage their pupils in collaborative EFL activities (such as listening, reading, writing, speaking, vocabulary and meta-cognitive problem-solving). In the next section I discuss the specific types of interaction teachers used when teaching the different EFL skills and how they addressed the specific challenges posed by EFL learners with SpLD.

7.2.3 Interaction specifically effective for promoting EFL learning in pupils with SpLD

This study's findings suggest some aspects of EFL learning that appear particularly relevant to pupils with SpLD. Thus, the third research question this study posed was:

RQ3: Are there specific types of interaction that appear effective in addressing the challenges posed by EFL learners with SpLD, and if so, what are they?

Patterns of instructional interaction which emerged from the data of each case, and across cases, reveal the advantages of dialogic, collaborative approaches to teaching EFL skills. The findings in relation to effective instruction of EFL skills have been presented in chapters 4 and 5, and in chapter 6 within the comparative cross-case analysis (see 6.2 - 6.6). These are discussed below.

7.2.3.1 Reading

Effective reading instruction was found to include teacher-pupil dialogues about reading strategies and meta-cognitive awareness (see 4.5.1). These strategies were facilitated from examples within the text and generalized. When isolated linguistic components were taught (e.g., lexical items or letter-sound correspondences), they were taught within meaningful reading and/or listening activities which enabled meaningful imitation (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 88), rather than mechanical, rote repetition (see 6.3). It was found that imitation of isolated linguistic patterns modelled by the teacher, within a broader, meaningful context, resulted in pupils' ability to go beyond the limits of their decoding, pronunciation and comprehension capabilities when reading alone (see 6.3).

Except for Case 5 private teacher (see 6.3), in the current study there was no evidence of explicit and direct instruction of decoding skills, which have been known as inefficient in pupils with SpLD (e.g. Frederickson & Cline, 2002, p. 308-309; Rack, 1994). The absence of phonics from the school teaching can be explained in that in large groups, structured instruction of basic phonics is less feasible and teachers prefer to teach pupils compensatory reading and meta-linguistic strategies so that they will be able to cope with academic texts, in spite of their decoding difficulties. However, school teachers did use a number of effective strategies to engage pupils in decoding processes. For example, while reading a text for pupils, Irene asked them to follow the words with their eyes and fingers in their texts. Case 4 teacher facilitated reading through interactive reading, asking her pupil to read out aloud and reading for him difficult words whenever he got stuck. Both Ann and Irene often read for pupils, and/or explained words or phrases, adding some background explanations to the text, to keep pupils' attention on the text and facilitate their reading comprehension (see, for example, 4.3 and 5.3).

7.2.3.2 Grammar

Grammar was mostly taught from examples within the text to generalization of grammar rules and was context-embedded (Adir-Hauck, 1992; Cummins, 2000, see 6.3). This approach may be suitable for pupils with linguistic problems because, for them, context-reduced grammar learning may be too abstract and cognitively demanding. In addition, it was found that generalizations and explanations of grammar rules focused upon the logical aspect of grammar and the pupil's common sense (rather than upon rote-memorization of abstract rules), and were directed at learners' general reasoning ability (see 6.4). When teachers reinforced and practiced isolated grammatical points they used short, simple grammar exercises so that pupils' attention was focused on the linguistic items rather than the task complexity (see 6.3, 6.4 and appendix 14). Alternatively, when matriculation examination grammar tasks were too cognitively demanding, the teacher provided substantial contextual support. For example, a teacher used linguistic playfulness (Sullivan, 2000), which prompted pupils to visualize abstract linguistic patterns in a novel, ridiculous way (see 4.5.3).

7.2.3.3 Writing

Effective composition instruction for pupils emerged from the private teacher' data and included: 'accommodation' in allowing the pupil to dictate the composition to the teacher, which enabled pupils who have difficulties with writing and spelling to generate ideas without worrying about how to convey them on paper (see 6.5). Teachers also integrated reading and speaking into the writing process, using text from which to generate ideas for the pupil to use in writing and then conducting a dialogue with the pupil about these ideas, negotiating meanings and accuracy (see 6.5). Interactive writing strategies allowed appropriation of the pupil's language into the teacher's and building on it (Nassaji & Cumming, 2000), as the teacher suggests, interprets and provides options to choose from.

In the large-group contexts, explicit and direct instruction of writing was not evidenced, except by Irene, who sat beside pupils, modelled for them how to write, or wrote for them (see 5.3.4 and 5.4.3). It may be that in large group contexts, teaching writing in a dialogical, dynamic way is less feasible, as teachers have to assist a group

of pupils. It is a challenge for practitioners who teach groups to integrate interactive writing in their instruction, either in the form of guided, collaborative group writing, or by creating a better balance between teacher fronted instruction and individual instruction. This last point has implications for professional practice and language education policy, to which I refer in 7.4 below.

7.2.3.4 Vocabulary

Vocabulary instruction appeared most effective when it included three dimensions of learning involvement: 'need', 'search' and 'evaluation' (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001, see 6.2). 'Need' was found to increase when teachers taught words within meaningful activities and tasks which were relevant to pupils' lives and identities. In contrast, when activities were composed of long word lists, with no attempt to create motivation, pupils appeared uninvolved and reluctant to comply with the task requirements (see 6.2.1). The second component of effective vocabulary learning was to encourage pupils to search for word meanings, either in the dictionary or by designing written tasks or verbal interactions that explicitly required pupils to infer word meanings from context (see, 4.3, 6.2.3 and Appendices 13 and 14). The third component was to increase pupils' evaluation strategies by referring them back to the meaning they have selected and the context of the text, questioning them about their choice, or presenting several options and encouraging them to make an educated choice when distinguishing between the options (see 6.2.3). This encouraged them to evaluate whether their choice did or did not make sense. The effectiveness of this process for pupils with SpLD lies in the fact that because some of them have difficulty in memory processes, the deeper they are involved in the vocabulary learning process, the better they will retain the word in their memory (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). From a socio-cultural perspective, the process of activating the learner's need, search and evaluation requires the teacher to guide, question and monitor their task engagement and the pupils to be active and engaged the vocabulary task.

7.2.3.5 Conversation

English conversation was practiced in the large group context through simulated role-play tasks, rather than natural conversation (see 6.6, p. 129). In the private context the conversation appeared to emerge more naturally (see 6.6, p. 128). In both contexts, findings suggest that in spite of pupils' limited conversation abilities and lack of confidence in using EFL, a number of conversational strategies encouraged pupils to use the target language. These were: a) asking open-ended, genuine questions in English, which allowed the pupil to express information about his everyday life experiences, b) adopting a 'meaning-and fluency focus' (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 152) by accepting mistakes and minimal use of L1 as valid; c) repairing by modelling the correct phrase (using a question intonation) as a clarification of the message rather than evaluation of language accuracy; and d) keeping language simple to maximize comprehension.

7.2.3.6 Language switching

Comparative analysis in relation to the use of L1 in the L2 classroom reveals that school teachers used more L1 in the L2 classrooms than private tutors (see 6.7). Furthermore, while private tutors used L1 in a reasonably consistent way, school teachers were much less consistent in their L1 use. Both school teachers and pupils argued that using mostly L2 in the classroom intimidates pupils who have difficulties. From a social-constructivist point of view input alone is not enough for language acquisition. L1 may facilitate thinking processes and is essential for learners (Ellis, 1994, in Lio et al, 2004: 608), especially as pupils are likely to ask themselves questions of L2 text in their first language (Shohamy, 1984), or need L1 equivalents for unfamiliar words. However, it may be the case that excessive L1 deprives pupils of essential exposure to the target language. Data reveal that two teachers found potential solutions for increasing L2 talk by asking simple questions and giving simple directions in L2 so the pupils become attuned to the language. Informed by Cline (1997, in Fredrickson & Cline 2002, p. 295), I suggest that a solution to the problem of language switching may be in the form of teaching EFL through teaching in L2 and using L1 "on a systematic basis", with adaptations to meet the needs of specific pupils with SpLD.

The findings suggest another three factors which are more indirectly related to EFL learning, but may have particular influence on the degree and the ways in which pupils with SpLD are engaged in EFL learning.

7.2.3.7 Peer and group work

Peer and group work was found to be used only by Ann (see, for example, 4.3.4 and 4.7), albeit not as part of an intentional attempt to design tasks which promote peer and group collaboration, but rather in response to pupils' initiation to work in pairs or threesomes. Among the other school cases, data revealed little interaction between pupils, but mostly between the teacher and individual pupils, so the opportunity for scaffolding between/amongst pupils was not exploited. Interview data, as well as my own experience in teaching Remedial Instruction courses for in-service teachers, suggest that teachers lower their creative pedagogic expectations when it comes to pupils with SpLD, not trusting, for example, their ability to work in collaboration. Nevertheless, data from case 1 provide some evidence that collaborative group and peer work leads pupils with SpLD to scaffold each other's EFL learning and may result in language development. From my own experience as a remedial teacher (Cohen, 2003, see also 2.5.2), and in line with sociocultural research in L2 (see, for example, Donato, 1994, 2000; Ohta, 1995), it is very likely that well designed EFL tasks (see, for example, Ellis, 2003), for peer and group work may promote collaborative learning in the classroom of pupils with SpLD.

7.2.3.8 Formative classroom assessment

Classroom interaction and interview data from Cases 1, 2, 4 and 5 revealed an emphasis and awareness of the importance of "informal instruction-embedded assessment activities" (Rea-Dickins, 2001, p. 434). This included assessment aimed at probing pupils' understanding by asking process-oriented rather than memory questions, and was often followed by formative feedback, using scaffolding strategies rather than merely evaluation of the answer's correctness (see, for instance, 4.4, 4.6 and 6.8.2).

Finally, this research investigation found evidence for non-verbal elements of mediation, which are inherent in classroom interaction, and can be essential to effective interaction with pupils with SpLD.

7.2.3.9 Non-verbal mediation

Effective non-verbal mediation was demonstrated by using a variety of physical and symbolic tools (Vygotsky, 1978) in addition to the traditional textbooks. These included audio recordings, charts, overhead projector presentations, pictures and computer presentations (see 4.3, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 6.9). In this way, school teachers not only provided the pupils with a variety of opportunities to engage in language learning, but also enabled them to use different sensory routes (auditory, visual and tactile). This instructional approach, as well as interview data (see 6.9.2) suggest that the teachers possessed awareness of the variability between people's cognitive abilities (Gardner, 1993), and did not rely on a single dimension learning style (Frederickson & Cline, 2002, p. 236).

Non-verbal mediation appeared to reflect the importance of teachers' choices of "not only what to do but also what not to do" (Interview data, case 4). Slow pacing, for instance, emerged from the data of four out of five cases, and included pauses between words and sentences and extended wait time for pupils to absorb what the teacher has said and process their responses (see, for instance, 6.6). This is considered important in light of the vast body of research which emphasizes the difficulty pupils with SpLD have in processing linguistic input rapidly (e.g., Fawcett & Nicolson, 1994; Nicolson & Fawcett, 1995). Teacher economical speech was also found an effective strategy which promoted pupils' attention (e.g. see 5.5). Other effective mediations were teacher's physical location in the classroom (see 4.3, 5.3, 5.5), or physical proximation to certain pupils (e.g. sitting besides a pupil, touching his arm). 'Scaffolding by silence' as a response to pupils' misbehaviours was found to be an effective choice which reflected the teacher's understanding that restraint is sometimes useful when dealing with pupils with ADHD and impulsivity (e.g. see 6.9.3), because these pupils sometimes break classroom rules without a specific intention or plan to do so (Carbone, 2001, p. 75).

Below, before analysing how these findings confirm and extend current knowledge in the area of EFL and SpLD, I first discuss some limitations of this research.

7.3 Limitations of the study

While I believe the findings summarized and discussed above are firmly grounded in the data, I also recognize that this research has some limitations. Firstly, case study research is not sampling research and a number of cases are still not a strong representation of other cases. Moreover, because of the complexity of the concept 'SpLD' and the fact that no commonly agreed upon definitions have been found in the literature (see 2.5.1), it may be difficult to generalise the current findings to different contexts. Secondly, the current study does not provide any tight causal links between factors which were found to open up opportunities for language learning, and actual measures of language acquisition. It is worth noting that case 5 provides recorded data of the pupil's language development and improvement over a period of two years (see 6.3). In addition, both case 1, 2 and 5 teachers reported that their pupils had made good progress and passed the matriculation examinations. It could also be argued that the "acquisition metaphor" for 'learning' should be replaced by the newer "participation metaphor" (Sfard, 1998; Swain, 2000, p. 103). However, these two metaphors represent two different perspectives which are enriching and complementary, rather than competing opinions (Sfard, 1998, p. 11). This last point has implications for further research in the field, to which I refer in 7.5 below.

These limitations aside, I do think this study has contributed in a number of ways to knowledge in the field of EFL teaching and learning and SpLD. It is to these contributions that I now turn.

7.4 Contributions to knowledge

Review of the literature on both EFL and SpLD suggests that no such study, investigating the relationship of both concepts from a sociocultural perspective, has been conducted. As this study was designed with a view to exploring good practice, its fine-grained analysis of opportunities that arise through sustained goal-directed interaction have yielded constructive and valuable findings. Firstly, pedagogical

interaction which lead to pupils' participation and engagement in EFL learning incorporated the five components of classroom scaffolding (see 2.3.2), learning-driven instructional styles (see 2.3.3), and deviations from the traditional IRF pattern (see 2.3.1) while asking process-oriented and open-ended questions, and providing formative feedback. These instructional practices resulted in teacher-pupil collaboration and dialogue, where the teacher challenged pupils to search for meaning, question themselves, and evaluate their answers.

Secondly, efficient interaction involved teachers' contextual support and conceptual bridges which built on the learner's thinking and pre-existing knowledge. In addition, practical and direct assistance, in the form of reading and writing for pupils, or providing them with word translations, were found to address learners' specific difficulties.

Thirdly, nn interesting finding was the apparently causal relationships between the five components of classroom scaffolding and "sense of coherence" (Antonovsky, 1987). The five phases of scaffolding appeared to create and increase pupils' sense of meaningfulness, comprehensibility and manageability of EFL activities and tasks, thus enabling pupils to become engaged in language learning and development.

It would be interesting to 'retest' these findings and check whether or not the socio-constructivist frameworks examined in the current study allow an account to emerge of effective teacher-pupil interaction in other contexts of good practitioners who teach EFL to pupils with SPLD. It could also be enriching to embed some assessment measures of language acquisition in future research on effective teacher-pupil interaction in classrooms of pupils with SpLD. Such measures may shed more light on causal links between teachers' instructional interactions and pupils' language development.

Finally, I believe that the current findings may have some important implications for professional practice and language education policy, which may help teachers broaden their perspectives and better meet some challenges posed by the specific needs of pupils with SpLD learning EFL. Firstly, the cross-case comparative analysis suggests

that in large-group contexts it may be less feasible to teach pupils basic skills of reading and writing (e.g., letter-sound correspondences) which are crucial for their future language development. Findings also suggest that little evidence of conversation and composition instruction was found in the large-group contexts. I believe that when planning provision for pupils with SpLD, systematic instruction of these skills should be carried out through additional provision for individual pu[ils or small groups, by specialist remedial instructors. Alternatively, making effective use of computers when teaching literacy (as Ann did) may facilitate pupils' learning. For example, research indicates that touch-typing training to pupils with SpLD improves their writing, spelling, fine-motor control and reading performance (e.g. Jacobson, 2006).

Secondly, the findings suggest that the quality of teacher-pupil interaction resulted from the ways teachers integrated their experiences and knowledge of pupils with SpLD into their classroom interaction and instructional activity. As a remedial EFL teacher, I have found that findings derived from Vygotskian and sociocultural research have influenced me to adopt more collaborative approaches to teaching and learning, and better strategies for process-oriented, formative questioning and feedback. I believe that specialist training for pre- and in-service EFL teachers should include systematic opportunities for teachers to know about sociocultural aspects that influence L2 development in pupils with SpLD.

7.5 Concluding remarks

As I have explained in the introductory chapter, one of my reasons for wanting to conduct this research was my personal experience of the challenges posed by good instruction to pupils with SpLD. This study has examined how teachers open up opportunities for pupils with SpLD to engage in EFL learning and development. Providing some enriching findings, it is my hope that this study will be disseminated through publication, and through specialist training courses for EFL teachers. By so doing, I hope that this dissertation will contribute to the improvement processes of language education to learners with SpLD.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Regulatory scale of collaborative corrective feedback

(Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994, p. 471)

0. Prior to the tutorial, tutor asks the learner to read (what the student has written), find the errors, and correct them independently.
1. Construction of a 'collaborative frame' prompted by the presence of the tutor as a potential dialogic partner.
2. Prompted or focused reading of the sentence that contains the error by the learner or the tutor.
3. Tutor indicates that something may be wrong in a segment (e.g., sentence, clause, line) - 'Is there anything wrong in this sentence?'
4. Tutor rejects unsuccessful attempts at recognizing the error.
5. Tutor narrows down the location of the error (e.g., tutor repeats or points to the specific segment which contains the error).
6. Tutor indicates the nature of the error, but does not identify the error (e.g., 'There is something wrong with the tense marking here').
7. Tutor identifies the error ('You can't use an auxiliary here').
8. Tutor rejects learner's unsuccessful attempts at correcting the error.
9. Tutor provides clues to help the learner arrive at the correct form (e.g., 'It is not really past but some thing that is still going on').
10. Tutor provides the correct form.
11. Tutor provides some examples of the correct pattern when other forms of help fail to produce an appropriate responsive action.

Appendix 2 Example field notes

This set of observation notes from Irene's lesson on 19.2.04 was chosen because of its relative legibility, and because it is written mainly in English. It also illustrates how I first took lower-inferences, descriptive notes and then added some higher-inference summative comments at the bottom of the page.

The best –

T: [illegible]

S: [illegible]

T: [illegible] To

Don't let them sing while she is reading

Translates the words of the song.

A girl translates the words for a friend who came later. Uses her electric dictionary.

Let them under your skin –

[illegible] – [illegible] [illegible] "[illegible] [illegible]"

shoulder – S: head + shoulders?

late
full = מלא fool = טמבל

Works calmly. Takes her time. Doesn't look at her watch. Elaborates on emotional, general knowledge things. Makes the connection to literature – an internal rhyme.

I decided not to video tape because the [illegible]

Appendix 3 Interview guide for pupils (translated from Hebrew)

The aim of this interview is to help me investigate the best ways to teach pupils.

1. What in English lessons helps you learn vocabulary/reading/writing/speaking?
2. What positive experience do you remember from English lessons?
3. What experience was not pleasant (frustrating)?
4. How would you describe a positive atmosphere that helps learning and concentration?
5. What promotes your English outside school?
6. What do you think about the following teacher-pupil dialogues?

Example 1:
P: (reads a sentence) GUY ASKED HIS FRIEND FOR HELP.
T: [What tense is this?]
P: [He is asking now.]
T: [No. It's not present it's past. How do we know?]
P: (Does not answer)
T: [We have] ed. Ed [hits to the past.]

Do the teacher's question and responses promote learning? Do you think that following this dialogue the pupil will remember the rule? Why?

Example 2:
T: (Shows a picture of a restaurant) What is this?
P1: Eating place.
T: Right.
P2: [Why right? There is another word.]
T: [But it is an eating place]. It is called restaurant.

Do the teacher's question and responses promote learning? Do you think that following this dialogue the pupil will remember the word? Why?

Appendix 4 Interview guide for teacher[10] (Ann)

1. What in your background and experience helps you to promote learning in pupils with LD?
2. What in your classes promotes learning in pupils with difficulties?
3. What in the atmosphere you create promotes concentration and learning for them?
4. What in your speaking style promotes learning in pupils with difficulties?
5. What threatens them (for example, style/speaking tone, materials, excessive use of English)?
6. How can a balance be made between use of English in the lessons and reducing pupils' anxiety?
7. What positive experience do you remember from the lessons you have taught to this class this year?
8. What unpleasant experience do you remember?
9. Other teachers avoid taking those pupils to the English centre. How do you make them get used to working in the centre?
10. Dorit has told me that you had done a project with a class on designing an advertisement. How did you do it?

<u>Excerpts from classroom interaction</u>

In what way do these dialogues reflect your teaching?

[Why does one say] Jerusalem [and not Yerushalyim?] (pause) [Why do we say] Gaza [and not Aza? For the same reason that we say] Jerusalem [and not Yeryshalayim ... I agree that you say Aza. Change the] G [into] A, [but this is an interesting question. We will discuss it.]

[What is] 'made of'?
This is made of plastic.
(points at her sunglasses)
(pause)
You will have to find out.

---

[10] Ann's and Irene's interviews were conducted in Hebrew. The guiding questions are translated.

Appendix 5 Consent form for pupils

The consent form used is provided below (translated from Hebrew)

8.2.2004

Re: Participating in a research study

Dear pupil

As part of my Doctoral studies in Education I am conducting a research study aimed at finding out effective instructional methods for pupils who have difficulties in learning EFL.

As part of my study, I would like to observe ten English classes in which you are participating this year at school. I plan to record the classes using observation notes and an audio recorder. In addition I will use a video camera to videotape the English teacher.

The pupils will benefit from the study as throughout it I will be able to share with the English teacher and the pupils the findings and conclusions.

Participating in the study is voluntary and a pupil will be able to quit at any time. While collecting the data, no identifying details, such as the names of the pupils, teacher or school, will be recorded. The dissertation will be submitted to the University of Bristol, England.

After reading this letter, please note if you agree or refuse to participate in the study.

Yours sincerely

Irit Cohen

I read your letter and I agree to participate in the study.

Signature _____

Appendix 6 Example of mail correspondence with my informants

The first correspondence is from May 2005. The second is from May 2006.

Dear S,

... In your interview there is a part in which you answer my question: What in your personality enables you to help students with difficulties. I find your answer very powerful and informative for other teachers in relation to commitment to students, and, naturally, would like to quote it in my dissertation. However, you are sharing there with me something intimate and I would like to be sure you agree that I quote you. It is the following...

Irit

Truly, Irit, I don't think anyone has ever taken me as seriously as you do - I thank you for this incredible experience. I see I contradicted myself, which I often do, I suppose, since life is full of contradictions. Yes, of course, you may use anything I provided in the interview. A dream of mine is to study student voice - I'd like to go around the country listening to the kids themselves and reaching conclusions from them. Right now, it doesn't seem likely it'll happen, but who knows ... With much respect and love for the light you are shining,

S.

Appendix 7 Example summary notes

These are example summary notes that I wrote in my pad after classroom observations (I typed them out only at the final analysis stage). The notes helped me summarize and organize observations, impressions and thoughts, and reflect on certain issues. Writing the summary notes was considered as part of data analysis in the field process as it helped me notice emerging themes and patterns. I also used them when preparing for the teacher and pupils interviews.

1.2.04: After a telephone conversation

In a phone call this evening I talked with Irene about today's lesson and she told me a few things about her teaching that I jotted down on a piece of paper. She said that she had studied art therapy. Sometimes she is angry with them because she realizes that she has to be angry. They don't control their tone of voice. I have to turn down their volume. We come to agreements: If you were a teacher and a student would be cheeky, how would you react? They make offers: how many times to warn them before I write down a complaint. We build a 'contract' together and this is why it has a stronger significance for them. A way of constructing their behaviour.

2.3.04: After reading through observation notes

Reading through my observation notes a few days later, it seems that the Language Centre is a pleasant, colourful and peaceful learning place. It is also well-equipped, and varied in learning materials. It seems that because this is a small group of students Ann is able to work with them individually. Nevertheless, some of them are not engaged in learning. The verbal and non-verbal interaction between Ann and the students is informal and friendly.

Appendix 8 Transcription codes

[I need help]	translated from Hebrew
(...)	speech omitted because irrelevant or redundant
(**)	unclear speech that could not be transcribed
Px	pupil
PP	a number of pupils speaking at once
(smile)	observer comments
(4 secs)	teacher's wait time
IN THE PAST	text being read out loud
Tourists/tourists	word/sound emphasized
<u>went</u>	word stretched
What does it mean?=	overlapping speech
= wait a minute	
?	interrogative intonation

Appendix 9 Transliteration of Hebrew in English letters

Episode 4 looking for clues (23.3.2004)

After the recess

(...)

Ann: /Techpsu remazim sheomrim lanu beia zman hatext (bedaber)/ (without being reminded, Ann is responding to P2's request from the previous lesson).

P3: /avar/

Ann: /minain at yodaat?/

P2: /lo achshav, hove/

P1: /Oh, ma ze hashelet im hamodaot? Oh/

Ann: They say?

P3 (*)

Ann: They said /beaver/ (5 sec)

P1: /Po bachelek haze (**)/

/az bou nishal etchen sheela nosefet. Ma anachnu mechpsim baeinaim

P2: /ani lo atsliach/

Ann: /rega/

P1: /Ani lo atsliach/

Ann: [signals with her hand for P1 to wait] (*) Yesh lanu shnei dvarim sheanachnu yecholim lechapes baeinaim bechdei sheyhiye lanu musag legabei Hzman shel hatext. Echad ze time expressions, tni li dogma

P1: Emm now

Ann: /ma od?

P1: every week

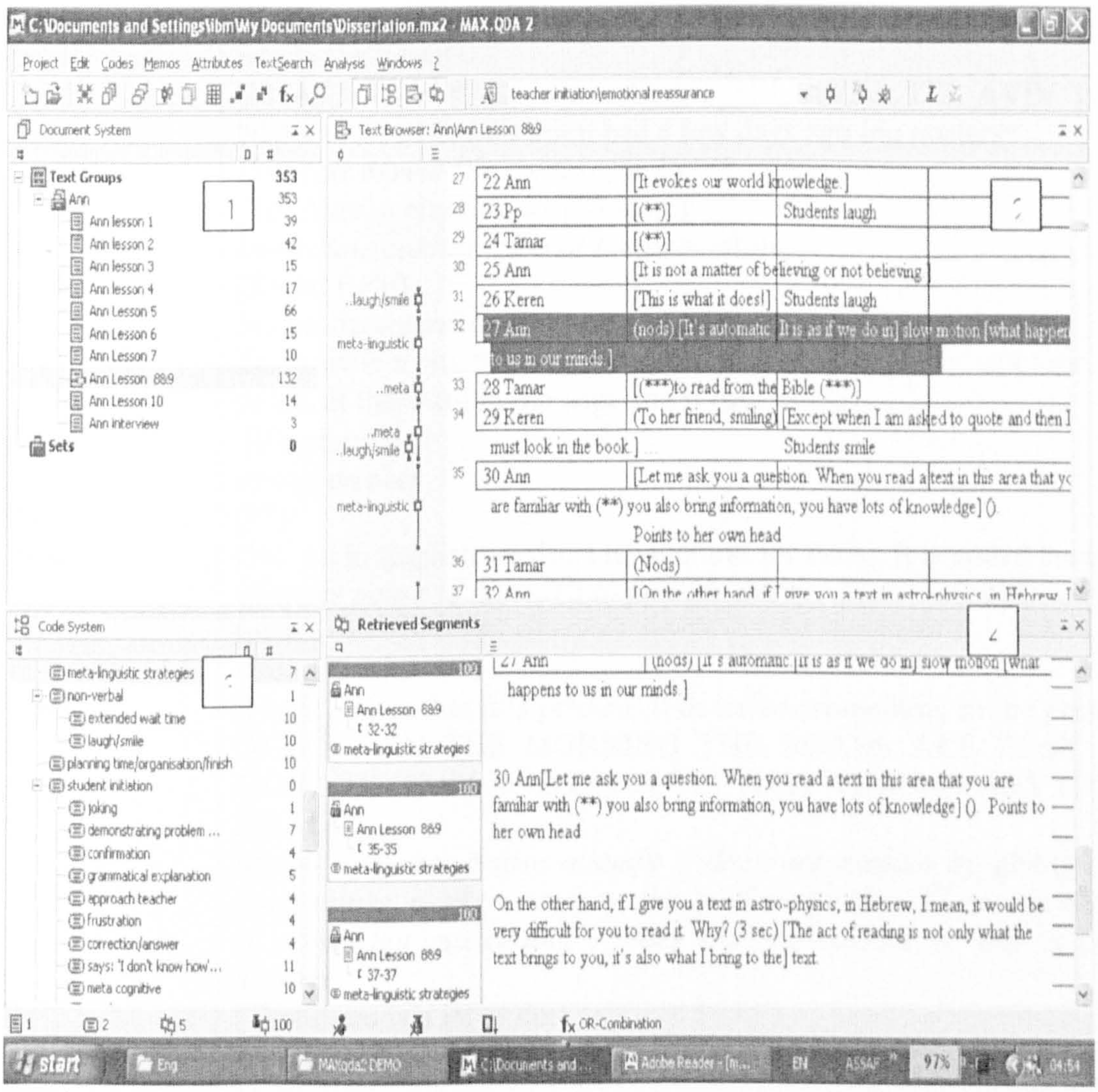
Px: yesterday

Ann: every day, yesterday. /ze hadvarim hamerkaziim (*) OK? /ze bituyei zama/ time expressions. (3 sec) /ma hadavar hasheni shealavanachnu-

P1: es

Appendix 10 Using MAXqda

Below is a screenshot from MAXqda, with a brief description of how the software was used



The transcripts, typed in Microsoft Word and saved as Enriched Text Files, were loaded into MAXqda's document system (1). I then used the text browser (2) and went through each transcript to code segments (see analysis practice 4 under 3.5), based upon and also contributing to the codelist or code system (3); the indicated squares in the code system window stand for memos regarding concepts that were in development or questions that were raised by a segment of data or group of segments. After coding one or more transcripts I could retrieve and look at all the segments that were given a particular code or codes in the retrieved segments window (4), thus facilitating the analysis process. In addition, clicking on a segment's accompanying box on the left in (4) brought up into the text browser (2) the transcript from which the segment was drawn.

Appendix 11 Triangulation of analysis

This appendix provides an extract from the second analyser's (Haines, 2006) case-categorization and interpretation. His observations appear in italics.

Irene	(reads out loud): WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TEL AVIV. TEL AVIV THE CITY THAT NEVER STOPS. [We even had a few days ago big posters= *Puts text in real-life context for Ps*
Px	[Tel Aviv, a city that doesn't stop.] *Immediate confirmation of I's association*
Irene	[Right, right] *Maintains interaction with Ps - human contact beyond the text* Tel Aviv is a city that never stops. [Why do we have 's' after the word stop?] (She points at the word in the page she is displaying)
Px	[It's plural?] *wrong answer*
Px	(**)
Irene	[No, no in English we don't have plural for verbs. It is added because it's] (3 secs) *effective pause to allow Ps to provide answer (does not praise attempt)*
Px	[past.] *wrong answer*
Irene	[No. it shows that it is present. It describes something in the present] EVEN AT 3 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING THE ROADS ARE BUSY (...) THERE IS MORE TO STAY AND DO IN TEL AVIV THAN IN ANY OTHER PLACE IN ISRAEL. *Again, does not praise attempt – does not explain by giving other examples – goes, thinks, works – anyway, the 's' distinguishes 3rd person rather than present, so somewhat misleading – does not self-correct so this is error rather than mistake*
Px	[That there is a lot to do.] *nearly right*
Irene	More than. *Focuses P*
Px	[More.] *Right answer*
Irene	[Good. More than other places in Israel.] What places do you know in Tel Aviv? *Praises correct answer. Switches to English. Why? To encourage Ps to respond in English?*
Px	[the port.] *response in Hebrew*
Irene	[The port] Port. *Moves again from Hebrew to English.*
Px	Promenade* *P responds in English this time.*
Irene	[Promenade] *Translates into Hebrew for class. She could have asked them to do this? <What is> promenade?*

Appendix 12 'Member check'

The first extract is taken from my email to one of the teachers where I ask her to explain her own interaction. The second extract is taken from her reply in which she provides her interpretation of the data.

Extract 1 (26/10/04)

... I would like to know if you could read the attached document (it's short) of 2 excerpts from your transcribed lesson, and comment on any aspect of the dialogue between you and your student. Anything that comes to your mind (interaction, pedagogy, strategies...) would be relevant and useful. Please write your comments in English. I chose these particular excerpts because they seem to represent your goal in that particular lesson ...

Extract 2 (27/10/2004)

In excerpt 1, I'm asking him to think out loud for 2 reasons: metacognition on his part – becoming aware of his thoughts and strategies, and letting me in on those secrets as well so that I can work with them. I want to acknowledge all of them, while reinforcing those that facilitate precision, setting aside those that do not and perhaps suggesting other options.

I try to ask him questions that he can ask himself while working on the material on his own. I am focusing mainly on one aspect that I already know he tends to forget. At first, I give "hints" as to what that aspect is, but when I see he can't figure it out on his own, I tell him what that is. I wouldn't want to keep on asking him until he happens to guess correctly.

After analyzing each piece separately, I try to pull all the pieces back together at the end of the lesson, so that he sees the whole sentence – structure and meaning as one. In addition, I provide feedback that relates to "what" he accomplished and "how" he can reproduce that accomplishment independently.

Appendix 13 Example task page (Ann)

Scanning a Computer Presentation

A. READ THE QUESTIONS BEFORE WATCHING THE PRESENTATION.

B. ANSWER THE QUESTIONS WHILE WATCHING THE PRESENTATION.

1. How many Israelis were murdered in the past three years? _____

2. Most terrorists come from-
i. Gaza ii. East Jerusalem iii. The West Bank

3. In Gaza there is a security fence.....YES / NO

4. The distance from Kalkilya to Kfar Saba is-
i. 30 minutes walk ii. 15 minutes walk iii. 15 minutes drive

5. Most of the fence is made of concrete ..... YES / NO

6. The final border will be determined by
the United Nations.....YES/ NO

7. Palestinian farmers will have access to their farms .....YES / NO

8. Most Palestinians will remain in
the Western side of the fence.....YES / NO

9. What is this presentation about?
i. Saving lives
ii. The West Bank
iii. The Security Fence.

10. Do you think the security fence is necessary for the safety of Israelis and Palestinians? Why?

_____

_____

**Translate all the underlined words- use the Dictionary of 'WORDS'

(עלייך לתרגם את כל המילים המסומנות בקו תחתון – 15 מילים , ניתן להשתמש במילון במחשב)

Appendix 14 Example worksheet (Irene)

Name : _____

Class : _____

Date : _____

The Beatles

Hey Jude

1) תרגם כל מילה לעברית וסָמן בקו את המילה ההפוכה

The word		The opposite	
בָאד (1) bad	= _____	give	= _____
טייק (2) take	= _____	finish	= _____
סָאד (3) sad	= _____	good	= _____
בֶגין (4) begin	= _____	big	= _____
ליטֶל (5) little	= _____	happy	= _____

2) לפניך משפט תיאור פעולות בהווה (Present Simple).
הפך כל משפט למשפט שאלה !!!

a) He makes it bad. _____ ?

b) You feel the pain. _____ ?

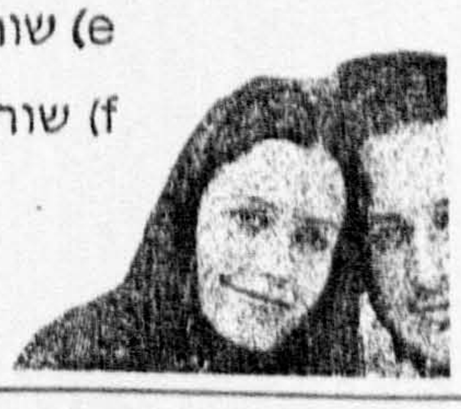
c) She gets into your skin. _____ ?

d) I let him down. _____ ?

3) להשיב תשובה מלאה, ובמילים בלבד, על-פי התבניות אשר למדנו.

a) How many lines are there ? _____

b) How many verbs are in line five ? _____

4) העתק את המילה על-פי ההוראה. תרגם לעברית ורשום האם היא adjective או verb ?

המילה		מהותה
a) שורה one מילה 4 = _____	←	_____
b) שורה four מילה 4 = _____		_____
c) שורה seven מילה 6 = _____	←	_____
d) שורה twelve מילה 3 = _____		_____
e) שורה fifteen מילה 6 = _____	←	_____
f) שורה eighteen מילה 4 = _____		_____