

Title:

Teaching and Learning through Interaction:
A Case study of Japanese Children Learning English as a Foreign Language

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis presents an analysis of interaction within an EFL classroom in a Japanese primary school. Adopting a sociocultural perspective of learning, the study explores the applicability of “guided participation” (Rogoff, 1990) as an approach to understanding the process of classroom language learning. It is a concept in which learning is viewed as increased “participation” (“participation metaphor” Sfard, 1998) in the activities of a community, achieved by mediation through language use and structuring.

Drawing on sociocultural theory, a method of discourse analysis was developed to reveal the educational processes involved in discourse. Data obtained from eight lessons was transcribed and coded for discourse actions, actions whose pedagogic functions are realised through the mediational use of language. Seven discourse patterns emerged, among them capturing the major characteristics of participation. One pattern in particular involving teacher assistance emerges as having the potential to promote a transformation of pupil language use and participation.

Discourse patterns were further examined to identify how opportunities / “affordances” (Gibson, 1979) for participation emerge. Drawing on an ecological perspective, a method of analysis for “affordances” in the EFL classroom was developed. Six dimensions of affordances were identified and an examination of the interplay of these dimensions in each discourse pattern carried out. As a result, four types of affordance were identified, two of which, “Strong affordance” and “Contingent affordance”, emerge as the most effective for enhancing pupil participation. Analysis further revealed (1) the existence of multiple affordances within a task or an activity, (2) the importance of the teacher’s role in the facilitation of affordances, (3) the importance of the active agency of a learner and (4) the complex interplay between learner and environment, the ecology of the classroom. The research also analysed a problematic class to identify causes of negative participation.

The thesis concludes that the process of “guided participation” is observable in classroom discourse as pupils make use of affordances available in the environment, suggesting that a sociocultural method of discourse analysis along with the concept of affordances and an ecological method of analysis for affordances is a valuable means of illuminating the complex, social and interactional nature of language learning in the primary EFL classroom. Finally, the findings of the study imply that a greater focus by teachers upon “guided participation” has the potential to enhance the learning process in the formal world of the primary classroom.

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Abbreviations and Conventions

Abbreviations

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
L2	Second language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Transcript Conventions

The transcription made use of the following conventions.

.	A pause of roughly one second; different numbers of dots indicate shorter or longer pauses.
::: :::	Prolonged sound
,	Slight rising tone
?	Rising tone
<i>italics</i>	Utterances in L1
bold typeface	Reading text
[]	Overlapping speech
((unint)) ((laughter))	Unintelligible utterances, or comments about the transcript, including non-verbal actions
T	Teacher
TT	Mrs Takahara (Year 3 teacher)
TC	Mr Southwell (Year 3 teacher)
TM	Mr Mansfield (Year 5 teacher)
Pp	several pupils
AG	A group

BG	B group
CG	C group
DG	D group

The turns are numbered in the left hand side column of the transcript. The utterances are shown with the pupils names and the teacher's initials.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This thesis presents the results of a study into the nature of interaction within a primary EFL (English as a foreign language) classroom in Japan. The aim of the study is to determine the nature of such interaction and how interaction impacts upon the teaching and learning process. In this introductory chapter, a rationale for the project is provided. Following background information on primary English in Japan, reasons are presented explaining why there is a need for research into classroom interaction at the primary level. Next, the research focus and aims are stated and finally, the structure of the thesis is outlined.

1.1 Rationale for the project

Recently the Japanese government introduced a ‘time for comprehensive learning’ (sogoteki na gakushu no jikan) segment within the state primary school curriculum, giving individual schools the freedom to pursue one of several options in the time allocated. Of the options designated by the government one is entitled ‘International Understanding’. Many schools and local education authorities have chosen to interpret this as an opportunity to introduce English at the primary level and have started English language teaching, despite government failure to provide a syllabus, textbooks or teacher training. This has caused confusion and worry amongst primary teachers, researchers, and those concerned with primary English language education. It has also raised a numerous issues such as the choice of an appropriate teaching approach to primary English in Japan. There are many methodological handbooks on teaching techniques and activities. However, there is a need to offer pedagogical proposals that are well informed both from theoretical perspectives and grounded in empirical research on language development at the primary level. Thus this research is intended to contribute to building understanding of young learners, English language learning and teaching, with a particular focus upon the Japanese context.

1.2 Focus and aims of the research

The focus of this research is upon the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language through classroom interaction within the Japanese primary classroom. When Japanese children learn English, the learning takes place in a classroom setting. A few children may be lucky enough to have exposure to English outside school. However, for the majority of children in Japan the reality is that almost their only contact with English is in the classroom, and they have a limited number of classes. Thus, there is a pedagogical need for research focused on classroom language learning. In conducting such research it is hoped to contribute not only to a

better understanding of the classroom dynamic, but in turn to better practice, to language teaching and teacher-pupil interaction.

The classroom is the primary centre for English language learning and exposure in Japan, the context in which interactions take place affording the learner opportunities to develop their understanding of and ability to make use of English. Allwright (1991, p156) states that interaction is the fundamental reality of classroom pedagogy, because everything that happens in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction. Other factors undoubtedly contribute to English learning, such as encounters with English outside the classroom in the form of private tuition, travel abroad, television and the Internet. The influence of such factors on children's English language development cannot be denied. However, for the majority of children in Japan, it is the classroom that provides the overwhelming if not sole opportunity for learning. Accordingly the research focus in this study is the process of language learning and teaching through classroom interaction, in particular:

- The nature of interaction in the primary EFL classroom.
- The way in which classroom interaction contributes to (or inhibits) English language learning and teaching.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

The thesis consists of four sections. Section 1, comprising chapters 1-7, provides the background and methodology of the research. Chapter 1 provides a justification for the project and outlines the research aims. This is followed in Chapter 2 by a literature review, first of existing mainstream SLA theories on the role of interaction and the nature of language learning, and secondly of views challenging to the mainstream SLA view, namely sociocultural, ecological and participatory perspectives of the learning process. Adoption of a combination of these multiple constructs is suggested in response to a perceived inadequacy in mainstream SLA theories on the role of interaction and what constitutes language learning. Whilst mainstream SLA theories provide conventional individualistic and computational views of learning described by an "acquisition metaphor", the theories adopted for this research provide an interpretation based on a "participation metaphor" (Sfard, 1998) in combination with an ecological perspective (Gibson, 1979), a view that perceives the process of learning as a complex and interactive one with learning defined as increased participation in a community of language users. Additionally, a number of methods of discourse analysis are reviewed in the search for a method to adopt and adapt for this research.

Chapter 3 presents a number of research questions based upon the adoption of an ecological/participatory perspective. These seek to uncover the nature of interaction, affordances/learning opportunities and the participative nature of language learning. Chapter 4 provides the context of study including the school, the participants, the types and amount of

data. After the data collection methods are explained in Chapter 5, chapters 6 and 7 are concerned with methods of data analysis. In Chapter 6 the development of a method of discourse analysis is attempted, the unit of analysis one of discourse action, the purpose being to determine the nature of sociocultural activity achieved through discourse. In Chapter 7 a coding system based on the method of analysis is presented.

Section 2, comprising chapters 8-13, presents an analysis of the first of two class studies, a Year 3 primary class. Chapter 8 provides a quantitative description enabling the identification and selection of activities for subsequent qualitative analysis. A method of analysis focusing upon affordances/learning opportunities arising in discourse is developed in chapter 9. Then chapters 10 to 13 carry out an analysis of affordances in three selected activities, namely, Story telling, Games, and Language-focused activities. Chapter 13 also discusses particular features of affordances identified and how a task can give rise to different types of affordances.

Section 3, comprising chapters 14-17, presents a second study, this time of a problematic Year 5 class. Utilizing the system of analysis for identifying affordances/learning opportunities developed in Section 2, the section seeks to discover why the Year 5 is a difficult one with noticeable discipline problems. Chapter 14 identifies the types of affordances available in the Year 5 class. Chapter 15 then compares the affordances identified in the Year 5 class with those identified in the Year 3 class, seeking to determine whether affordances are a factor influencing pupil behaviour, engagement and discipline. In addition to an analysis of discourse, Chapter 16 provides an analysis of interview data intended to provide a deeper understanding of affordances and the problematic Year 5 class. Chapter 17 presents further analysis of interview data, seeking to identify pupils' "imagined communities", a perceived solution to improve affordances, engagement and the behaviour of pupils in both the Year 5 and Year 3 classes.

In Section 4 Discussion, Chapter 19 draws together all the research findings in order to provide answers to the research questions and discusses the limitations and the implications of this study. Finally, concluding remarks are presented.

Chapter 2 Literature Review: A Theoretical Framework for Language Learning through Participation in Discourse

The focus of this research is interaction in a primary EFL classroom and the processes by which young learners learn and are taught. In order to accomplish this it is necessary to take into account theoretical perspectives on language development, interaction and language teaching, that is, to establish an appropriate approach to the focus of study, and also to establish a method of enquiry whereby the processes of learning might be identified. This review therefore concentrates on this task, reviewing a number of different theoretical perspectives on language learning.

The nature and processes of language learning remain topics of contention within the field of second language acquisition (SLA). With the mainstream taking an individual cognitive approach, critics advocate a more socially situated view. The first section of this review therefore provides a brief introduction to mainstream theories (e.g., Long 1983, Long and Porter 1985, Gass and Varonis 1985a, 1985b, Varonis and Gass 1985a, 1985b, Pica and Doughty 1985a, 1985b, Pica 1987) based on a scientific-reductionist perspective of language acquisition. The second section then presents a number of criticisms that have been made of the mainstream perspective, notably that the mainstream fails to provide a sufficient explanation of the holistic phenomenon of language learning. The third section introduces two metaphors, the acquisition metaphor and the participation metaphor (Sfard, 1998), that permit a comparison to be made between the mainstream perspective of language learning and an alternative perspective in which the focus is upon participation rather than acquisition. Sections four to nine then review a number of alternative views from a participative perspective, these being a sociocultural view, an ecological view, participation theory, and the notion of imagined communities. Section ten raises a number of criticisms of the participatory perspective. Section eleven then presents a summary of a participatory approach and implications for this research. Finally, in section twelve a number of methods of discourse analysis are reviewed in the search for a method to adopt and adapt for this research, concluding with a summary and a statement of the research implications for this study.

2.1 The Role of Interaction in Mainstream SLA Theory

Mainstream SLA research takes an individual cognitive approach to language learning. A major influence internationally has been the work of Noam Chomsky, largely conducted in the field of *first* language acquisition. Particularly influential has been the distinction drawn by Chomsky

between ‘competence’ and ‘performance’ and the notion of a ‘language instinct’ (Chomsky, 1959, 1965, 1968). Competence is perceived as the level of abstract knowledge possessed by an ideal speaker-listener whilst performance is the actual utterances made by the speaker-listener in language use. Additionally, Chomsky argues the existence of a language instinct, an innate “mental structure” or “language acquisition device” that enables language acquisition to take place. This naturally occurring learning device is held to be located in the brain and is held to exert a significant influence on language acquisition through a largely unconscious process, be it a first or second language.

Influenced by Chomsky’s concept of a language acquisition device, an individual/cognitive perspective on the nature of language and language learning became the central concern of mainstream *second* language acquisition research. As noted by Corder (1973) and cited by Firth and Wagner (1997, p287), “the consequence was that SLA [research] must subscribe to a view of language “as a phenomenon of the individual, while being principally concerned with explaining how we acquire language...its relation to general human cognitive system, and...the psychological mechanisms underlying the comprehension and production of speech” ” (Corder, p24). The influence of this individual/cognitive perspective is seen in the work of subsequent researchers such as Selinker’s (1971) enquiry into the development of interlanguage and Krashen’s (1982) model of SL speech processing. A consequence of this mainstream view of SLA is a perception of language as property, something that can be broken down, analysed and conveyed, an entity to be passed from one person to another, possessed and owned. As Gregg (1993) argues, “SLA theory is a theory of the acquisition of linguistic knowledge, and thus requires a *property* theory or functional analysis of that knowledge. But it is also a theory of the *acquisition* of linguistic knowledge...Our property theory asks “How is L2 knowledge instantiated in the mind/brain?” ” (Gregg, p279) (my italics). Accordingly, a strict interpretation of the mainstream view is one in which acquisition is viewed as an individual phenomenon, a process occurring within the brain, and in seeking to understand this process it is the task of SLA research to determine the means by which L2 competence or L2 knowledge of abstract grammar, ‘property’, is ‘possessed’ in the *individual mind*. It is an individual cognitive account of language development concerned with psycholinguistic phenomena (van Lier 2000, Donato 1994, Sfarid 1998).

In seeking to explain the acquisition process, mainstream SLA theorizing makes use of the notions of cognitive processing and information processing. These focus upon an individual’s mental functions as they relate to language, for example, language reception and production processes, and short- and long-term memories (e.g. McLaughlin, Rossman & McLeod, 1983, McLaughlin, 1987). The focus is upon individual performance and abilities, seeking to isolate interactional variables making use of a decontextualised and controlled environment for

research into language related mental functions. This information/cognitive processing approach is also used to examine processes of second language interaction and negotiation. In doing so, the mainstream does acknowledge the role of social and interactional factors in SLA (e.g., Long 1983, Long and Porter 1985, Gass and Varonis 1985a, 1985b, Varonis and Gass 1985a, 1985b, Pica and Doughty 1985a, 1985b). For example the notion of negotiation of meaning is emphasised for its role in providing a learner with opportunities for learning. In negotiating meaning, language previously incomprehensible becomes comprehensible (Krashen: 1985) as a result of the process of negotiation and can be processed in the learner's subconscious language processing system, transferred and incorporated into a learner's knowledge of a language. A further assumption is that a learner can learn best from negotiation with a native speaker or a more competent learner, as knowledge has to come from someone who possesses a greater knowledge. Such a view (Pica 1987, Porter 1986, Doughty and Pica 1986, Ehrlich, Avery and Yorio 1989, Pica et al. 1989) presents a conduit metaphor perspective of communication. (van Lier 2000, Donato 1994, Sfarid 1998)

2.2 Criticisms of Mainstream SLA

In contrast to the individual cognitive approach to language learning taken by the mainstream of SLA research, critics advocate a more socially situated perspective. Van Lier (2000) summarises three major criticisms of the mainstream: (1) the rationalist and empiricist theories underlying mainstream SLA theories, (2) the inclination to a cognitive/psychological perspective of the nature of language and language learning and, (3) the lack of consideration of context, namely activity and interaction. A further criticism (Larsen-Freeman 1997) is that, despite the reductionist nature of mainstream research, it is nevertheless extremely difficult to determine whether learning has indeed taken place.

2.2.1 Reductionism

The first criticism of mainstream SLA research concerns the rationalist and empiricist theories underlying such research. Van Lier (2000) points out that such views of second language acquisition are based on a reductionist view of learning, a perspective dominant since the era of Descartes and Galileo. The main characteristic of such a view is that it simplifies and selects from the infinite variety and complexity of the real world. The simplest explanation is preferred. A problem has to be broken down into its component elements and it is preferable that these are analysed one by one, not together as a whole. The paradigm underlying the mainstream, the Chomskian paradigm, is deeply rooted in such a perspective. Language is broken into components of knowledge and use and these are then analysed separately. Analytical preference is given to knowledge of the language, not language in use despite the fact that in the real world language cannot be disassociated from the context in which it occurs.

One area of mainstream analysis in which reductionism is observed is in the examination of the role and importance of negotiation in the process of interaction (van Lier 2000). In mainstream analysis of SLA interaction, negotiation is felt to facilitate learning in instances where a deficiency exists. During the negotiating process a transfer of knowledge occurs from a native speaker or a more competent non-native speaker to the learner. As a result the deficiency is overcome and input is incorporated into the learner's developing linguistic system (Long, 1981, 1983, 1996). However, in order to prove this assumption, van Lier notes that in mainstream SLA research only simple interactional contexts have been examined. He argues that the findings drawn from such research are inadequate given the infinite variety and complexity of interaction existing in the world of real language use. A further weakness noted is that tasks requiring negotiation were deliberately chosen by mainstream researchers in order to prove prior assumptions. Additionally, van Lier and Matsuo (2000) reveal that conversation without negotiation is also capable of promoting language work. An examination of a conversation between two non-native speakers shows that negotiation, one 'form' of talk, is itself embedded into a range of other forms such as comparison, the expression of emotion, and so on. These findings and the criticisms made by van Lier raise the concern that reductionism, in seeking to refine its focus of study is in fact being over selective and in so doing missing essential features of the language acquisition process. The message for researchers is the need to be wary of reductionism and oversimplification, and far more aware of the complexity of language use and the process of learning (van Lier, 2000).

2.2.2 Imbalance between cognitive psychological and social orientations

A second major criticism of mainstream SLA research is the danger of mainly adopting a cognitive/psychological perspective of the nature of language and language learning. That is, whether from a constructivist, behaviourist or nativist perspective, it is generally held that learning is primarily located within the individual, taking place in the brain by means of a computational mechanism: information is received, processed and then incorporated into a learner's mental structure. Firth and Wagner (1997, 1998) criticise this mainstream view, insisting that SLA research needs to take account not only of individual *cognitive* dimensions of language acquisition but also give greater recognition to the *social* dimensions. In illustration Firth and Wagner (1998) argue that the mainstream notion of interlanguage is overly concerned with psycholinguistic phenomena to the exclusion of the social and contextual nature of learning. Similarly, Rampton (1987) points out a failure of SLA cognitive interlanguage research to consider social and external factors such as social relationships, identities, task and physical settings, only examining individual cognitive features such as variability (Tarone 1983, Ellis 1985) attributed to underdeveloped grammatical competency. An individualistic view and cognitive view of acquisition is revealed here, a concern with acquisition of L2 competence rather than social and international dimensions of language use. As Donato (1994) claims, "the

development of interlanguage grammar remains an abstract, solitary process hidden in the heads of individuals rather than concretely available in social relationships among learners” (Newman, Grillo and Cole 1984; Forman and Kraker 1985). Van Lier (1988) also notes that present research on negotiation of meaning mainly refers to repair strategies, without explaining the purposes of the collaborative process and the rich network of social support identified by Rogoff (1990) (See 2.6). Donato (1994) also argues that the mainstream fails to give sufficient recognition to social and contextual influences, claiming that “the negotiation of meaning perspective superficially recognises the influence of the social context as the process of L2 acquisition is explained only as reception, analysis and incorporation of input conducted in the head of individuals.”

2.2.3 Lack of consideration of language use

A third criticism of mainstream SLA theories is a failure to take language use into consideration. Activity and interaction themselves have little if any place in mainstream perspectives which, reflecting Chomsky’s distinction of competence and performance, make a clear distinction between language acquisition and language use. Research in language use is considered to be outside the domain of mainstream SLA research. Gass (1997) notes, within the mainstream perspective, “research in language use is useful only if language use provides for psychological processes which are the main focus of SLA”. This narrowness of focus is observable in interaction hypothesis in which interaction is regarded as simply offering an indirect way of feeding into the negotiation process, of creating opportunities for information transmission and the facilitation of learning. It is not a site in which learning itself actually occurs. However, as noted by van Lier in his observations of the job interview referred to earlier, how non-native speakers engage in extensive linguistic work in actual interaction does not simply facilitate learning. Being engaged in language use and interaction is to be engaged in learning itself.

2.2.4 Measurement of learning

In mainstream SLA theory learning is regarded as the acquisition of linguistic knowledge. A problem with such a view however is the difficulty in determining at what point in time a particular linguistic item has been learned. Larsen-Freeman (1997) points out that much of SLA research is carried out with simple pre-test/post-test designs and is not longitudinal in nature. In such studies if a learner shows little or no gain, it is determined that learning has not occurred. However, Larsen-Freeman argues that this is too simplistic a view. Learning can be more complex, taking place receptively initially and manifesting itself productively only later when the requisite data is taken in. Larsen-Freeman points out that it is possible for a learner’s linguistic system to change internally without being able to produce a new form. In such a case, it is very difficult for researchers to record a change. Finally, she mentions that the nature of learning and language itself is not stable and always subject to change. In consequence, it is

difficult for the SLA researcher to measure when learning has occurred in conventional ways.

It is now over forty years since Hymes (1961, 1962, 1974) criticised Chomsky's abstract notion of grammatical competence and advocated greater focus upon communicative competence. Nevertheless, it remains the case that mainstream SLA research continues to give little recognition to the social and contextual dimensions of language acquisition. One result is the widely divergent views between the mainstream and alternative perspectives, particularly concerning discourse and communication. In light of the criticisms briefly raised above however, these are dimensions of language acquisition calling for greater enquiry, dimensions this researcher feels a need to take into account in the task of developing a holistic understanding of acquisition in the primary EFL classroom.

2.3 Acquisition Versus Participation

Criticism of mainstream SLA theories is built upon the ontological differences between the mainstream view and alternative perceptions of the nature of language learning. In mainstream SLA research, learning is understood to mean the acquisition of rules and sequences in the brain by means of computational mechanisms. Language is regarded as a fixed entity and the native speaker's competence is an ideal, a goal it is the task of the learner to aspire to. Accordingly, success in learning for the learner is determined by the degree to which he or she accumulates knowledge ever closer to the ideal target language. Language acquisition might therefore be regarded as the acquisition of "private property", with learning assumed to occur as a result of the accumulation of knowledge or "property" that is transferable between context and between people.

An alternative perspective on language acquisition is to view language not as a static entity but as something evolving and changing, with learning taking place while using language in interaction. According to such a view, language competence is a fundamentally transitional, situational, and dynamic entity (Firth and Wagner 1998; Larsen-Freeman, 2002, 2003), and all language users will always be "learners" in some respect. New or partly known registers, styles, language-related tasks, lexical items, terminologies and structures, routinely confront language users, calling for the contingent adaptation and transformation of existing knowledge and competence, and the acquisition of new knowledge. If language is viewed in this way, as something evolving and changing, learning can never be complete. Therefore, as Firth and Wagner (1998) claim, it is not easy to draw a line between acquisition and use, as what constitutes acquisition is not clear, and where "acquisition" ends and "use" begins is blurred. That is, the notion of acquisition is less clear than mainstream SLA advocates would have us believe, acquisition and learning being a constant and evolving process. It is simply not possible to distinguish learning from using. Consequently, if what acquisition is is not clear and

acquiring entities is not the purpose, we need a new understanding of what is meant by success. Instead of viewing success as the acquisition of entities, success might more appropriately be viewed as the degree to which a learner becomes an ever more socially constituted individual within a group by using language as the purpose of using language is to engage in a social action (Larsen-Freeman, 2002).

2.3.1 Two metaphors

The ontological differences between the conflicting views mentioned above can be described by two metaphors, an “acquisition metaphor” and a “participation metaphor” (Sfard, 1998). As Sfard points out, an “acquisition metaphor” is more likely to be found in older writings, that is, in mainstream theories, whilst a “participation metaphor” is more likely to occur in newer studies challenging of mainstream theories. These two metaphors representing two very different perceptions, one placing emphasis upon “acquisition” and the other upon “learning”, are examined in detail below. The difference between the two is at the heart of debate within the field of SLA research and is one that needs to be understood to appreciate the approach undertaken by this researcher. In rejecting an “acquisition” perspective and adopting a “participation” perspective approach, this researcher commits herself to seeking evidence of language learning not through the measurement of language “acquired”, but through the observation of language in use. It is the theoretical basis underpinning the empirical work carried out in the course of this research.

An “acquisition metaphor” may be used to describe a perspective in which learning is viewed as accumulation whether it is knowledge acquisition in an information-processing model or concept development in Piagetian or Vygotskian terms. Although these are undoubtedly two different conceptions of the learning process, an acquisition perspective does draw attention to a major feature they both have in common, that of ownership. In the computational model, learning is perceived as reception of knowledge; Piagetian constructivists assume the learner actively constructs knowledge, and some sociocultural theorists, for example Vygotsky, insist concepts are transferred from a social to an individual plane and internalised by the student. Despite differences in terms such as acquisition, construction, and internalization, these views all imply that learning involves gaining ownership over knowledge and that, once acquired, knowledge may then be transferred to a different context and shared with others.

The second metaphor described by Sfard, the “participation metaphor,” provides a perspective in which learning is viewed in terms of activities and context rather than the acquisition of entities. It is a notion of development or learning by “participation,” a view differing significantly from one of “acquisition”. As Sfard notes, “In the image of learning that emerges from this linguistic turn, the permanence of *having* gives way to the constant flux of *doing*” (p.

6). It is a view in sharp contrast to that of an acquisition metaphor with its implied end point to the process of learning. Rather, the participation metaphor implies no such end point but instead a continuous and never ending flux. Key words associated with the participation metaphor are situatedness, contextuality, cultural embeddedness, social mediation, discourse and communication. These not only suggest that learners should be viewed as active participants engaged in activities, but also stress the importance of context. As Rogoff (1998) notes, individual, interpersonal and cultural processes are not independent entities but interrelated and impossible to separate.

As a result of reviewing existing theories of language learning and interaction, it is the second metaphor, the “participation metaphor”, that this researcher has chosen to adopt to structure her research into classroom language learning. The “participation metaphor” addresses the four major weaknesses of existing mainstream SLA theories outlined above and the nature of interaction as perceived by the “acquisition metaphor” (See 2.2.1 Reductionism, 2.2.2 Imbalance between cognitive psychological and social orientations, 2.2.3 Lack of consideration of language use, 2.2.4. Measurement of learning). That is, first, the “participation metaphor” does not break down phenomena into independent entities as the “acquisition metaphor” does. Instead, it takes a holistic approach to understanding language learning. Learning is viewed in terms of participation, the use of language to participate in an activity. Accordingly, the object of analysis is not the mental processing of the learner but rather the activity engaged in and the interaction required for participation in the activity. Secondly, the “participation metaphor” takes account of the social and contextual nature of learning. It does not take a perspective in which language acquisition occurs unconsciously through a language specific mental function. Rather, the social environment is held to play a significant role in the emergence of learning. Thirdly, the “participation metaphor” takes language use into consideration. Indeed, language use and language learning cannot be separated, being one and the same. It is in the process of use that learning occurs and through learning that use is expanded. They are inseparable and indivisible. To sum up, from a “participation metaphor” perspective, language and language learning are perceived to be dynamic in nature. Learning and participation are inseparable. Consequently, in order to understand the learning process, it is also required to understand the nature of participation. Thus for this researcher whose research aim is to determine the nature of interaction and learning (participation) within the social context of a primary classroom, this appears an appropriate perspective to adopt, offering a more comprehensive theoretical framework than that of mainstream SLA perspectives.

2.3.2. Community and transformation

From a participation metaphor perspective, development is viewed as a transformation of participation; learning/development seen as “a process of becoming a member of a certain

community. This entails, above all, the ability to communicate in the language of this community and act according to its particular norms.” That is, ““Participation” is almost synonymous with “taking part” and “being a part,” and both of these expressions signalize that learning should be viewed as a process of becoming a part of a greater whole” (Sfard, 1998 p.6). Therefore, the purpose of learning in the “participation metaphor” is to build evolving bonds between the individual and other community members. Development/learning is to be observed through participation, through a learner’s changing roles in sociocultural activities. As Sfard states:

“Whereas the “acquisition metaphor” stresses the way in which possession determines the identity of the possessor, the PM implies that the identity of an individual, like an identity of a living organ, is a function of his or her being (or becoming) a part of a greater entity. Thus, talk about the “stand-alone learner” and “de-contextualized learning” becomes as pointless as the attempts to define lungs or muscles without a reference to the living body within which they both exist and function.” (p.8)

The question of how children actually participate and how they contribute is therefore a question of qualitative transformation rather than one of quantitative acquisition. It is a perspective of learning as participation, one that this researcher has chosen to adopt in this research to illuminate the nature of interaction and learning in a community of learners, the primary classroom. However, the notion of participation in a community is a variable one, the form of participation varying according to the type of communities. Outside school, within school and possibly across subject classes within school, different types of communities exist and each community has different types of social norms and values. Therefore, when adopting a participation metaphor, analysis of transformation of participation as development requires examination of the nature of community in which participation takes place.

At this point in our discussion it is perhaps useful to clarify a possible issue of confusion. The distinction made between acquisition and participation in the metaphors above is not one that is congruent with the distinction between social and individual perspectives on learning. The latter distinction, the social/individual dichotomy, refers to a different mechanism of learning, and learning can involve either the reception of knowledge or the internalisation of socially established concepts. However, both the reception of knowledge and the internalisation of socially established concepts can be regarded as involving acquisition, the increasing possession of established entities. Accordingly, psycholinguistic rules and socially established concepts may both be viewed as objects of learning. In contrast, the acquisition/participation distinction refers to an ontological question of the *nature* of learning (Sfard 1998). The participation

metaphor seeks to study the language use of socially situated individuals in the community in the process of becoming participants.

2.4 Participation Metaphor: A Sociocultural View

The work of Vygotsky provides one of the most influential views of learning from a participation metaphor perspective. He argues that, from the moment of birth, human beings live in a social world and that it is within this sociocultural setting that human development occurs (Vygotsky, 1979). Human beings are consciously active beings, and their active consciousness brings about changes in their surrounding world. Humans cannot therefore be understood within a behaviouristic framework. This perspective led Vygotsky to reject the then dominant reflexology model of psychology for its failure to take account of human consciousness (Kozulin 1990, p81). As humans are active rather than passive beings it is necessary for the totality of human mental processes to be explained rather than reducing psychological phenomena to reflex-like behaviour. It is consciousness that distinguishes human beings from animals and consciousness that should be the object of study.

Vygotsky was influenced by Spinoza who argued that the thinking process cannot be explained by a description of the structure of the human brain, just as walking cannot be explained by describing the structure of the leg. An explanation of the thinking process is to be found not in the function of the cerebral organs but in sociocultural activities, in the interaction between thinking bodies (humans), and also in the interaction between thinking bodies and objects such as socioculturally constructed artefacts like language. This consciousness develops during the process of people's interaction with reality on the basis of socio-historical practice. Thus, whereas Piaget regards the child as an autonomous active learner in a world of objects, Vygotsky regards the child as an active learner in a world of other people, people who help the child learn in a variety of ways (Cameron 2001 p.6). Human consciousness develops as a consequence of engagement in socioculturally meaningful activities. That is, the essential feature of a Vygotskian approach is to treat human development as a social and interactive process as opposed to an innate cognitive one. Cognitive development is a consequence, a result of engagement in social interactional activity.

2.4.1 The role of mediation

Essential to Vygotsky's sociocultural view of learning is the role performed by mediation, (Vygotsky 1978, p54-55). It is through the mediation of tools such as hoes and fire that humankind has changed and created the physical world. Similarly, humans alter processes of mental function and shape their world with "psychological tools" (Vygotsky 1981) such as language. It is a view in which human consciousness derives from mediated mental activity, cognitive development mediated by the behaviour of others through language and action. More

precisely, mediation plays an important role in transforming spontaneous lower mental functions such as natural memory and involuntary actions into higher mental processes such as logical memory, selective attention, reasoning and analysis. It is through the process of mediation that cognitive development occurs, through mediation that language development, a higher mental function, also occurs (Vygotsky 1978, p 55-57).

Vygotsky reveals that children develop through interaction with their parents and other adults. Through interaction, adults connect and mediate children to the world and it is through this process that children learn from society around them. At an early stage of learning, the child is completely dependent on other people such as parents. Parents initiate the child's learning by assisting and instructing the child. On this plane the child's metacognition is under the control of the *adult (other-regulation)*. The child, the unskilled individual, learns under the guidance of more skilled individuals through a process of other regulation, mediated by language. Gradually higher cognitive processes emerge as a result of interaction and the child can carry out certain tasks with the help of mediation. Finally the child masters a whole process by herself and acquires *self-regulation*. This process of the learner gaining control over activity is called *regulation* (Vygotsky, 1986). Thus the child learns in a social context through the *mediation* of adults and language and gradually the child becomes independent, able to solve problems and engage in activities. This process of shift from the *intermental* to the *intramental* provides evidence of cognitive development and is called *internalisation*. Thus the child's development appears on two planes: first between people, the intermental plane, and then inside the child, the intramental plane (Vygotsky 1981a).

Central to Vygotsky's sociocultural view of learning is the notion of a 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD). As noted above, the shift from the *intermental* plane to the *intramental* plane in the process of development or *internalisation* appears in the gap between what the child alone can manage and what the child can achieve with the help of an adult. This domain, the gap where social forms of mediation allows internalisation to take place is referred to by Vygotsky as the 'zone of proximal development' and is defined as follows:

The ZPD is the difference between the child's developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (1978, p85)

Vygotsky originally proposed that the ZPD could be used as an alternative means to assess a child's intelligence instead of more widely used methods in which a child's actual abilities and the skills already mastered, the end product of development, were the focus of measurement.

Vygotsky's primary interest is however a very different one. Rather than assessing what has *already* been learned, he is primarily concerned with the *potential* for learning. Rather than focusing upon what a child has already completed, he is interested in assessing what a child has the potential to complete, a child's prospective future development. Such a view has the potential to radically affect how the teacher in the classroom approaches the task of teaching. Through assessing a child's ZPD, it is possible for a teacher to gain insight into the child's developmental process, able to predict what the child will soon be capable of doing and as a consequence provide a form and level of mediation appropriate to the child's potential.

The importance accorded by Vygotsky to the ZPD and the role of mediation has important implications for the researcher. In seeking to understand the process of language development from a sociocultural perspective, it becomes necessary for the researcher to take account of the ZPD and give recognition to the importance of classroom interaction and in particular the forms of mediation supplied, notably the use of language. As Mercer (1994, p. 95) states, "Vygotsky argues very persuasively that (a) human thought is shaped by human language and (b) 'the very essence of cultural development is in the collision between mature cultural forms of behaviour with the primitive forms that characterize the child's behaviour' (Vygotsky, 1981a, p151)". That is Vygotsky, in a perspective on learning very different from Piaget's, perceives talk to be an essential medium for the sharing and transforming of understanding and participation. In mainstream SLA theories based on Chomskian linguistics, input is unconsciously processed in the brain and social interaction does not play a significant role (See 2.1 on Mainstream SLA). However, Vygotsky argues that higher mental cognition including language develops through mediation and interaction. That is, a Vygotskian perspective emphasises the social nature of learning and the role of interaction. It is a perspective that challenges and provides a contrasting account to that of mainstream SLA theories. For this researcher, seeking to develop an understanding of the second language development process in the primary classroom, it is a perspective that highlights the importance of classroom interaction and activity, the social and interactional nature of the classroom community. It is an understanding that, as observed by Mercer, provides a theoretical justification for the examination of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil discourse in the social world of the classroom community context. A perspective in accord with the aims of this research project and one this researcher has chosen to adopt.

Mercer (1994), recognising the social-interactional nature of learning, makes the important point that the concept of a ZPD is context bound. That is, different settings of context can be expected to have different processes of learning and understanding and accordingly each ZPD will be differently determined by intersubjectivity, the shared focus of attention between teacher and learner. As the teacher perceives in interaction the intersubjectivity between her and the child, she sets the ZPD and provides appropriate mediation. This suggests that mediation

involves both teacher and learner actions and that mediation depends on interaction between teacher and pupil in each particular context. That is, as expected from a “participation metaphor” perspective, it is through the participation of both teacher and pupil, their individual and collective actions and interactions in the classroom-learning context that learning occurs. For the researcher this has important implications. In seeking to understand the learning process and the world of the classroom, attention to the mediation provided and the resulting nature and levels of participation observed should be *the* issues of central concern. Focus should be upon how context-dependent mediation occurs and how learning is stimulated by mediation, with the resulting participation reported through a detailed description of particular cases. It is with just such an undertaking that this research project is concerned.

The importance of participation is also given prominence in the work of Rogoff (1990). As mediation is embedded in the social context in which it takes place, changes in cognition facilitate changes in participation. Accordingly, psychological processes are to be explained as part of the active participation of an individual in everyday life activities. Rogoff therefore proposes a view of learning as *the process of participation* in cultural activities in which development is jointly constructed through mediation. The mediation of caregivers structures the child’s biological and social worlds. Thus, a child’s cognitive development can be regarded as the development of their participation in cultural activities through the guidance of others in the community. This allows children to internalise their community’s tools or way of thinking. The consequences in the formal world of the classroom are that we can say learning has emerged when mediation changes the participation of a child in the classroom community. Learning becomes synonymous with increased participation in the community, be it of the home or the school.

The key theoretical implications of significance for this research project drawn from the above literature review may be summarised as follows:

- Mediation, provided by an expert and adjusted for the ZPD contributes to the child’s cognitive development.
- Classroom interaction and activity are the domain where mediation and learning occur and should therefore be a prime focus of attention for the researcher.
- Mediation is context-dependent, depending on interaction between the teachers’ and learners’ actions.
- Learning resulting from mediation is perceived as increased participation in the classroom community.
- The need is for a research method enabling in-depth description of dynamic mediation, fine-tuned for each particular ZPD.

2.4.2. Scaffolding

One form of mediation that has received much attention by researchers working in the sociocultural paradigm (Donato 1994, 2000, DiCamila and Anton 1997) is that of scaffolding. This is a concept that helps explain a neo-Vygotskian interpretation of teaching and learning and was first developed by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) to refer to parental tutoring of infants. According to Wood, Bruner and Ross, scaffolding is the steps of cognitive support that an adult provides for a child's learning to *reduce the degree of freedom* available so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill he or she is in the process of learning. Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) identify the following six features of scaffolding.

- (1) Recruiting interest in the task
- (2) Simplifying the task
- (3) Maintaining pursuit of the goal
- (4) Marking critical features and discrepancies between what has been produced and the ideal solution
- (5) Controlling frustration during problem solving
- (6) Demonstrating an idealised version

In seeking to apply the concept of scaffolding to the classroom, Mercer (1994) suggests adding to the above the following criteria from Maybin, Mercer and Stierer (1992):

[‘Scaffolding’] is not just any assistance which helps a learner accomplish a task. It is help which will enable a learner to accomplish a task which they would not have been quite able to manage on their own, and it is help which is intended to bring the learner closer to a state of competence which will enable them eventually to complete such a task on their own...we wish to retain the idea (covered in Bruner's original usage) that “scaffolding” is help given in the pursuit of a specific learning activity, one which has finite goals.....To know whether or not some help counts as ‘scaffolding’, we would need to have at the very least *some evidence of a teacher wishing to enable a child to develop a specific skill, grasp a particular concept or achieve a particular level of understanding*. A more stringent criterion would be to require *some evidence of a learner successfully accomplishing the task with the teacher's help*. An even more stringent interpretation would be to require *some evidence of a learner having achieved some greater level of independent competence as a result of the scaffolding experience (p188)*.

As the above criteria indicate, not all the help a teacher provides can be categorised as scaffolding. Scaffolding is a particular type of assistance that enables a child to perform within

the ZPD, performance significant *in indicating* the child's future development. For the researcher there is then a need to distinguish scaffolding from other forms of help and assistance that may be unrelated to assisting performance within the ZPD. The notion of scaffolding and the criteria listed above do nevertheless make available a useful tool in the task of analysing classroom mediation and participation.

2.4.3 Genetic method

For Vygotsky (1978) the sociocultural setting where mediation such as scaffolding and interaction assists learning is the primary determining factor of development. In the process of child development, biologically-specified lower mental functions develop into more complex higher order, socioculturally determined functions, a process in which inborn abilities are transformed as a result of sociocultural interaction (Vygotsky 1981a). Accordingly, analysis of child development should focus on social, cultural and historical processes in which individual functioning develops. Thus, as Kozulin (1990) points out, "the central goal of sociocultural theory is to show how such supposedly individual psychological phenomena (memorization, decision making, concept formation, strategic orientation to problem solving) depend on historically specific cultural systems of mediation" (p.135) (Cited by Donato and McCormick, 1994).

Vygotsky (1978) rejected scientific experimental methodology as an inappropriate way to understand and explain human mental development. He was critical of experimental research, pointing out that, as children are pre-taught before a main experiment the very opportunity to grasp the learning process can be missed. He argued the need to develop a research methodology that would allow humans to behave as real agents in control of their own mental activity in order to observe how the higher mental processes emerge and grow. His solution was to propose genetic methods of research (1981b) that take account both of the historical character of human behaviour and learning and also the social nature of human experience. Such methods would trace the process through which children incorporate learning new knowledge into their cognitive activity in order to mediate that activity, activity previously beyond their capabilities. It is a developmental approach to research as opposed to an experimental scientific one.

As proposed by Vygotsky, genetic methods have four genetic domains: phylogenesis, sociocultural history, ontogenesis and microgenesis. Phylogenesis is concerned with how human mental ability developed differently from that of other animals though mediating tools. Sociocultural history is concerned with how the symbolic tools developed by a culture are affected by the differing values of other cultures. Ontogenesis is concerned with how children appropriate and integrate mediational means into their thinking activity as they grow during childhood. Microgenesis is the developmental change that occurs in mental functioning over a

relatively short span of time such as a few weeks, a few days or even a few minutes (Vygotsky, 1978). Of all the four domains, ontogenesis and microgenesis are of most interest to classroom research.

In the study of microgenesis, Vygotsky (1978) suggested observing how subjects integrate mediation before instruction is given. Such an approach applied to the language classroom suggests investigating a learner's use of language during their normal classroom language learning experience. It is the daily classroom, not an experimental setting that is the appropriate domain of study. The classroom and the interactions that occur within it are a culture where practice, mediation, and social relations occur including ontogenesis and microgenesis. Genetic methods therefore offer the researcher the prospect of gaining insight into the process of language emergence within the classroom, permitting observation of both microgenesis, the moment of internalisation in daily classroom activity, and of ontogenesis, longitudinal observation of development. They also offer the prospect of deepening our awareness of how micro-level learning and learning on a longer timescale are interrelated over time.

For this researcher, adoption of genetic methods as advocated by Vygotsky provides a significant framework, a means to analyse the language learning process through interaction. Research on interaction from a mainstream SLA perspective does not reveal such a process. Indeed, interaction is not regarded as responsible for learning other than as a source of comprehensible input (e.g. Long 1983 in 2.1 Mainstream SLA and 2.2 Criticism of Mainstream SLA). It is "Language Instinct" (Chomsky 1965, 1968) that enables acquisition through unconscious processing of language input. Therefore mainstream interactional studies have not sought to analyse the emergence of learning through in-depth analysis of interaction when learners are actively engaged in an activity. Instead, they have relied on statistics and frequency counts of negotiations for cumulative results (Stelma, 2003). The weakness of such an approach to analysis is that it does not reveal the process by which learning occurs

As mentioned earlier, mainstream studies adopting a scientific experimental methodology fail to acknowledge the importance of interaction and activity. These are not analysed and little or no attention is given to the emergent moment of learning. Accordingly, there is a lack of recognition and hence analysis of environmental and social effects on the learner and learning. However, Vygotsky's genetic method overcomes these deficiencies of the research methodology adopted by the mainstream SLA studies (see 2.2 Criticisms of mainstream SLA). The genetic method is a holistic method enabling on-time analysis of local dynamics along the timescale of activity (Cameron, 2003). This enables a shift of focus of analysis from one solely concerned with cognition to one recognising the importance of both cognition and social interaction. On-time analysis illuminates social interaction, activity and mediation that bring about dynamic

cognitive change and learning. Therefore a genetic approach which documents unfolding local dynamics over time has the potential to contribute significantly to this research, seeking as it does to conduct a sociocultural analysis of the language learning process.

Key theoretical implications of significance drawn from the above are as follows:

- Genetic methods trace the process of the emergence of human development. In particular microgenesis provides a means to observe how a learner's language use develops during their normal classroom learning experience.
- Genetic methods are an appropriate method for analysis of classroom interaction as the adoption of time-scales enables investigation of unfolding dynamic language development and of inter-relationships between shorter and longer time scales (Cameron, 2003).

2.4.4 Activity theory

In seeking a sociocultural understanding of the learning process, the researcher is also able to benefit from insights provided by activity theory (Leont'ev 1981). This seeks to explain the social context in which individual learning takes place and argues that in order to explain the activity of individuals it is necessary to uncover the motives, actions and operations of those individuals. Building on the work of both Vygotsky (1978) and Leont'ev (1981), Zinchenko (1985) proposed tool-mediated goal-directed activities as an appropriate unit of analysis. Within an activity, collaborative interaction, inter-subjectivity and assisted performance, all take place. The individual or group approaches activities in a particular way, depending on perception and the social context. Activities are directed towards achieving goals and actions are taken in order to achieve the goals. To achieve the same goal different actions may be taken. On the other hand different goals may be fulfilled by the same action. Finally, an operation is the way an action is carried out and depends on the conditions under which actions are taken.

A criticism made of activity theory is that it employs a Piagetian conceptualization of cognition, cognitive development viewed as the internalization of activities occurring at the sensorimotor level. Accordingly, mental schemata do not reflect sociocultural practices. Some writers have also questioned whether sensorimotor action is an appropriate unit of analysis. As Zinchenko (1985) and Wertsch (1985, p207) suggest, tool-mediated action appears a more appropriate focus of attention as such an action is a mediated sociocultural action. A further concern with activity theory is that classroom activities and goals cannot be generalised, as each child will approach the same activity with a different goal and in a different way and in circumstances specific to the individual. Thus, it is argued it is not possible to manipulate children to act in particular ways because each child has his or her own goals, actions, background and beliefs. Activities may be different as each person sees different objects and has different motives. As

Coughlan and Duff (1994) reveal, a task is perceived and carried out differently not only across learners but also within the same learner and at different times.

Despite the weaknesses noted above, activity theory offers this classroom researcher a valuable perspective on the learning process. It is a perspective that recognizes the classroom dynamic and its dependence on each particular context and each particular interaction. The value of such a perspective can be seen in Coughlan and Duff's study (1994), revealing the effect of unpredictable situational dynamics on the learning process. It is a perspective that has informed this researcher in her approach to an analysis of interaction in the context of the second language classroom. As pointed out by Lantolf (2000), classroom activities are not stable in nature and goals are likely to shift and change as class activities unfold. An activity started at the beginning of a class may change itself into another activity in due course as a result of dynamic engagement with others. It is then incumbent on this researcher to recognise and seek to take into account this dynamic.

Activity theory acknowledges the importance of sociocultural activity, recognises that human cognition "is comprised of contextual, intentional, and circumstantial dimensions" (Lantolf and Appel 1994). This recognition of the learner's agency, context and interaction provides a justification for the direction and focus of this research and draws attention to the need for appropriate research methods that will facilitate such a perspective. The implied research methods, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6, will differ from those of scientific experimental method, the latter based on the assumption that research design and resulting behaviour are scientifically controllable and measurable. In contrast, the implied method should be one able to shed light on the contextual, intentional and circumstantial dimensions of learning perceived as a sociocultural process. Thus activity theory, alongside mediation, interaction, and genetic methods, has influenced this researcher and is incorporated into this research, calling for methods of analysis capable of revealing the dynamic emergence of language through unfolding interaction.

The key theoretical implication of particular significance drawn from the literature is as follows:

- Activity theory highlights the need to take into consideration the contextual, intentional and circumstantial dimensions of an activity in the analysis of the emergence of learning through interaction and calls for an appropriate methodology.

2.5 Participation Metaphor: An Ecological View

While a sociocultural view puts mediation and social interaction at the core of the language learning process, an ecological view emphasises the learning environment and gives recognition to the role of interaction. It is a perspective advocated for research within the field of

psychology (Gibson 1979, Brofenbrenner 1979, Reed 1996, Brofenbrenner and Ceci 1994) and for research within the field of language learning (van Lier, 2000) to overcome criticisms of mainstream SLA research noted earlier. Ecology is the study of the complex relationships between organisms and the environment as they come into contact and interact with each other. In an ecological perspective of learning, therefore, context becomes of central concern and the narrow focus of a scientific paradigm abandoned in favour of a holistic one. The concern is with clarifying the totality of relationships within an environment and the emergence of learning that results. It is a perspective in which the learner is immersed in an environment full of potential meanings that become available as the learner acts and interacts with and within the learning environment. This challenges the mainstream view that all learning occurs in the brain as, from an ecological perspective, learning emerges from the totality of meaning making. Finally, context does not simply exist to provide input to a passive learner but instead is the focal field in which learning occurs. In terms of the language-learning classroom, the learning environment provides a 'semiotic budget' and the active learner engages in meaning-making activities together with the teacher and other learners, who may or may not be more or less competent learners.

2.5.1 Affordances

Gibson (1979) coined the term 'affordance' to refer to a particular property of an environment that is relevant to an active, perceiving organism within that environment. It affords such an organism opportunity for further action. What becomes affordance depends upon each particular organism. Different properties are perceived and acted upon by different organisms. Affordance is then not a property of the actor nor of a particular object. "It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment" (1979, p127). In seeking to illustrate this notion of affordance, Gibson provides an example of how a surface offers an affordance of support.

"If a terrestrial surface is nearly horizontal (instead of slanted), nearly flat (instead of convex or concave), and sufficiently extended (relative to the size of the animal) and if its substance is rigid (relative to the weight of the animal), then the surface affords support..."

"Note that the four properties listed----horizontal, flat, extended, and rigid----would be physical properties of a surface if they were measured with the scales and standard units used in physics. As an affordance of support for a species of animal, however, they have to be measured *relative to the animal*. They are unique for that animal. They are not just abstract properties." (Gibson 1979 p.127)

An environment may contain a number of affordances. These may be viewed as those characteristics of the environment that permit the environment to enter into a complementary relationship with an animal. It also seems logical that these characteristics may work alone or in concert according to circumstance and the nature of the affordance provided. However, availability does not guarantee that affordance will occur and, if it does, that it will be successful. For that to occur there must be perception of the affordance by the agent. As noted above, there is a complementarity to the relationship, that is, affordance refers to the environment and the animal in a way that is symbiotic. Where the animal perceives the affordance then complementarity will occur, but where an animal fails to perceive the affordance, there can be no complementarity.

To further illustrate the notion of complementarity, Gibson gives an example of how a chair may provide affordance. If a surface has the physical properties of being horizontal, flat, extended, rigid, and knee-high relative to a perceiver, the surface can be perceived as affording support for the purpose of sitting. However, this affordance becomes available only to a person in need of sitting and who perceives its suitability for the purpose of sitting. The affordance of support a chair provides is unique and relevant only to those who need to sit. Furthermore, it becomes an affordance only when it is perceived to be so, seen to offer the opportunity to sit. If you do not need to sit, you are unlikely to perceive of the opportunity to do so, or, if you do not perceive the opportunity, you are unlikely to enter into the relationship of complementarity required for affordance to occur.

The example of a chair tells us that an affordance can be viewed as a relationship between an object and a person's perception, goals and readiness. The chair has physical characteristics that can be used for a particular purpose, the purpose of sitting. However, the chair becomes useful and affords sitting only when it is needed. The properties of the chair exist there in the object and do not change. They do change, however, when someone recognises and uses those properties for the purpose of sitting. These properties particular to the chair only become affordance when we recognise their concrete usability with a particular purpose in mind. Thus, for affordance to occur it is necessary for four elements/dimensions to come together at one and the same time, these being an object/environment, the user's goal, the user's perception, and the user's readiness to make use of the affordance. In other words, opportunities for interaction occur where organisms and the environment encounter each other, and affordances exist in these opportunities for interaction.

Of the sources of affordance available within the environment, Gibson further argues that it is humankind that is the source of the richest and most elaborate of affordances. As humans interact with one another, their behaviour affords the behaviour of others, that is, there is a

reciprocal relationship. What the infant affords the mother is reciprocal to what the mother affords the infant. Gibson also points out that learning to know something is an extension of perception. The child becomes aware of the world directly by observation, by listening, feeling and smelling. Then she begins to learn about the world, mediated by aids such as toys, pictures and the words of parents and other adults. For an infant the world is one of rich affordance, a learning environment comprised of multiple opportunities for learning as a result of affordances made available by adults together with those of direct observation and experience of the world.

In seeking to apply the above four elements/dimensions—an object/environment, the user's goal, the user's perception, and the user's readiness—to gain insight into the process of language learning, the characteristics of the linguistic environment can be expected to influence how the active learner perceives and seeks to make use of the environment. Use will be dependent upon the relationship between the learner and that environment, an environment with particular characteristics. These are activated and become available only when the learner interacts with the environment and perceives its characteristics as relevant to his or her goals and readiness. Affordances are taken up and used as necessary and appropriate by the learner, that is, when s/he recognises the affordances and is ready to make use of them. As van Lier (2000) notes, the active language learner can be expected to perceive linguistic affordance and use it for the purpose of linguistic action. The learning that emerges depends on the individual learner's perception and how he or she perceives affordance relevant to his/her action. Thus, rather than learning being perceived as a transfer of meaning from teacher to learner, the transference of property, it is a view of learning as emergence, a process whereby learning emerges whenever a learner is actively engaged in the learning environment and perceives affordances as learning opportunities. The consequence is that language learning can no longer be viewed as a process of representing linguistic objects in the brain on the basis of input. We no longer 'possess' language knowledge. Rather, we learn how to use language for communicative purpose. Language learning is to be perceived as the development of increasingly effective ways of dealing with the world, and in the study of language learning our focus should be upon the relationships that exist between learners, and between learners and the environment, not upon the study of objects such as the units of words, sentences and grammatical rules. The notion of input is replaced by one of affordances in which an environment provides the active learner with opportunities for learning (van Lier, 2000).

For the researcher an ecological perspective calls attention to second language development not as a simple linear process but as something uniquely dependent on individual learning contexts in which perception and social activity are essential elements, a contextual view of learning in which features of the environment, notably the linguistic environment, provide a guide to the identification of learning opportunities. This is a view with characteristics in common with

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. In the notion of affordances, it is the process of interaction between the active human learner and the learning environment that is the essential ingredient of the learning process, the meeting place, providing for the emergence of learning. And, within this environment, it is human assistance that is regarded as the richest and most elaborate source/form of affordances available to the active learner. This is a concept of the learning process in tune with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory with its emphasis on the role of interaction and mediation in the learning process.

For this researcher seeking to illuminate the process of language development in the classroom, it is the development of interaction within the classroom activity/social context and the emergence of learning through interaction that call for attention. Therefore, along with the Vygotskian perspective, the ecological perspective on language learning also informs the theoretical framework adopted in this study. This has clear implications for the kinds of research methods adopted. In order to identify the emergence of learning, it is necessary to construct a method of analysis that facilitates identification of learning opportunities by giving due recognition to environmental factors, the active learner, and the interaction that occurs. It is then the intent of this researcher to illuminate this mediational process by seeking to uncover the complementary relationship between environment, learner goal(s), perception and readiness. That is, to illuminate the contextual, interactional and circumstantial dimensions of activity within the primary EFL classroom environment.

A further similarity can be drawn between an ecological approach and Vygotsky's (1978) advocacy of genetic methods. In the same way as Vygotsky sought to uncover the emergence of learning, an ecological approach implies analysis of how emergence of a complementary relationship occurs through the process of interaction. Such a relationship is to be observed and revealed not through the examination of one instance in time but rather by observing interaction over time. That is, research based on an ecological approach requires the researcher to attempt an in-depth analysis of (1) features of each context where interaction appears, that is, the environment and agents within the environment (2) the process of unfolding interaction along a timeline and (3) the outcome(s) arising as a result of interactions observed. Development of research methods adopted in this study is detailed in Chapter 6.

The key theoretical implications of particular significance drawn from the literature are as follows:

- The concept of affordances provides a concrete direction, a focus for carrying out an analysis of the mediational nature of interaction and in identifying learning opportunities arising as a result of mediational interaction.

- The emergence of affordances may be traced by in-depth analysis of complementarity among the dimensions of the environment, a learner's perception, goals and readiness over time.

2.6 Participation Metaphor: Participation Theory

A third view of learning from a participation metaphor perspective is provided by participation theory (Rogoff 1990, Rogoff et al 1993). Developed to describe the emergence of toddlers' understanding and skills of cultural practice from a sociocultural point of view, it is a theory arising out of dissatisfaction with the notion of internalisation, a concept used in different and therefore confusing ways by both Piaget and Vygotsky. As used by Piaget, the notion of internalisation is used to refer to internalisation of action on object whilst for Vygotsky internalisation refers to the internalisation of social activities. In both views, however, individuals are regarded as separate from one another and are considered to learn from observation or participation and then to internalise learning. However, Rogoff (1990, 1998) questions whether new knowledge is ever brought inside a learner unchanged or whether it is transformed in the process of internalisation. She further questions the underlying assumption that knowledge can be regarded as an objectified entity, something transferable from an *external* source that is brought across a barrier into the mind of the child. (Rogoff, 1990)

Rogoff suggests a solution to the problems of internalisation and objectification by adopting the concept of appropriation. If individuals are regarded as active participants and observant in activities, the individual aspect becomes integral to the interpersonal aspects of their functioning. Thus, what is practised in social interaction is never on the outside of a barrier and it is not necessary to separate processes of internalisation from external processes of participation.

To act and communicate, individuals are constantly involved in exchanges that blend "internal" and "external" – exchanges characterized by the sharing of meaning by individuals. The "boundaries" between people who are in communication are already permeated; it is impossible to say "whose" an object of joint focus is, or "whose" a collaborative idea is. An individual participating in shared problem solving or in communication is already involved in a process beyond the individual level. Benefiting from shared thinking thus does not involve taking something from an internal model. Instead, in the processes of participation in social activity, the individual already functions with the shared understanding. The individual's later use of this shared understanding is not the same as what was constructed jointly; it is an appropriation of the shared activity by each individual that reflects the individual's understanding of and involvement in the activity (Rogoff 1990 p.195).

It is through engagement in communication that children build their understanding, develop the skills and perspectives of their society through participation in communicative activities. Additionally, the resulting understanding is not derived through a process of transference. Rather, it is jointly produced with performance distributed among participants. Rogoff (1990) also cites Miller (1987):

Although [a] joint argument will be mentally represented in individual minds, the processes of construction proceed by interlocking the cognitions of all the participants in such a way that a structural whole (joint argument) can result. Thus, each participant's thinking becomes more and more an integrative part of what everyone else thinks in the group, and therefore neither the meaning nor the mode of construction of each participant's cognition can be explained as isolated, individual mental entities. (Miller 1987 p.235)

Miller also argues that cognitive development is inevitably jointly constructed as the process itself interlocks the cognition of the group. Thus the more participants are involved in joint thinking, the more their cognition is incorporated into the thinking of the group. It is this rejection of individual cognition in isolation that separates mainstream perspectives from those of the participation metaphor, the latter rejecting the separation of the individual mind from the external (world) and arguing that cognition is inseparable from social engagement. This is the basis of the participation metaphor.

2.6.1 Cognition, collaboration and transformation

Rogoff (1990) argues that cognition cannot be separated from collaboration, a perspective firmly within the tradition of sociocultural theory in its recognition of the importance of context in the study of human actions. If cognition is perceived as linked to/arising from collaboration, as Rogoff suggests, then learning cannot be viewed as an individual property. Rather, learning is embedded in the sociocultural context, a context in which an expert supports a novice by means of interaction and the structured arrangement of activity. A child's performance will inevitably reflect sociocultural aspects of community such as goals and values. Therefore, cognition cannot be separated from sociocultural influence. This is a perspective echoed in the work of Cole (1985) who notes that not only do culture and cognition create each other but that new members of cultural communities also transform them, that is, culture is not static. Rogoff (1990) also points out the implications for the educational researcher of a sociocultural perspective of learning. In revealing how individual, interpersonal and community developmental processes are interlocked, she argues that research focusing only on those contributions made by an individual child must inevitably fail to recognise the contributions made by other children, the

teacher and the environment, and as a consequence it is impossible to interpret how what a child is doing relates to other ongoing events. For the researcher seeking to understand the learning process, a focus only on the individual risks failing to understand the totality of the learning process, its jointly constructed and holistic characteristic.

As from a participation theory viewpoint cognition is perceived as collaboration, it follows that development of cognition may be perceived as transformation of collaboration. A child develops by attending to an activity, the nature of the child's participation in the activity, the child's roles and the activity itself, develop and transform and the child takes on increasing responsibility for managing activities. From an adult's perspective, effective transfer of such responsibility is facilitated by sensitivity to a child's competence in tasks so that responsibility is given according to skill. First, an adult adjusts the nature and level of support by assessing a child's skills and the level of task difficulty. Based on this assessment, the adult may modify the chosen approach to the task. One way of providing such modification is to provide oral fine-tuned assistance to ensure understanding. As a child begins to comprehend, an adult will decrease the amount of assistance provided and the explicitness of statements. When children are unable to proceed, assistance is once again provided.

2.6.2 “Guided participation”

Rogoff (1990) argues that child development occurs through active participation in culturally structured activities in which the child learns and extends the skills, values and knowledge of the community helped by companion adults. Individual, interpersonal and cultural processes are regarded as inseparable aspects of whole events in a child's development. Rogoff terms this process of development through participation in the community one of “guided participation”, a process of communication in which people come to share the common values and practices of the community. It is a process involving both interpersonal communication and the structuring of activities with the aim of eventually handing over responsibility to the child. In so doing it is a process having much in common with the notion of scaffolding (Wood, Bruner and Ross 1976), a “verbal fine-tuned assistance” (Cameron 2001) (See 2.4.2.). Both seek to clarify/identify the process of mediation whose purpose is to provide cognitive support to the learner in the learning process.

The first of the two characteristics of “guided participation” identified by Rogoff, that of, interpersonal communication, has a crucial role to play. Communication is a collaborative process for participants to come to a common ground of understanding, connecting a child's view to that of an adult. It is through guided participation in the process of communication that bridges are built between the new and the familiar. It is a process beginning from a difference in perspective between the child and the caregiver. In order to reach intersubjectivity, adults search

for common reference points so that the new situation is within a child's grasp and also make simplifications so that a child is able to focus on the situation. Adults specify how the new resembles the familiar. In this way connections between the old and the new are built and the child is able to reach a new understanding or knowledge. Thus communication is a collaborative process between adult and child and provides a supportive opportunity for a child to learn the skills and values of a society. As a collaborative process, it is one requiring not only the active participation and mediation of the adult, but also the active involvement of the child as she endeavours to achieve a new understanding.

The second important feature of the process of guided participation is the structuring of activities. Caregivers choose and assign opportunities for participation in activities. They select, arrange and structure activities by providing access to and regulating the difficulty of tasks. Thus adults have the power to determine a child's activities, assigning tasks or restricting mobility. In so doing the adult's choice is influenced by social constraints and in consequence the activities they arrange are determined by the goals and regulations of the society. Rogoff (1986) provides as an example the actions of Mayan mothers in Guatemala choosing and structuring activity in order to help their daughters learn weaving. They assign an appropriate level of activity to their daughters, adjusting the level of participation. The mothers let two year olds sit, chat and observe their mothers weaving. Five year olds are given back strap looms and plain leaves. Seven year olds begin to weave simple things with help. By the age of nine, girls can weave simple things without the assistance of adults. Thus, it is adult structuring that enables the gradual participation of children in sociocultural activities. (cf. Scaffolding in 2.4.2)

After assigning activities, adults structure a child's involvement in learning through joint participation. Caregivers support a child's efforts to participate in the cognitive activities of daily life by means of interaction. Caregivers give direct assistance during interaction so that a child can extend her ZPD while engaged in appropriate handling of a task. This is a process in which the nature of the interaction and structuring taking place may be further illuminated by the notion of scaffolding (Wood, Bruner and Ross 1976). For example, when an adult and a child clean the child's room together, the adult may divide the activity into two separate steps, first picking up clothes and second putting toys away. Then the adult will give verbal support to the child, for example, by demonstrating and providing encouragement. In this way the structuring of "guided participation" provides the chance for both child and adult to participate in the activity, "scaffolding" providing for joint participation and skills development. Thus Rogoff et al (1993) suggest that development is a creative process of participation in communication and shared activity. They find that children and adult jointly engage in and contribute to the management of activities through the bridging of understanding and through the structuring of involvement. Participation is not simply interaction between child and adult

but rather, it is a shared endeavour in which child and adults participate while developing the child's contribution to and extensions of cultural practices. Central to this development is the notion of "guided participation".

The concept of "guided participation" fits well with Vygotsky's notion of a "zone of proximal development". The ZPD can be viewed as a context in which individual development occurs during joint problem solving with people who are more skilled in the use of cultural tools (Vygotsky 1978). In common with the ZPD, "guided participation" is a process in which children develop and transform their understanding of culturally structured activities in a creative process through which they become more responsible participants. There is however a difference, one of emphasis. The concept of "guided participation" refers to the process and system of involvement of individuals with others in communication and engagement in shared endeavours. Its focus is upon the relationships between children and those people supporting them. Whereas Vygotskian theory emphasises dialogical features, Rogoff et al (1993) emphasise tacit and routine forms of communication and the arrangement of children's activities. It is a shift of focus that illuminates children's development in the context of routine cultural activities.

2.7 Participation Metaphor: Legitimate Peripheral Participation

Yet another view of learning from a participative metaphor perspective is that of legitimate peripheral participation, a concept developed by Lave and Wenger (1991). In common with Rogoff they insist that thinking and learning are inextricably tied to context and that it is inappropriate to describe development as an individual phenomenon. They therefore call for greater attention to the 'situated' nature of learning, a focus on the relationship between learning and the social situations in which it occurs. This situated view assumes that learning takes place in the processes of co-participation in social practice, that is, learning occurs in the process of social engagement. Learning is a form of social co-participation and the learner does not acquire a discrete body of abstract knowledge in the head that she will then reapply in later contexts as a lone learner. Rather, she acquires the skill to perform by actual engagement in the attenuated interaction. The implication here is that, if learning is indeed an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice, then the learner, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other, and the situatedness of an activity is all important.

It is pointed out by Lave and Wenger (1991) that learners can eventually be expected to participate as full participants in communities of practitioners, that is, through the learning process the nature of a learner's participation undergoes a process of transformation. At the beginning, the learner participates in the actual practice of an expert only to a limited degree and with limited responsibility, that is, they are peripheral participants. With time, however, the new learner moves toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community, not by

mastering knowledge and skill, but by operating within the community. It is through participation that the learner has the possibility to transform herself, becoming a complex, full cultural-historical participant in the world. Lave and Wenger describe this process as legitimate peripheral participation, a process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice. Apprenticeship is transformed by increased participation in a productive process. Lave and Wenger also suggest that there may be no such thing as central participation. Peripherality implies “multiple, varied, more- or less-engaged and inclusive ways of being located in the field of participation defined by a community. Peripheral participation is about being located in the social world. “*Changing* locations and perspectives are part of actors’ learning trajectories, developing identities and forms of membership” (Lave and Wenger 1991, p36). Eventually it is expected that peripheral participation will lead to full participation. Thus peripherality is regarded as something positive, suggesting that a participant is related to the community of practice and her participation is relevant to on going activity.

The notion of legitimate peripheral participation provides a view of learning that has little in common with the conventional view in which a learner internalises knowledge through a process of discovery, the absorption of knowledge transmitted by others, and through the experience of interaction. A participatory view is one in which learning is perceived not as the acquisition of mental representation, but rather as a process of increased access by learners to participatory roles in expert performances. That is, it is a process of internalisation of the cultural given rather than internalisation of knowledge. Thus, in seeking to apply a participatory view to the idea of a zone of proximal development, Engestrom defines the ZPD as “the distance between the everyday actions of individuals and the historically new form of the societal activity that can be collectively generated” (1987, p174). It is a view that implies a process of sociocultural transformation, one involving changing relations between newcomers and old-timers in the context of an evolving but shared practice.

Lave and Wenger point out that “participation in social practice also suggests an explicit focus on the person, but as person-in-the-world, as a member of a sociocultural community” (1991, p.52). This implies that learning involves the whole person, not as an ‘individual’ but as a ‘member’ of a social community, someone involved in the process of becoming a full participant of the community, someone able to be involved in new activities, to perform new tasks and functions, someone able to master new understandings. Activities, tasks, functions and understandings do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relationships in which they have meaning. For the learner, learning implies transformation, becoming a different person, the construction of evolving identities.

For the researcher seeking to understand the learning process, the concept of legitimate peripheral participation calls for a view of the learner as ‘member’, as participant undergoing transformation. It is to increased participation within the sociocultural community of the classroom or of experts that the classroom researcher should turn, to the totality of co-participation found to exist and the activities, tasks and functions through which new understandings are achieved and manifested. The concept of legitimate peripheral participation also makes available to the researcher a framework for bringing together theories of situated activity and theories of production and reproduction of the social order. Learning is seen as a dimension of social practice. Thus the production, transformation, and change in the identities of persons, knowledgeable skill in practice, and communities of practice are realized in the lived-in world of engagement in everyday (and classroom) activity.

2.8 The emergence of language use

As noted throughout this chapter the weakness of an acquisition metaphor in accounting for language learning based on information processing psychology and a nativist view has led to the development of a number of different views from a participative perspective. Common to such views, most notably in an ecological perspective (van Lier 2000), is an emergent view of language learning. Whereas the acquisition metaphor views language development as a process of gradually accumulating entities and language use a process of transferring acquired items, emergentism provides a view of language development as non-linear (Larsen-Freeman 2003), a process subject to constant change as the learner uses language. It is a perspective in which language learning emerges as a result of interaction between learner and linguistic environment (van Lier 2000). It is, as Johnson (2002) points out, “what happens when an interconnected system of relatively simple elements self-organizes to form more intelligent, more adaptive higher-level behaviour” (cited in van Lier 2005). This interactive view of learning is also emphasised by Larsen-Freeman (2003) who, drawing on complex systems theory (Cameron 2003, Larsen-Freeman 1997, 2003), presents a dynamic view of language development, “grammaring”, a view in which stable periods are interspersed with sudden bursts of development and reorganization of linguistic resources and skills resulting from interaction. It is a perspective in which regularity and systematicity are “produced by the partial settling or sedimentation of frequently used forms into temporary subsystems” (Hopper 1998, p. 158). In such a view, as Hopper argues, grammar is not a prerequisite for generating discourse (a cause) but something that emerges in the discourse of communication (an effect). It is a dynamic account of language learning in which language development as a result of adaptation may occur at anytime when a learner uses language, a result of interaction between learner and environment. Thus emergentism provides a perspective very different from that of an acquisition metaphor in which language use and language acquisition are separate with language use occurring when a learner transfers acquired knowledge and produces language. The

implication is that the learner is not a passive recipient of input but rather is an actively engaged individual perceiving and making use of what is available to enable further action.

As this research is primarily concerned with how learning emerges out of affordances and does not seek an analysis of learner language as product, the intent is to reveal the process of emergence through classroom interaction, in particular, the microgenetic moment. In the data analysis, therefore, it is hoped to provide in-depth analysis revealing the emergence of language use, pupil perception and use of affordances to participate in language learning activities.

2.9 Language, Community and Context

For this researcher approaching the research process from a participatory metaphor perspective of learning, the concept of “guided participation” offers a potentially valuable means of gaining insight into the sociocultural nature of development. Thus one aim of this research is to seek to determine whether “guided participation” is an applicable means of interpreting the language-learning process in the formal context of the primary EFL classroom. Accordingly, from a participation metaphor perspective, success in language learning is to be defined as increased participation in classroom language learning activities. It is hoped therefore to determine whether more independent and active participation in the classroom occurs as a result of “guided participation”. However, examination of the nature of participation and the applicability of “guided participation” to an EFL context calls for some caution. Rogoff’s notion of “guided participation” (1990, 1993, 1995) may not be applicable directly to the EFL classroom context. As originally formulated, it served to illuminate the nature of daily sociocultural activities, a very different type of context from that of formal education and the EFL classroom.

Widdowson (1998) points out that language use in a real English speaking community differs from language use “in an EFL classroom community”. This difference is attributed to the nature of community and context. Widdowson observes that people use language to engage in social action in the real English speaking community outside the classroom. This is a feature held in common with Rogoff’s notion of “guided participation” in that an apprentice’s engagement in an activity is a preparation for participation in real sociocultural activities. Widdowson also points out that people communicate through the use of language in order to make an appropriate connection with the context of shared perception. In such situations, contexts are constructed from the local knowledge of particular communities possessed by individuals. Thus in communication, things are left unsaid because participants are assumed by fellow participants to have common knowledge of the community. The language is complementary to context and is used to compensate for what the context does not provide. Participants (community members) create meaningful discourse through the employment of appropriate pragmatics in language use. “Real language is local language in that it is always associated with specific contextual realities”

(p.711). “The authenticity or reality of language use in its normal pragmatic functioning depends on its being localized within a particular discourse community” (p.711). Thus an English speaking community has context specific to it and people use language with appropriate pragmatic engagement.

In contrast to the real English speaking community discussed above, this is a study concerned with an EFL classroom community with its own context. As Widdowson states, the classroom is a learning community and the purpose of any discourse therein is a pedagogic one, the main objective of the *language* classroom being the “internalization of language as a semantic source” (Widdowson 1998, p.712). Two major features of language use in the classroom community are identified. Firstly, learning activities and associated language use need to be designed with the specific purpose of assisting learning in mind. Secondly, classroom discourse has its own discourse reality and should be meaningful and authentic to its own context. Discourse meaningful and authentic to the classroom context can be expected to contribute to language learning and attract the learners’ pragmatic attention. Thus Widdowson argues that whatever form a pragmatic activity takes, it eventually needs to lead to the internalization of language as a semantic resource because the classroom is a language learning community.

The means of achieving Widdowson’s goal are not so straightforward. He argues that there exist a number of differing classroom contexts, communities and realities. One such is found in classrooms in which a structuralist approach to language learning is adopted. Widdowson (1998) argues that such an approach creates a type of language use particular to the language classroom, one in which context simply serves as a device for demonstration. Thus a teacher may provide context by using realia and presenting a structure, for example, “This is a book”. In such an instance the purpose of language learning is served, focus on learning the meaning of the structure. However, semantic meaning is given primary status with little attention or status accorded to context in the teaching procedure. “Text....simply duplicates context” (Widdowson 1998, p.706). Accordingly, participants are unable to engage pragmatically with language as the text does not create meaningful discourse and the communicative potential of the language is left unrealized. Widdowson reminds us that in order for language use to be pragmatically effective, speakers have to use language not to duplicate context but to complement it. Thus it is likely that the learner may end up learning a type of language use very different from that of real language use. If such a classroom environment is created, one in which real language use is given little opportunity to develop, the learners’ language use and the forms of participation that result are likely to be significantly different from those forms associated with a native or real English speaking community. Discourse can be expected to be artificial, unnatural and with little pragmatic engagement, learner activity limited to internalizing semantic meaning. The

learner may have little motivation due to a lack of meaningful discourse, the result a situation of teacher control and passive learner participation.

In the classroom, language use should be pragmatic and at the same time help pupils encode semantic meaning. In order to do so, classroom activities need not only to be designed with language learning in mind but also aim to promote the learner's pragmatic engagement in discourse. Real, meaningful, interesting and inspiring discourse for the classroom may not be 'real' in an English speaking community. Pragmatic engagement in the classroom may be associated with purposeful problem-solving activities such as language games. In addition, it would seem a requirement that classroom activity should as far as possible reflect and be familiar to local cultural contexts. This may be achieved for example through the alteration of songs and stories to reflect local culture. Beyond the encoding of semantic meaning it is essential the classroom provides opportunities for learners to engage in activities permitting them to attend to the pragmatics of communication, albeit the pragmatics of the classroom community as opposed to that of a real English speaking one.

Summary

The nature of the classroom language community and the resulting language use are not the same as the context and associated language use of English language speaking communities. First, the purpose of the communities is different. As Widdowson suggests, "the purpose of teaching is to get learners to invest in a general capacity for further learning when they encounter actually occurring language in the real world" (1998, p715). There are categories of language use that can only be experienced and learned in the outside world in the appropriate context. Thus pedagogy should prepare learners to learn from experience in the future, not seek to replicate experience in advance. This view of the nature of the classroom community suggests a fundamental difference with Rogoff's idea of apprenticeship in sociocultural activities. The purpose of "guided participation" in daily social activities is to prepare children directly for participation in actually occurring activities in the society. Additionally, such guided participatory activities are themselves normal daily occurring activities in a society. However, pupils in the language classroom are apprentices on the road to becoming fuller participants in *classroom* learning activities. This is, classroom apprenticeship is not a preparation for direct participation in the real world English speaking community.

Secondly, reflecting the purpose of the classroom, the types of activity and language use are different in the two communities. Activities in real life are real and exist in the community, for example, house chores and reading stories. The discourse that emerges in such activities is meaningful and embedded in the local context. In the classroom, as the ultimate purpose is to learn the language, activities are devised to promote such learning, existing only in the

classroom and not in the real world. The resulting discourse, which is particular to the classroom, may not be found in the real world. In such activities there is a clear focus on language and the associated discourse makes sense only to the participants in the classroom. Thus, even when an authentic English story is adapted for use in an EFL classroom, a specific discourse pattern may have to be incorporated in order to create engagement in language learning. Teachers may deliberately elicit new words. Children may be invited to guess what will happen next and assistance provided to help them guess. The content of the materials may have to be changed to reflect the local culture, for example, by changing some of the lyrics in a song. The emergent discourse will be particular to the classroom. Additionally, societal norms and values as well as school culture are also likely to affect discourse and the way of communication.

2.10 Imagined Communities

Another form of participation is participation in “imagined communities”. According to Kanno and Norton (2003), “imagined communities” are that “group of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination” (p.241). The notion of “imagined communities” was first advocated by Anderson (1991) and he suggests as an example that nations are imagined communities as one individual is never able to meet most members of the group yet by imagination members bond themselves with fellow-members across space and time, feeling a sense of community. “Situated learning” and “guided participation”, perspectives of the learning process adopted by this researcher, represent forms of participation in tangible and accessible communities. Lave and Wenger (1991) in presenting their notion of “situated learning” argue that learning is not just a cognitive process in which the learner acquires a set of skills and knowledge. Rather, it also involves changing patterns of participation in various communities with shared practices. As learners become more adept at community practices, they increase their levels of responsibility in the community and become more active participants. Rogoff (1998) also insists that individual cognition is inseparable from cognition of the social group and arises from collaboration. Child development occurs in “guided participation”, or through active participation in culturally structured activities by learning the skills, values and knowledge of the community with the help of an expert. The nature of ‘community’ is also addressed by Wenger (1998) who argues that direct *engagement* in communities in tangible and accessible relationships is not the only way for an individual to belong to a community. *Imagination*, which is “a process of expanding oneself by transcending time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves” (cited by Kanno and Norton, 2003 p241) is an additional way by which an individual is able to affiliate with communities.

Norton (2000, 2001) extends the concept of “imagined communities” to second language learning. Studying two adult second language learners, Norton argues that their sense of belonging to an imagined community affected their investment of time and energy profoundly. Norton identifies two types of “imagined communities”, one temporal and the other spatial. The former relates to future relationships that exist in the learner’s imagination such as working with colleagues in her/his dream job. The latter involves affiliation that extends beyond local sets of relationships such as a sense of nationality, of belonging to a nation. However, Kanno and Norton (2003) suggest that imagined communities are “no less real than the ones in which learners have daily engagement and might even have a stronger impact on their current actions and investment” (p.242). If an imagined community is as real and powerful as that community in which a learner is actually engaged, affecting motivation and levels of investment, it appears crucial to identify the form of participation and sense of identity in “imagined communities” as well as a learner’s participation in concrete classroom communities of practice. The implication is that in this research, while development and success in learning are defined as transformation of participation in communities, “the imagined community” is also a legitimate site of participation requiring investigation. Participation in “imagined communities” may have a significant link to participation in actual communities. Examination of “imagined communities” may therefore provide insight into the form of learner engagement in classroom practice. Thus this research also seeks to reveal the identities pupils hold in “imagined communities” and how these affect their engagement in classroom activities.

2.11 Criticisms of the “Participation Metaphor”

Although sociocultural, ecological and participation theory belong within the participation metaphor and are felt to offer perspectives valuable to the conducting of this research, such perspectives do have drawbacks. A participation metaphor denies the idea of objectified knowledge. In so doing it also appears to deny the idea of knowledge transfer. If knowledge is regarded as an aspect of activity, rather than property possessed by an individual, there should be nothing carried over from context to context. However, it is difficult to deny the fact that something does repeat from one situation to another. Sfard (1998) suggests that to prepare to deal with new situations encountered in the future beyond the classroom is the very purpose of learning. Larsen-Freeman (2002) raises the fact that L1 transfer in L2 acquisition is frequently observed. It does indeed appear difficult to account for such phenomena if the notion of knowledge transfer, the carrying of knowledge from one situation to another, is denied.

A number of attempts have been made to reconcile the idea of transfer with that of the participation metaphor. Greeno (1997) attempts to do so by providing the notion of learning with a new interpretation. He defines learning as “improved participation in interactive systems” and accounts “for transfer in terms of transformation of constraints, affordances, and

attunements” (cited in Sfard p12). However, extreme adherents to the participation metaphor do not accept this switch to a new framework of interactions between learners and situations, as they find it difficult to accept the usage of the words “transfer” and “situatedness” at the same time. Rogoff (1990, 1998) also attempts to reconcile the dilemma, proposing to redefine “transfer of knowledge” as relations between a new and an old situation. People determine how situations relate to each other and how their participation in one relates to their participation in another. This transfer is rather a matter of “how individuals change and handle later situations in ways prepared by their own participation and changing responsibility in previous activities” (1998 p691). Thus the process of knowledge transfer is regarded as a creative one in which people actively seek meaning and relate one situation to another. Rogoff (1990) argues that this creative process is itself a sociocultural activity. People think about how to manage a new situation on the basis of their own and their shared history, reaching their own and their shared goals through communication. She gives an example of referring to an object with a label. Referring links the present object with a general class or objects of sociocultural meaning. This is a process of classifying and generalization in a sociocultural way. According to Rogoff, this orientation demystifies the processes of learning as it directly looks at people’s efforts rather than attributing the nature of learning to an internal repository.

Despite these attempts to explain “transfer of knowledge” Sfard (1998) suggests that there is still no satisfactory explanation to account for people’s previous experience. There is still a need to provide a model of learning to account for the systematic property of the learner, which may at the same time be dynamic, complex and situational in nature. Sfard suggests living with both the acquisition and participation metaphors as having both metaphors may protect our educational practices and theories from excess. She also suggests that researchers choose either the acquisition metaphor or the participation metaphor depending on purpose. The merit of the participation metaphor is to make us aware of the weakness of the acquisition metaphor and recognise the social aspect of learning. Thus, in research such as that conducted in this study, research aiming to illuminate the process of learning through interaction by bringing social factors to the fore, the appropriate choice is that of the participation metaphor.

2.12 Summary and Research Implications

Mainstream second language theories offer an insufficient explanation of the complex nature of classroom interaction and language development. Focusing on individual and cognitive aspects of learning, they give inadequate recognition to the role of social context. Their assumption is that language development follows a constant and linear process of knowledge accumulation as the individual learner processes received input. Such an account not only fails to take into consideration the context embedded nature of language use but also fails to capture the dynamic evolving and non-linear nature of language and language development. Thus there is a need for

theories of language development that do take account of the socially situated nature of language development and the complexity of interaction, that is, there is a need for a different metaphor of success giving due recognition to the socially constituted nature of learning and the community dynamic. Sociocultural theory offers such a metaphor, the fundamental concept being that human learning is socially constructed with the help of others and that language is a prime tool in this process, in the emergence of learning and the achievement of mutual understanding. Such an approach has much to offer this researcher whose focus is upon classroom interaction, upon how foreign language learning and teaching at primary level is achieved through active participation in classroom discourse. It provides a fundamental position from which to approach research in which a socially oriented perspective of classroom interaction and learning is taken.

Adoption of a sociocultural perspective of learning requires the researcher to address the question of how to examine the process of learning in interaction. Mediation theory provides one possible answer to this question, offering a perspective in which learning occurs by means of mediated activity. Teacher activity is one means of mediation and consists of teacher strategies intended to assist pupil learning, strategies realized through language use. Considering that in Japan teaching is pre-dominantly teacher-led, mediation theory, by providing a focus upon teacher activity, offers the possibility to better understand the teaching and learning process in the Japanese classroom environment. In each teacher activity distinctive patterns of interaction and teacher strategies might be identified and their value in providing learning opportunities for children examined and compared.

Mediation theory however is not by itself sufficient to account for an active learner's agency and the social interactive nature of the relationship between teacher and pupil in the learning process. An ecological view, especially the notion of affordance, makes us aware that learning results from complementary interaction between teacher and pupil. That is, there is a need to examine not only the teacher's provision of mediation but also what children as active learners perceive as affordance in order to engage in learning activities. An environmental perspective of learning is also of value here, focusing attention on how pupils perceive and make use of opportunities available in the classroom environment. It is a perspective that recognises the socially constituted nature of learning and its non-linear dynamic. Identification of affordances should also make it possible to identify which types of activities have the potential to provide rich productive opportunities, as well as permitting the identification of constraints and restrictions that may exist. Examining how access to affordances in activities is encouraged or restricted should also allow the researcher to examine the applicability of the concept of "guided participation" to illumination of the language learning process.

A sociocultural perspective provides a view of language learning not as a simple process of cognitive development but rather one recognising the social nature of language learning and development, development that can be observed as a change of participation within the classroom environment through actual participation in activities. This research is based on such an assumption and it is hoped to illuminate the process of how apprentice learners develop as a result of participation in the classroom community and in so doing assume a greater degree of participation. In so doing, this research aims to analyse the interactive process of learning by adopting the concept of affordances. It is hoped to identify the nature of learning through interaction by adopting the notion of affordances, the assumption that learning achieved through interaction is complex and socially situated and that emerging development resulting from pupils' use of affordances is a part of social development, that is, transformation of participation. It is hoped that analysis based on the concept of affordances will provide an alternative perspective of learning, one providing a fuller and more holistic view of the nature of learning than might be obtained only through a perspective of mediation. It is through using the concepts of mediation and affordance alongside one another that this researcher hopes to both recognise and illuminate the social interactional and holistic nature of the language learning process.

2.13 Approaches to Discourse Analysis

The location in which this study takes place is the pedagogic world of the classroom, a sociocultural environment in which learners and teacher interact. Accordingly, a sociocultural approach will be taken to interpreting the classroom dynamic, as it is argued that the social and interactional nature of human mental processes is best understood when observed in the context of sociocultural activity. The method of analysis selected should be one capable of revealing the nature and patterns of classroom discourse and facilitate analysis of how learning opportunities are created through such discourse. Thus, with the purpose of selecting or adapting a suitable method of data analysis, this chapter reviews a number of approaches to discourse analysis, a structural functional approach (the Birmingham school), Conversation Analysis, sociocultural studies, and approaches recognising the influence of external (non-classroom) influences on the classroom learning environment.

2.13.1 Structural-functional analysis (the Birmingham School)

Discourse analysis has revealed how language, or a stretch of language, bears a different meaning, purpose or totality, depending on context, and it seeks to identify ways in which language use is coherent according to context. One approach to such an analysis is to form a picture of discourse in its totality and to seek patterns of usage. As pragmatics has revealed, stretches of language are often coherent without making full use of cohesive devices because participants can understand the connection between the form and functions and as a result are

able to interpret meaning. It is therefore logical that the identification of sequencing of language function in context is helpful in solving the problem of what binds utterances as discourse in the absence of formal links. Thus the Birmingham School sought to analyse larger structures of discourse, identifying sequences of functions and the patterning of such sequences. It was revealed that chunks of spoken discourse have organized patterns and are not simply strings of language form with individual functions.

Dissatisfied with previous studies of classroom talk which they perceived to be subjective in nature, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) attempted to establish a highly structured “grammatical” model for discourse analysis. The authors analysed classroom interactions observed within a British secondary school and set out a scheme of analysis with categories other than sentence grammar and phonology. First they identified distinct discourse units. These were then organized to show the relationship between parts of discourse and the whole by making use of a rank structure. In the same way that sentence grammar has a rank structure of sentence, clause, phrase and word, Sinclair and Coulthard advocated that classroom discourse also has a rank structure ranging in size from lesson (the largest) to transaction, exchange, move and act (the smallest). The ranks of move and act were defined by their functions in the discourse and these functions fix them to positions in the structure such as respond or boundary. One of the most useful levels of Sinclair and Coulthard’s rank system is the exchange level which in actuality is the minimum unit of interaction. The exchange level reveals the sequencing of turns at talk in terms of functional positions. At the exchange level, classroom discourse appears in a predictable pattern of three moves: teacher initiation, pupil response and teacher feedback (IRF).

The strength of the Birmingham School approach is that it offers a highly organized way to describe discourse as a distinctive linguistic structure by using a rank system (Taylor and Cameron, 1987). It is also possible to see how the structure of discourse is related to that of linguistic and functional units to manifest dimensions of the social and cultural context. A particularly valuable contribution by the Birmingham School is the focus provided upon the patterning of conversational exchange. Other approaches to discourse analysis such as Conversation Analysis provide valuable insights by calling attention to specific features such as adjacency pairs and sequences, but they do not propose a general theory of discourse structure. The Birmingham School, however, provides us with a general description of exchange as a basic unit of conversational structure in functional-structural terms. This focus appears to have the potential to assist this research project by drawing attention to patterns of discourse with which affordances can be associated and identified.

Although the model presented by the Birmingham School provides valuable insight into the nature of discourse, it does nevertheless have a number of limitations. According to Roberts,

Davies and Jupp (1992) a general drawback of the approach is that, while it appears a useful and applicable means of understanding formal and ritualistic pedagogic interaction, it is less applicable to the discourse of more casual conversation. This can be attributed to differences between the two types of discourse. Casual conversation is more open-ended and has unpredictable prolonged multi-slotted sequences that are longer than the three slot Initiation—Response—Feedback (IRF) exchange. Additionally, in classroom discourse, one participant with institutional power, the teacher, can be expected to plan or map out the development of discourse in advance. This is in contrast to more casual conversation where development is not pre-planned. A further difference is that, in casual conversation, participants rarely ask questions to which they already know the answers. In the classroom this is a common occurrence. Moreover, even in the formal classroom, not all talk necessarily falls into the patterns of exchange structures. As van Lier (1996) points out, the lessons observed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) contain instances of pupil talk that do not fit into the IRF pattern, for example, pupil requests to go to the toilet or whispered disagreement. A further concern is that as originally devised the Birmingham School approach sought the analysis of discourse in a mainstream British secondary school, not that of a foreign language learning classroom, the focus of this study. Discourse in a foreign language classroom might however be expected to differ from that in mainstream British classrooms. Accordingly, a direct application may not be appropriate, even for an analysis of the structural features of a formal EFL classroom.

From the perspective of this researcher, however, probably the main criticism of the Birmingham School model is that it seeks to reveal the linguistic structure of discourse but not the sociocultural processes of education. This is an important distinction. The linguistic structure of discourse is undoubtedly essential to social communication. However, analysis of linguistic structure alone is insufficient to serve the needs and purpose of this research. In this study, based on sociocultural theory, it is assumed that language use is a means to interaction, participation in sociocultural activity, and that it is through interaction between teacher and pupil that learning emerges. The purpose of this study, accordingly, is to discover the features of discourse that contribute to pupils' learning. However, the Birmingham School model with its structural-functional focus is not capable of illuminating the educational/sociocultural processes of classroom discourse. Does the IRF structure reveal the educational function of a move? Does it reveal how Initiation benefits pupil language development? How does the Response move by a pupil reveal the process of development? How does the Feedback move facilitate pupil learning? How do the roles and effects of these moves differ from situation to situation? The Birmingham model appears incapable of answering any of these questions, its rigid and structured linguistic approach an inadequate means of capturing the complex and dynamic nature of social interaction, incapable of providing qualitative insight into the interactive and developmental processes of classroom discourse. Thus it is necessary to seek an alternative

approach, one enabling the researcher to understand utterances in more depth, the educational purpose that language is used for, how teacher and pupil perceive each other's utterances, how they interact with each other and as a result how understandings are established and built upon as discourse proceeds. In other words, the focus in this research is content rather than form and it is necessary to adopt or adapt an approach enabling interpretation of the sociocultural functions of utterances in discourse. This also suggests that the unit of analysis should accordingly be a sociocultural one rather than a linguistic one and that a focus upon a qualitative analysis of discourse is needed rather than a focus upon the mechanical linguistic function of utterances and the linguistic structure of discourse.

The Birmingham School model as an approach does not acknowledge the importance of sociocultural and ecological features, or make clear the process of learning through mediational interaction. However, a valuable lesson for this research from the Birmingham School approach is the importance of adopting a systematic and comprehensive approach to the research process. An approach with a rigorous system enables replication and can help the researcher avoid being subjective and unsystematic. It enables the researcher to seize general features and patterns of discourse in language development with a greater degree of empirical validity than might otherwise be the case. In addition, such an approach offers the prospect of analysis of the whole flow of discourse, of identifying the genetic and emergent moments of learning in the totality of discourse. Rigorous systematic methods of discourse analysis, however, can only lead the researcher to a certain point of understanding. In order to achieve a deeper insight into discourse, an interpretative analysis is also required. Thus, an approach permitting the researcher greater flexibility, one combining rigor and system with interpretive method is called for. Such a method would seek to interpret intended meaning as well as assigning discourse into fixed categories. Additionally, such an approach would allow data to be presented as substantial excerpts of interaction rather than as isolated segments of function.

2.13.2 Conversation analysis

A different approach to that of the Birmingham School is provided by Conversation Analysis, originally developed within the field of sociology to meet the research needs of ethnomethodologists interested in understanding how social members make sense of everyday life and conversation. Whereas the Birmingham School sought an analysis of discourse specifically located within the classroom, CA focused upon the language of daily life, the talk of a community. As Roberts, Davies and Jupp (1992) explain, ethnomethodologists assumed that people use practical reasoning to produce orderly behaviour in conversation and that orderly structures of social interaction reflect the wider social order. Thus interaction was studied as a social process rather than as a linguistic one. In contrast to the Birmingham School the focus of CA is on the fine-grained detail of conversation. Daily conversation is more complicated than

classroom talk, being more casual with every participant potentially having an equal opportunity to control and monitor the discourse. This means it is much more difficult to construct a rigid model or models of structure. Thus, early CA analysts such as Sacks, Shelgoff and Jefferson (Sacks et al 1974) took a bottom-up approach and analysed conversation at the micro-level, seeking to observe regular patterns of *behaviour* and to draw underlying rules of conversation, in other words, to determine the mechanism and orderliness of conversation. For example, how people behave and how they cooperate in the management of discourse. Whereas DA attempts to analyse talk as a whole or as a product and then imposes an overarching structure on it, CA starts at the micro level, trying to understand how conversation unfolds in time, and first seeks to establish the smallest units.

The basic concepts of CA may be summarised as ‘accountability’, ‘sequential organization’, and ‘inter-subjectivity’ (Roberts, Davies and Jupp, 1992). The first concept, ‘accountability’, is used to account for the behaviour of people, that is, behaviour is designed always with consideration of how it will be interpreted and analysed by the other participant or participants. This is in contrast to DA which assumes that behaviour is determined by rules. The second basic concept of CA, “sequential organization”, provides a view of conversation as locally managed interaction. Each contribution to a conversation creates a new context and meaning is not inherent solely in an utterance. The last concept, ‘intersubjectivity’, seeks to explain the interactional character of conversation. Individuals come to a shared interpretation by means of intersubjectivity. This suggests that conversation is a joint construction in which all parties play an important part in the conversational outcome.

Two devices are useful in illustrating the mechanism of conversation and the basic concepts of CA, ‘turn-taking system’ and ‘adjacency pairs’. Sacks et al (1974) observe that conversation is fundamentally a turn-taking activity. Only one person speaks at a time and speaker change recurs. Conversation is then to be perceived as a ‘generative mechanism’ (Eggins and Slade 1998, p25), one enabling people to recognise when to transfer the role of speaker and also to recognise who the next speaker is. In this sense, turn taking is very systematic with turn allocation determined locally as conversation proceeds. This is in contrast to discourse analysis such as that of the Birmingham School approach that urges there is a structure into which all utterances fall. Sacks et al (1974) point out that turn allocation cannot be decided in advance. It must be continuously negotiated at each turn. In other words, conversation is an infinitely ‘generative turn-taking machine’ seeking to avoid a lapse in conversation (Eggins and Slade 1998 p27). The notion of ‘adjacency pairs’ explains how the turn-taking mechanism works. In some sequences such as question and answer, the occurrence of a second turn can be explained by the first turn, owing to relatedness between the two turns. Conversation sequences that have relatedness between adjacent utterances are termed adjacency pairs. They function to allocate

the next turn and to exit from the current turn. Sequences longer than adjacency pairs, longer than two turns, have also been identified.

For the researcher CA has the potential to make a significant contribution to the research process as it offers a powerful way of viewing conversation as a dynamic creation of interaction between co-operating participants (Eggins and Slade, 1998). As Schegloff (1981) states:

The discourse should be treated as an achievement; that involves treating the discourse as something 'produced' over time, incrementally accomplished, rather than born naturally whole out of the speaker's forehead...The accomplishment of achievement is an interactional one... it is an ongoing accomplishment, rather than a pact signed at the beginning. (Cited in Eggins and Slade 1998 p73)

This dynamic and creative feature of interaction is described as contingency, and is a key feature in describing the nature of conversational interaction. Contingency is something that happens accidentally in a moment during a process. Van Lier (1996) provides a dictionary definition of contingency, as something "likely (but not certain) to happen", and "dependent on (or linked to) something else". As this definition contains the two contradictory elements of "dependency" and "uncertainty", contingency has both predictability (known-ness, the familiar) and unpredictability (new-ness, the unexpected). Van Lier further mentions that this dual aspect, of predictability and unpredictability, is related to indexicality (Pierce, in Bucheler 1955), meaning focusing attention on and connecting the given and the new. Thus contingency is defined as "what gives language first an element of surprise, then allows us to connect utterance to utterance, text to context, word to world" (p.172). And this has important consequences for the understanding of classroom interaction in the learning process. As Van Lier (1996) notes, contingency has an important pedagogical role to perform. For interlocutors conversation is both dynamic and motivating, particularly when compared to monologues and classroom specific IRF interaction. It may therefore be assumed that if learners in the language learning classroom are engaged in conversational interaction characterised by contingency, they are more likely to be motivated, more likely to contribute linguistically, more likely to elaborate their language use, more likely to actively engage in the classroom learning experience. It is then just such practice in the use of language that the language teacher should seek to encourage. Features associated with such conversation identified by van Lier may be summarised as follows:

1. face-to-face interaction
2. Locally assembled, (not planned in advance)

3. Unpredictable of sequence and outcome
 4. Potentially rights and duties in talk are equally distributed
 5. Reactive and mutually contingent
- (van Lier 1996, p169)

The above discussion of CA draws attention to a number of features of conversation important to this researcher. Firstly, there is the need to recognise that conversation is a social process, an interaction calling for the researcher to go beyond a narrow focus upon linguistic structure. Secondly, that conversation has a dynamic that may not fit easily with rigid methods of analysis. Thirdly, in seeking to interpret the classroom dynamic and the quality of the classroom learning experience the contingent nature of conversation is a deserving area of focus. If contingency occurs in the classroom, it is more likely to promote the learner's use of language and enhance the quality of the learning experience. Thus, for the researcher, CA offers an important focus and perspective for the analysis of features of classroom interaction.

Although CA provides the researcher with valuable insights, there are also a number of problems associated with CA. Eggins and Slade (1998) identify three drawbacks: a lack of systematic analytical categories, a fragmentary focus, and a mechanistic interpretation of conversation. The first of these, a lack of systematic analytical categories, is reflected in the fact that CA has not provided an exhaustive list of adjacency pairs. Additionally, CA has not specified how a turn can be recognized. Eggins and Slade suggest that it may be necessary to use linguistic categories to relate aspects of conversational organization to aspects of the organisation of language as a whole. This would then also facilitate the conducting of quantitative analysis. Although for the purposes of this research project it is not intended to conduct a rigid quantitative analysis, the categorization of each activity does appear necessary to establish empirical validity if this researcher is to claim that interactions in both successful and less successful classrooms are typically organized in particular ways. The second drawback identified by Eggins and Slade is that CA appears to have a limited ability to deal comprehensively with complete, sustained interactions. Sacks et al (1974) used only fragments of conversation to identify how social meaning is achieved. Other researchers focused on mechanical concerns such as the timing of turn taking. However, many conversations as well as classroom interaction are long and consist of sustained interaction over a lengthy period. Accordingly, CA appears ill-suited to revealing the dynamic interactive achievement.

Of particular concern for this research is the third issue raised by Eggins and Slade, CA's mechanistic interpretation of conversation. Such an interpretation means that it is not at all clear what achievements are to be revealed through the mechanism of CA. For this researcher it is important to point out that CA does not account for educational processes associated with

conversation, failing to demonstrate or reveal the purpose for which people make use of conversation. That is, CA does not focus on what is achieved, on how and what types of sociocultural activities are attained through interaction. In education, the purpose for which both teacher and pupil use language is to take part in the sociocultural activities of the classroom. For a researcher seeking to gain insight into language use in the classroom, this is a focus that cannot be ignored, a focus calling for the adoption of a method that both recognizes the importance of sociocultural activities in language development and facilitates their analysis.

The focus of CA is on social rules of conversational interaction, aiming at analysis of conversational behaviour in the management of discourse from an ethnomethodological point of view. It does not aim at analysis of the developmental process in interaction. Therefore it is felt to be an approach not directly applicable to this research. As a methodology, Conversation Analysis avoids imposing large structures on discourse and is concerned with local transactions. However, in seeking to understand the nature of classroom interaction, it is necessary to look at longer stretches of interaction in order to gain understanding of how learning emerges from context. A systematic categorical analysis to deal comprehensively with sustained text is called for in order to observe processes of development, to identify patterns of educational discourse that may reveal themselves to be more or less educationally efficient than other patterns. Nevertheless it is implausible to impose a rigid coding system to contingent conversational interaction and to identify the existence of a rigid structure. What does appear to be plausible however is, as suggested earlier, a combination of systematic analysis at the whole discourse level and an interpretative analysis at the local level. That is, first to establish a system of categorization and apply this to the data to identify patterns of discourse. Then, secondly, with each pattern to carry out a close qualitative analysis to discover and generalize those interactive features resulting in successful mediation. In so doing, concepts from CA such as intersubjectivity and contingency will be useful in seeking to understand the nature of mediation.

2.13.3 A sociocultural approach to discourse

A sociocultural approach to discourse is one in which the focus is upon the emergence of learning mediated by interaction. A number of such studies are presented below, each of which is felt by this researcher to offer useful insight into the development of an appropriate sociocultural methodology for her study.

Edwards and Mercer (1987) conducted a close qualitative analysis of L1 classroom discourse and activity to discover the process of joint understanding: how knowledge is built and shared between teacher and pupils. In so doing their focus was on the content of knowledge and the processes of communication. For example, how pupils offer their ideas of explanation, and how

they take turns at speaking. This is a sociocultural focus, one different from that of structural discourse analysis. The concern is with discovery of the communication process and how particular types of classroom discourse convey classroom knowledge. To analyse the communication process, Edwards and Mercer use excerpts from transcripts of classroom dialogue. They provide a column of comments to be read in parallel with the transcript in order to provide contextual features such as physical props, movements, activities and gestures. Then, in each excerpt, they identify factors that constrain or promote the communication process and subsequent knowledge development in pupils, and provide a detailed interpretative account of such processes.

In organising their analysis of the communicative processes, Edwards and Mercer identify several types of teacher control—teacher strategies—and argue that the extent to which a teacher controls discourse and content knowledge is the key factor in classroom talk. They note a number of features associated with this control process and compile a list of features of classroom communication, a list of teacher strategies. This is also a scale of teacher control with the extent of control increasing as the list descends. It is not an exhaustive list and, as the list is one obtained from qualitative analysis, it is not claimed that the hierarchy or ordering of strategies is precise. The list is as follows:

Elicitation of pupils contributions

Significant markers, e.g.

Special enunciation

Formulaic phrases

Ignoring pupils' contributions

Joint-knowledge markers, e.g.

Simultaneous speech

'Royal' plurals

Repeated discourse formats

Cued elicitation of pupils' contribution

Paraphrasic interpretations of pupils' contributions

Reconstructive recapitulations

Implicit and presupposed knowledge

(Edwards and Mercer: 1987 pp128-159; 1994 p189)

As a result of their work, Edwards and Mercer suggest that the process of education can be regarded as one of cognitive socialization through interaction, a process in which teacher control and direction are prominent. The basic process is to introduce pupils into the conceptual world of the teacher and that of the educational community, joint understanding between teacher and pupil arising through the development of shared frames of reference and conception established through classroom discourse. Education is a social and communicative process, its purpose to

introduce children into the culture of the educational community. And, in this process, teacher control has a vital sociocultural role to play. It is an inherent part of the process of formal education by means of which pupils are brought into a classroom culture of asymmetry between teacher and learner. Pupils learn the type of knowledge and the type of discourse inherent to their classroom community through such control. Additionally and perhaps surprisingly, Edwards and Mercer found neither a process of scaffolding nor one of appropriation in their study, no handover of knowledge to pupils. Rather, teacher control was found to hinder pupils from grasping the overall purpose of activities, pupil understanding a result of guessing at what seemed to be required. That is, teacher control was found to prevent pupils from achieving a principled understanding of how and why certain actions and procedures were appropriate or correct, others inappropriate and incorrect.

For the researcher adopting a sociocultural perspective of language learning, Edwards and Mercer provide valuable insight into both the learning process and the research process. They identify discursal factors affecting pupil development, revealing how classroom discourse carries knowledge and how teacher-pupil interactions may be characterised according to the degree of teacher control. These are insights into the learning process arising out of the use of interpretive method and reveal how such a method might be applied. The approach adopted was to take extracts from lessons and carry out an interpretive analysis of how particular types of classroom discourse carry classroom knowledge. Lists were then drawn up of the types of classroom discourse used to achieve varying degrees of teacher control. Each type was then described and accompanied with illustrative examples. It is an approach that appears to make a valuable contribution to the methodology of sociocultural discourse analysis, an interpretive method revealing of the pedagogical processes and how classroom discourse functions to establish or hinder joint understanding.

The research of Edwards and Mercer does however contain two major drawbacks. Firstly, their analysis is not systematic, as they did not adopt a rigid coding system for their method of analysis. They did not code or count any of the phenomena observed, claiming such coding was not related to their aim of study. Their prime concern was to achieve a qualitative descriptive analysis in order to discover the features of how knowledge is built and shared between teacher and pupil. As mentioned in 2.12.2 Conversation Analysis, such an approach can be argued to lack empirical validity. Secondly, the analysis was not comprehensive, the main focus being teacher discourse with little attention given to pupil discourse. A comprehensive and systematic coding system would have permitted insight into dynamic interaction between teacher and pupil discourse. As a result of this omission, the teacher's strategies identified are alone insufficient to precisely describe different types of discourse within the learning environment. The research

fails to demonstrate how different teacher strategies interact with pupil learning and create or hinder learning opportunities, one of the main concerns of this researcher.

Tharp (1993) and Tharp and Gallimore (1988) also examined classroom discourse from a sociocultural point of view. Unlike Edwards and Mercer who examined knowledge development in content subject classes, Tharp and Gallimore focus upon the emergent nature of the development of spoken language as a second language at the primary level in the United States. They were puzzled by the fact that schools failed to make use of interactive teaching methodology in which a teacher assists pupils to stretch their performance through the ZPD. Their assumption was that learning would take place through a process of mutual participation by teacher and pupil. Such an approach was felt to be more effective than the teaching pattern most commonly found in schools, that of recitation, assignment of task, and assessment of student performance. Thus, discourse characterised by interactive teaching methodology was described as instructional conversation and learning resulting from such discourse was viewed as assisted development and assisted performance.

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) then examined the discourse of instructional conversation and identified six types (seven in Tharp 1993) of teacher assistance to develop student performance through discourse. These are as follows:

Modelling

Contingency management

Feed-back

Instructing

Questioning

Cognitive structuring

(+Task structuring

Tharp 1993)

(Tharp and Gallimore 1988 pp44-70; Tharp 1993 pp272-273)

Using excerpts from lessons, Tharp and Gallimore revealed how these means of teacher assistance could be used to create a flowing interaction between student and teacher and also between student and student for development to occur. Their analysis was qualitative in nature, describing how the teacher provided fine-tuned assistance to pupils so that pupils could make more complete and elaborate utterances. Tharp and Gallimore did not adopt a comprehensive coding system in their analysis, their intent being to focus only on effective means of assistance and as a consequence they ignored other teacher actions. In their descriptive analysis, they did describe pupil responses and assisted performances together with teacher assistance as features

of mutual engagement, but they did not categorise pupil responses and performances. However, if learning is regarded as a mutual endeavour, it does appear necessary to invent a system to categorise pupil performances. Indeed it is requisite to do so in this research if learning is assumed to emerge from affordances arising as a result of interaction between the environment, for example teacher assistance, and pupil perception. It is also necessary to apply categories more rigidly to all utterances to identify the precise nature of affordances: how things interact in totality and become affordances. Depending on context and situation, the same means of assistance may not turn out to be helpful. Tharp and Gallimore's work, as well as that of Edwards and Mercer, give direction to this research, offering suggestions for a system of categorisation. However, in order to capture the complex nature of affordances, it is necessary to adopt a more rigorous and comprehensive system of categorization.

In seeking to develop a system of categorisation the work of Johnson (1995) calls attention to the importance of learning opportunities. Johnson examined EFL and ESL classroom discourse to identify patterns of communication on the assumption that communicative patterns can both foster and constrain student opportunities for participation, opportunities that shape language use and development. Johnson tried to determine how teachers use language to control classroom communication, how students respond to teacher use of language, and how patterns of communication create opportunities for student use of language. She provides two excerpts to describe two contrasting patterns of classroom communication: one of tightly controlled interaction, the other a spontaneous pattern of interaction in which interaction is mutually constructed by the teacher and the students. She also provides a descriptive analysis of the flow of discourse to illustrate how the teacher makes use of different strategies and how students participate. Unlike the work of Edwards and Mercer, and that of Tharp, Johnson does not attempt to create an organising treatment of the data to describe types of communication observed. Nevertheless, by using excerpts she explains how certain types of teacher language use offer opportunities in which students are encouraged to initiate questions, to control the topic of discussion and to self-select when to participate. In this way she reveals how teacher language use can create opportunities for students to assume more active roles in the learning process.

Jarvis and Robinson (1997) provide a further approach to the analysis of classroom discourse. Examining the responsive use of language by teachers, they sought to identify pedagogic functions and patterns of functions in the discourse of lexis development. Using transcribed data from a primary EFL classroom in which a class review previously taught vocabulary, they adopt pedagogic functions of teacher utterances as their unit of analysis. The functions identified are as follows:

- A. Show acceptance of pupils' utterances
- B. Model language
- C. Give clues
- D. Develop, elaborate, build-up the discourse
- E. Clarify understanding, task, purposes, principles
- F. Disconfirm, reject, rebuke

After assigning pedagogic functions to teacher utterances, Jarvis and Robinson identify a Focus, Build, Summarise pattern of discourse, a pattern larger than a two or three-part IRF exchange (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). The pattern reflects teacher responsiveness to pupils, a responsiveness that enables the teacher to appropriate pupil utterances by using what pupils say and to build on it, the result being a meaning shared by both teacher and pupils.

Jarvis and Robinson's study differs from the studies mentioned previously in that they established a distinctive unit of analysis and devised a more rigorous coding system. As a result they are able to identify and present larger discourse patterns that provide a means to support learning. Such an approach appears relevant to this research project in terms of the systematicity in coding and identification of discourse patterns. As Jarvis and Robinson's focus is the teacher's pedagogic role (responsiveness) in discourse in lexical development, they focus on only the teacher's functions and analyse only an aspect of lexical development. However, in this research, it is necessary to examine both the teacher's and pupils' parts as the purpose is to identify how they interact in creating affordances in a variety of pedagogic activities.

2.13.4 Features of context: beyond the classroom

As noted earlier, Edwards and Mercer (1987) suggest that the process of education is one of cognitive socialisation through interaction, one of introducing pupils into the conceptual world of the educational community. Such a perception, however, in drawing attention to the classroom as a community also alerts us to the existence of other communities to which both teacher and pupil belong, the need to view development as "total social and cultural growth" (Vygotsky 1978, p108). That is, our attention is drawn to the world outside the classroom; to features of culture, community and institutional setting that all impinge upon the classroom. The classroom does not exist in isolation from the world, and the world cannot be left on its doorstep.

One study of classroom revealing the influence of external factors on the classroom was carried out by Cazden (1988). Her main concerns were to examine (1) how discourse supports deeper student learning and (2) how patterns of talk in classrooms affect the equality of student's learning opportunities. In the course of the study a three part sequence of classroom discourse

consisting of Initiation, Response and Evaluation (IRE) was identified. This sequence, in which the teacher asks questions to which she already knows the answer, also defines a set of procedures for allocating turns and gaining access to speak. Thus, students need to learn these features in order to engage in and benefit from learning opportunities. Examining the cognitive process involved, Cazden appears to support a scaffolding model of discourse, explaining the importance of the first part of the IRE sequence, teacher questioning, as conceptualisation to guide mental attention to particular features of task. The last part of the IRE sequence is identified as performing the important role of reconceptualisation. A major feature of Cazden's work is her observations concerning differences in patterns of talk between minority children and fellow pupils and teachers. She reveals how cultural differences work disadvantageously in the exchange structures and themes of classroom talk. Importantly, pupils from minority cultural backgrounds were unaccustomed to IRE sequenced discourse, unfamiliar with being asked questions to which the enquirer (teacher or parent) already knew the answer. This placed them at a disadvantage in the classroom. Cazden's ethnographic and sociolinguistic observations reveal that such pupils' talk, grounded in their own culture, is not valued and may in consequence result in their being less effective in making use of learning opportunities available.

Cazden's study demonstrates that ethnographic methods revealing sociolinguistic features of classroom discourse are beneficial in providing a deeper understanding of the situated nature of classroom interaction, language learning and participation that are bound up with the local cultural context, macro factors outside the classroom. This reflects Vygotsky's view that development should be viewed as "total social and cultural growth" (1978 p108). Thus an analysis of interactive processes that construct learning opportunities in particular types of discourse in the classroom setting itself may not be sufficient to fully develop our understanding. An ethnographic analysis revealing influences from the wider sociohistorical context is also called for. The importance of such an understanding will be seen later in an analysis of the Year 5 class.

Further studies revealing of influences external to the classroom were carried out by the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group (SBCDG) (1992a, 1992b, 1995) utilising ethnography, sociolinguistics and an interpretive approach. Ethnography was used to identify key events of the classroom. Then a tracer unit, text constructed by teacher and pupils, was established as an analytic unit and social and academic practices within the unit identified. Further, intertextually tied events related to cycles of activity were noted, making use of field notes and videotapes. In a cross-case comparison (1995), analyses of text construction processes within intertextually tied events in two classes were then used to examine the relationship between language practices, academic content, and inquiry processes.

The SBCDG (1992a) revealed that literate action and literacy processes are socially constructed through interactions and communications, creating particular types of opportunities in classrooms. They argue that what we see in pupils' actions is not an indication of ability but a patterned way of acting or communicating that students have learned from the opportunities afforded them in this and other classrooms. Their examination of classroom events accomplished through the discourse strategies of participants over time shows that types of discourse are not isolated objects in isolated events but rather intertextually tied to future activity and past events. Additionally, in illustrating a frame clash (Mehan 1979, Tannen 1979) over credit/grading, the study reveals how classroom events and learning opportunities are influenced by external decisions. SBCDG (1992b) in a review of several studies also revealed generic elements in the specific and situated nature of classroom life, how specific concepts in one classroom occur in other classrooms. The generic aspects identified are: (1) instructional activities can be cyclical and events are not isolated occurrences; (2) knowledge and meaning are intertextually constructed within and across events; (3) factors external to the class influence the class.

SBCDG (1995) also examined whether common processes and practices could be identified when teachers share common goals, philosophy and educational background (generic). They discovered that text construction and inquiry processes established are intertextually related within the cycle of activity and across subjects. Additionally, comparative analysis illustrated how knowledge construction is generic in actions and interaction, there being a set of principles for types of literate and social practices, for example, types of text construction, ways of interacting, and ways of organizing for learning. This suggests that learning is situated, not separate from opportunities available.

The studies by SDCDG imply that analysis of interactions in classroom events based on a situated perspective has much to contribute to this research in seeking to understand learning opportunities in the classroom and how learning is formed in particular settings. The in-depth analysis and over-time perspective provides a way to understand the intertextual and cyclical nature of activities within and across a subject as well as the emergent nature of learning. A valuable indication is that classes are open systems in which influences from outside influence life in the classroom. Thus, methodologically, analysis solely of actions and interactions of members of the group is of itself insufficient. It is also necessary to draw upon a wider variety of additional data sources, to recognise the importance of external influences that can both support and constrain patterns of observed life in the classroom.

Although the importance of an analysis of external factors on classroom life is acknowledged, this research aims at local analysis of classroom interaction, identifying the nature of interaction

and learning opportunities provided through interaction in the EFL classroom. Combining micro-level analysis of classroom interaction with study of the broader context will deepen understanding of pupil development grounded in their particular context. For this purpose examination of the influence of external factors on the Year 5 class making use of interview data is conducted in Chapter 16. Interview data is hoped to provide a source for understanding the influence of factors outside the EFL classroom for a deeper understanding of a problematic class, supplementing the analysis of classroom interaction. However, due to the limitation of the scale of this PhD study, a through examination of the influence of external factors was not plausible. It remains however an area of future interest for this researcher.

2.13.5 Summary and implications for the development of an appropriate method of discourse analysis

The above review of existing approaches to discourse analysis has a number of significant implications for this researcher seeking an appropriate method with which to conduct discourse analysis from a sociocultural perspective. The implication from the work of the Birmingham School (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) is that this research will benefit from making use of a systematic and comprehensive approach to discourse. For this researcher, seeking to identify the emergent moment of learning in the totality of discourse on both a shorter and longer time-scale, the need is for a method systematic and thorough enough to be applied to the entirety of discourse encountered. However, the Birmingham School model seeks the linguistic structure of discourse and is not meant to illuminate the sociocultural process of education, the intent of this research project. It is then expected that the discourse patterns identified in this research will not be confined to linguistic discourse patterns such as the IRF exchange pattern of the Birmingham School.

The value of a sociocultural approach to discourse analysis and also problems associated with such an approach is revealed above. Edwards and Mercer (1987) highlight the importance of the sociocultural process, the need to seek to identify how understanding is jointly constructed in classroom discourse. This has significant implications for this research, inspiring the direction of analysis. Additionally, their approach to interpretive analysis making use of excerpts to reveal the *pedagogic* process of classroom discourse is of considerable value, having much in common with the intent of this research. However, the analysis of Edwards and Mercer is not systematic and comprehensive, lacking a rigid coding system. Their list of types of classroom discourse is a valuable one but, for this research, a more comprehensive coding system is required to enable an in-depth analysis of how the teacher and pupils interact moment by moment. The work of Tharp (1993) and Tharp and Gallimore (1988) also shows the value of a sociocultural perspective, revealing the important role teacher assistance plays in contributing to the development of student performance through discourse. The implication for this research is the

need to recognize and seek to identify the nature of teacher assistance in discourse. In so doing the list of types of teacher assistance identified may be of great relevance in categorizing teacher discourse. However, the work of Tharp and Gallimore also implies the need to create a comprehensive system of categories to be applied to all utterances by both teacher and pupil in order to more fully illuminate the emergence of learning.

Further implications arise from the work of Johnson (1995) and Jarvis and Robinson (1997). Johnson's study illustrates how certain types of teacher language use create learning opportunities for pupils. However, it is Jarvis and Robinson's study (1997) that has significant implications for this research. Their creation of a distinctive unit of analysis and a rigorous coding system stands in contrast to the other studies discussed above and reveals how an appropriate method may be devised to investigate the classroom dynamic. It is intended to develop an equally systematic coding scheme for this research. Another contribution from Jarvis and Robinsons' study is their identification of discourse patterns, the educational pattern, larger than the IRF exchange pattern. This research benefits significantly from their in-depth systematic analysis, focusing on the educational process. However, in this research it is hoped to develop a more comprehensive coding system able to incorporate both teacher and pupil utterances and to use this on a larger body of data.

Lastly, the work of Cazden (1988) and that of SBCDG (1992a, 1992b and 1995) indicates the need to look beyond the classroom in order to fully illuminate the classroom itself. Cazden draws attention to the impact of culture and cultural differences on the learning experience and demonstrates the value of ethnographic methodology to gain insight into cultural context, macro actions outside of the classroom. The SBCDG call attention to how institutional influences impinge upon the classroom observation over time and to the importance of a wide range of sources of information, data from beyond the classroom to more fully illuminated the classroom.

Chapter 3 Research Questions

3.1 Research Questions

The research questions below have been informed by the theoretical frameworks of sociocultural, ecological and participatory perspectives. The context of the study is a primary EFL classroom in Japan; the intent is to illuminate the nature of interaction within the classroom and the associated opportunities for learning and language acquisition. The research questions are as follows:

1. What types and patterns of discourse can be identified in a Japanese primary school EFL classroom?
2. What affordances for participation are offered to pupils by the discourse patterns identified?
 - 2.1 What kinds of affordances are provided?
 - 2.2 How are affordances provided?
 - 2.3 How do pupils make use of the different kinds of affordances?
3. Does the concept of “participation” (Rogoff, 1990; Sfard, 1998) provide a means of
 - 3.1 illuminating teaching and learning within the primary EFL classroom?
 - 3.2 informing future practice within the EFL classroom?

3.2 Research Design

In order to answer the research questions stated above, the following methodology has been adopted. Reflecting the main aim of this research, analysis of classroom interaction and language development, the core methodology employed is discourse analysis based on the theoretical frameworks of sociocultural theory, participation theory and an ecological perspective. All of these fall within a participatory metaphor perspective of learning and have been discussed in Chapter 2. Common to all of the different perspectives that together come within the participatory metaphor is the belief that learning is a social process involving participation within a community. Thus, sociocultural theory explains that human learning takes place socially through interaction during engagement in sociocultural activities. Participation theory goes one step further in that it defines learning and participation as one and the same thing, that is, learning is not something that can be separated from participation, it is the act of participation itself. In seeking to understand this interactive and emergent process of learning, an ecological perspective provides a valuable emphasis upon context and ecology as well as

providing the concept of “affordances”, a means by which the researcher might interpret the interactive nature of participation and the learning process.

In this study, these theoretical insights can be interpreted as follows: the classroom represents the sociocultural community, the context and ecology in which learning occurs; learning itself can be said to occur when pupil participation within the classroom environment evolves, that is, the changing nature of participation within the sociocultural community is itself a demonstration that learning is occurring. Within the EFL context of a Japanese primary classroom this is interpreted to mean increasing *engagement* by pupils in language learning activities in the classroom community and increasing *levels* of language use; affordances are those opportunities for learning/participation arising out of the classroom context, the sociocultural community in which teacher and pupils interact and participate.

In order to identify and interpret this interactive sociocultural process, a method of discourse analysis with a focus upon social interaction within the classroom context has been devised and adopted. The method adopted is outlined in Chapter 6 and the coding system developed to accompany the methodology is explained in Chapter 7. In Chapter 8, the coded data obtained from the classroom is quantitatively described to provide a broader picture of the totality of the classroom discourse and nature of the discourse. In Section 2 from Chapter 9 to Chapter 13, the data is qualitatively analysed using the concept of “affordances” in order to gain insight into the interactive nature of the process of teaching and learning.

It is perhaps important at this stage to note that the study as initially devised was intended to compare the longitudinal development of two groups of pupils, a Year 3 group and a Year 5 group. Thus data was taken from the two groups. However, when data collection began, it was soon revealed that the Year 5 class had discipline problems and the teachers had difficulty in conducting lessons. In addition, regular lessons in the Year 5 class were frequently cancelled to use the time to prepare for school events. Thus the data collected from the Year 5 class was insufficient in quantity and presented a significantly different type of discourse from that of the Year 3 data. This made the original intention of conducting a cross-sectional study impossible to carry out. Instead, the Year 5 data was analysed as a separate case and is presented in Section 3 chapters 14, 15, 16 and 17. Nevertheless, in the qualitative analysis of the Year 5 class, the scheme of affordances devised to analyse the Year 3 data is employed, providing a valuable means to assess the method of analysis itself. Additionally, interviews with the Year 5 teachers and pupils were also conducted. This provided another dimension in the analysis of a difficult class, valuable insight into the different expectations each held for the class.

As the emphasis in this study is on participation within the classroom community, it does call for the researcher to give attention to wider forms of participation that might not at first glance be observable within the data. That is, it is necessary for the researcher to seek alternative forms of participation and their role and influence upon actual participation in classroom activities. To this end, interview data obtained from both the Year 3 and Year 5 groups and the teachers is analysed in Chapter 17, the focus being upon the influence of imagined participation as identified by Norton (2000, 2001).

Chapter 4 Context of the Study

This chapter describes the context in which the data collection was conducted.

4.1 Socio-historical context of Japanese education

4.1.1 Changing society and values

The work ethic based on Confucianism has traditionally been a core value of the Japanese. Although the society is rapidly changing, the majority of Japanese still believe that hard work leads to success. However, the recent sluggish economy, political change and technological advances have brought changes to social values and education.

Loyalty

Loyalty is a traditional value still prized highly by the Japanese. Work is done for the good of the company and society rather than for money or prestige. However, economic stagnation since the late 1980's has seen traditional loyalties loosened, most notably the system of life-long employment. This is particularly noticeable among the younger generation. About 30 percent of newly employed university graduates leave their jobs within three years. Large numbers choose not to seek a permanent job at all, preferring to live as "freeters", working part-time for short periods in lowly paid service related jobs. Additionally, unlike their parents, many Japanese today are increasingly reluctant to sacrifice their private life for the interests of their employer. (Kawaguchi, 2002)

Dedication

Dedication is another traditional value in Japan. Children and adults are taught the importance of time and effort in achieving goals, a belief that informs all of Japanese society. However, with economic stagnation, dedication is another value becoming less valued. As a result of recession, companies are laying off workers, despite their dedication, whilst the young and unemployed find it difficult to obtain employment. Additionally, Japan is today an affluent society and its youth the products of affluence, their world a very different one from that of the post-war generation of the 1950's. Values are changing. More people are choosing to spend more time with their families rather than work long hours at their company desks. Young Japanese do not favour the idea that the meaning of life is to be found in the discipline of work. They refuse to take 'dirty, difficult and dangerous' jobs. Increasingly, university graduates prefer companies that provide long holidays, little overtime and generous salaries.

Empathy and human relationships / cooperation

Empathy and human relationships / cooperation are considered to be integral parts of maintaining an efficient working environment. Japanese children learn from an early age that empathy, identifying oneself with others, results in human fulfilment. Children learn that they are part of an interdependent society. Thus at school children are divided into groups in which they help each other with their academic work and exercise self-discipline. Working in a group requires a high degree of self-control and provides members with emotional security and social identity. Within the group it is required to use certain channels of communication that fortify group interdependence and a sense of difference from non-group members.

Although belief in empathy and social harmony remains strong throughout Japanese society, this is being challenged by Japan's changing economic fortunes and is reflected in the demands being made on the country's schools and education system. Whilst in international comparative studies, Japanese children perform well when compared with students from other countries in subjects areas such as maths and science, it is felt that they lack creativity and problem-solving abilities, characteristics increasingly called for in a modern technological and rapidly changing world.(Torikai, 2005) Thus current educational reforms aim to introduce a less pressurised and more individualised style of learning, one with an emphasis on the individual and individual achievement in contrast to the previous emphasis on the group and group progression. Traditionally, for the individual to stand out is to risk being beaten back into the group. As the Japanese saying goes, the nail that sticks out is hammered down. However, as the needs of the economy change and the bonds of life-long employment are loosened, greater recognition is being given to individual ability and accomplishment.

4.1.2 Educational reform and introduction of primary English

The current educational system in Japan was established after World War II. The system stresses uniformity and homogeneity. It has a centralized uniform curriculum with the same content taught throughout the country, the intent being to achieve a uniformly high standard. However, in Japanese society, which school to attend is very important as it defines social status. Therefore there is severe competition to attend prestigious schools, schools that have close links to, or good records of getting students into, the most prestigious universities. Competition is severe resulting in a variety of educational concerns, most notably suicide, an increasing dropout rate and bullying. To address these issues and the needs of the national economy, the government has initiated a number of educational reforms in order to give greater emphasis to (1) individuality: creativity and hands-on activities as opposed harmony and uniformity (2) life-long learning: a shift from rote memorization to learning higher reasoning ability (3) preparing students to cope with and plan for change in the information age and a global society.

Changes are also occurring in the approach taken to the teaching of foreign languages and English in particular. In 2002 under the slogan “Strategy to Cultivate Japanese Who Can Use English” the Ministry of Education proposed a number of reforms to language education. That year, English lessons were introduced in primary schools for the first time although not as a compulsory subject. Listening comprehension tests in a centralised college entrance exam were also introduced. The Ministry also announced its intention to increase the number of native English speaker teachers working in Japanese schools, building upon the current JET scheme under which young graduates from the USA, UK, Australia and NZ spend one or two years in primary and secondary schools, assisting local teachers and giving speaking lessons.

One consequence of educational reform at the primary level has been the introduction of a new subject called a “Period for Integrated Study” intended to provide educational experiences of an interdisciplinary nature. The decision to select which type of activity is left to each school. One of the choices available is that of ‘International Understanding’ which aims to provide students with opportunities to develop an understanding of foreign cultures. For many schools this has been interpreted as an opportunity to introduce primary English into the school curriculum, English language teaching incorporated within International Understanding.

Although the introduction of English within the nation’s public primary schools is something new and marks a significant change, it is also the case that a large number of children, whether attending public or private schools, take private English lessons outside of school. Additionally, private primary schools have been offering English classes for many decades. Whereas it is the intent that cultural understanding rather than English language education should be more emphasized at public schools within the framework of “International Understanding”, the focus of private schools has been upon English language education, some claiming that English language education is one of the distinguishing and advantageous features of a private education. Thus for some parents who send their children to a private school, an awareness of and belief in the importance of English language education is a motivating factor.

A number of concerns have arisen associated with the government’s reforms. Although a reduction in the number of lessons and lesson content has been implemented, concerns are being expressed over falling levels of academic achievement. In primary schools there is particular concern with levels of achievement in mathematics, science, geography and the Japanese language. Additionally, students are viewed as being less motivated and interested in learning and it is argued that competition itself is no longer an incentive for students to work hard. There is a feeling that the traditional ethos of hard work and competition does not bring about successful results owing to the increased frustration the Japanese feel about the sluggish

economy and increasing unemployment. Reflecting the issue of unsatisfactory academic achievement, the Ministry has organised a number of official discussions to deal with the situation. It is possible that in the future more emphasis will be given to the ‘main’ subjects (mathematics, science and the Japanese language) at the expense of other subjects (including English) despite the pressure of ‘globalisation’.

4.1.3 A new trend: “Gakkyu hokai” or Classroom collapse

Many people still hold a stereotypical image of obedient students and a harmonious Japanese school life. However, Japan is dealing with the kind of problems common to many post-industrial societies. Today more and more incidents of “gakkyu hokai” or classroom breakdown are occurring throughout Japan. Januzzi and Mulvey (2001) describe “gakkyu hokai” as a phenomenon in which the students rebel against their teacher and further instruction becomes impossible. According to Tachi (quoted in Januzzi and Mulvey, 2001), a few dominant students in a class decide, for whatever reason, that they dislike a particular teacher. Suddenly, due to peer-pressure, all the pupils in the class feel they have to dislike the teacher. The entire class ignore or even attack that teacher. As such incidents are regarded as shameful for the teacher, the teacher may keep quiet about the problem. This situation is compounded by the lack of a peer-support network in many schools. It is said that “gakkyu hokai” is different from truancy, disobedience, bullying and violent misbehaviour, as these traditional problems are individual and isolated incidents whereas “gakkyu hokai” is the action of an entire class. Additionally, “gakkyu hokai” is not limited to schools in lower socioeconomic areas but can be found in all schools and is increasingly found in primary as well as secondary schools. Although the problem is now being discussed, there appears to be no clear solution. Januzzi and Mulvey (2001) report that both Japanese teachers and native English speaker teachers assigned to teach English are subject to “gakkyu hokai”.

The school in which data collection was carried out during this study is a private school that, in comparison to the majority of other Japanese schools, has a more flexible policy regarding the provision of education emphasising individual creativity and intensive English language education. However, as the description of the school in the following section indicates, it is not removed from the general socio-historical context of Japanese education. In particular, the problem of the Year 5 class appears to be a typical case of “gakkyu hokai” or classroom collapse.

4.2 The School

Data collection was carried out at a medium sized private co-educational school in a medium sized city in central Japan. As is the case with the many private schools found throughout Japan, the pupils attending the school come from relatively affluent backgrounds, though many parents

do make considerable sacrifices to send their children to the school.

The school offers two different educational programmes, an immersion programme and a regular programme, with students enrolling in one or other of these when they first enter the school. This study is concerned with the second of these, the regular programme. Unlike the immersion programme in which extensive use is made of English as a medium of instruction throughout the school day, the regular programme follows the standard curriculum of all Japanese primary schools with all lessons being conducted in Japanese. The difference is that the school gives emphasis to the teaching of English as a foreign language at the primary level, something not included on the curriculum of most primary schools in Japan, but something increasingly called for by parents and educators alike. All data in this study is therefore collected from pupils attending the regular programme.

According to the school website (no reference is given to protect confidentiality), for parents, one of the attractions of the school is its claim to adopt an open plan approach to education. The school's original curriculum for both the immersion and regular programmes claims the school takes a child-centred approach with emphasis placed upon the individual and the development of individual uniqueness. This marks the school out as different from the majority of schools in Japan where class sizes are large, sometimes 40 or more, and the intent is to mold pupils to fit into and identify with the group. Thus, in classes, it is stated that individualized instruction is offered to suit each child's needs. However, according to the Head of English, the school and parents are very aware of the overwhelming need for pupils to pass the required entrance examinations for progression to the 'better' high schools and universities in future, and therefore the school also adopts a transmission approach to the classroom as well, being very conscious of its academic standing and the need for academic success.

4.3 The English Language Teaching Programme

The school environment is one in which there is a more positive attitude towards and greater understanding of English Language education than is found in most state schools, which may have no English lessons at all. The school web page states that the regular programme aims to equip pupils with positive attitudes, ability and practical English skills. Towards this end international exchange programmes, for example, visits to the American School in Japan and home stay in America, are offered in addition to lessons in English as a foreign language. At the time of this study the regular programme had a total of eight teachers of English, three full-time and five part-time. Of these, five were Japanese and three North American. In addition, the immersion programme had its own teachers, mainly North American. Although teachers from the immersion programme did not teach pupils on the regular programme, the two programmes

were located in the same building. That is, pupils on the regular programme were in an environment in which they could observe English used as a means of communication and instruction.

The pupils on the regular programme had English lessons three times a week, each lesson lasting 45 minutes. There were approximately 20 children in each class. Whilst homeroom teachers taught all other subjects, specialist English teachers were employed to teach English. This is another feature distinguishing the school from the majority of state schools and other private schools. As Japan has no official English teaching qualification at the primary level, Japanese teachers of English at the primary level are often those with a secondary (junior high school and senior high school) English teaching qualification. This was the case with teachers at the school. The Year 1 to Year 4 classes were team-taught by a Japanese teacher of English together with a native English speaker teacher. A different arrangement existed in the Year 5 and Year 6 classes. These classes were taught twice a week by a Japanese teacher and once a week by a native English speaker teacher. Course books were used throughout the six years, with a range of activities being devised by teachers to supplement or replace the designated text.

4.4 The Participants

The study involved two separate year groups, a Year 3 class and a Year 5 class. The data from the Year 3 class was mainly used for the analysis of discourse and affordances. The data from the Year 5 class was analysed as a separate case study of a difficult class. (See Chapter 3 for the reason).

4.4.1 The Teachers

Two teachers taught the Year 3 class. One was the Head of English, a Japanese female teacher with about 30 years of experience. The other teacher was a young part-time Canadian male teacher. The Head of English has a secondary English teaching qualification and at the time of this study was undertaking a distance education course to obtain a general primary teaching qualification. She gives the impression of being a confident teacher, possibly reflecting her 30 years of teaching experience. Additionally, she appears motivated, her current course of study indicating a continuing interest in education and a desire to deepen her understanding of issues at the primary level. In comments to this researcher she revealed a concern for pupils and also knowledge of individuals even though she is not a homeroom teacher. The Canadian teacher joined the school earlier in the academic year this study was conducted and was in his second year as an EFL teacher. In the previous year he had taught adult students at a private language school in the same locality. In classroom observations and in conversation he gives the

impression of having a relaxed and friendly personality. Additionally, he appears enthusiastic about teaching and expressed an intention to pursue a career as a primary teacher.

The Year 5 class was also taught by two teachers, one a full-time female Japanese teacher with seven years of teaching experience, the other a part-time American male teacher. The Japanese teacher has a secondary English teaching qualification and a general primary teaching qualification. In the classroom she frequently makes use of Japanese and appears hesitant to use her English. In comments to this researcher she expressed concerns over maintaining discipline in the class. She is popular with the pupils. The American teacher works part-time and does not have a teaching qualification. He has attended a weekend ESL training course. Both in conversation and as a result of classroom observation he gives the impression of a gentle and calm individual. In the classroom he experiences difficulty maintaining discipline and does not appear to have a dynamic or commanding personality.

4.4.2 The Pupils

The study involves two classes each from a different year group: one class of eight or nine year old pupils in Year 3, one class of ten or eleven year old pupils in Year 5. There were eighteen pupils in each class. In the Year 3 class, there were eleven boys and seven girls. In the Year 5 class there were eight boys and ten girls. The Year 3 pupils had been learning English for three years and the Year 5 pupils for five years when the data collection was conducted. Some of the pupils also had an additional two years of learning experience as a result of attending an attached kindergarten. In both classes the pupils sit around sets of desks in groups of four or five though seating arrangements were sometimes changed by the teacher depending on the nature of that day's lesson and activities. In Year 3, the boys and girls are mixed together in groups, but in Year 5 groups are not mixed, the boys and girls sitting separately. While the Year 3 pupils are still firmly in their childhood, the Year 5 pupils are approaching their early teenage years and gender differences have started to emerge. In particular the girls are becoming more mature than the boys both physically and mentally.

4.4.3 Participant Profiles

Data was collected both on an entire class basis, on an individual pupil basis and on an individual teacher basis. Six focus children were selected in each of the two classes observed to conduct interviews with each individual pupil. The focus pupils were selected to be representative of each class in terms of their levels of English and their attitudes toward learning English. Selection was made based on teacher suggestion together with the researcher's observations during the first week of data collection. The intention was to obtain data from three pairs of pupils representative of pupils with a) a high level of English, b) a middle level of English and c) a low level of English. However, the school would not allow pupils with a low

level of English to be chosen as focus pupils. As a result, three pairs of pupils in each of the two year groups were selected, one pair with a high level of English and two pairs with a middle level of English. Profiles of the pupils selected are contained in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 below and profiles of the teachers in Table 4.3. The names allocated to the pupils and the teachers are pseudonyms chosen by the researcher.

Table 4.1 Profiles of Year 3 Focus Pupils

Level	Names	Profile
Pair 1 High	Sachiko (girl)	Has the strongest English in the class with a very positive attitude towards English. However, in other subjects she is not particularly strong. Takes private lessons. Tries to communicate in English.
	Kumiko (girl)	Strong English. Strong minded child. Her mother is very keen on the girl's education and she takes private lessons in Mathematics, Japanese, Science and other subjects.
Pair 2 Middle	Misaki (girl)	Good English with a positive attitude to English. However, not as good as the other three girls and slower in learning. Quiet but has a positive attitude to English and active in the class, frequently raising her hand. Does not try and challenge new things as hard as Sachiko or Kumiko. Does not take private lessons. Favourite subjects: English and computing.
	Tomoko (girl)	Very good English with a positive attitude to English. Quiet and shy. Learns quickly. Does not take private lessons. Favourite subjects: English and music.
Pair 3 Middle	Tomoya (boy)	Good English. Playful class clown. Attention seeker. Not very cooperative with the researcher during the interview as wanted to go out and play. Has got the best English among the boys. Does not take private lessons. Favourite subjects: Computing and PE.
	Masaki (boy)	Good English. Very cooperative with the researcher during the interview. Does not take private lessons. Quiet and less competitive. Sometimes teased by the other boys.

Table 4.2 Profiles of Year 5 Focus Pupils

Level	Names	Profile
Pair 1 High	Naoko (girl)	Strong English. Conscientious and academic. Articulates her opinions. Favourite subjects: Mathematics and English.
	Haruka (girl)	Strong English. Conscientious and academic. Favourite subjects: English and Computing.
Pair 2 Middle	Mai (girl)	Good English. She is rebellious and unhappy in the class but she gives only good comments on the lesson and the teacher in the interview. Has been overseas several times. Takes private lessons. Favourite subjects: English and Japanese.
	Nanami (girl)	Good English. Not as mature as Naoko, Haruka and Mai. Not fond of the teacher. Expresses honest opinions. Favourite subjects: English and Music.
Pair 3 (middle)	Takuya (boy)	Good English. Takes private English lessons. To demonstrate his solidarity with the boys group he does not openly express his opinions. Not as mature as the girls. Favourite subjects: Computing and Mathematics.
	Ryuta (boy)	Good English. The class clown. He expresses his opinions honestly. Not as mature as the girls. Favourite subjects: Computing and Art.

Table 4.3 Profiles of the Teachers

Classes	Names	Profile
Year 3	Mrs Makiko Takahara Head of English (Japanese)	Has been teaching English at the school for about 30 years. Possesses a secondary English qualification.
Year 3	Mr James Southwell Part-time teacher (North American)	Has taught at the school for a year. In the previous year taught adults at a language school in Japan.
Year 5	Miss Mikiko Ohta Full-time teacher (Japanese)	Has taught for seven years at the same school. Possesses a secondary English qualification and a primary general qualification.
Year 5	Mr Richard Mansfield Part-time teacher (North American)	11 years of experience of part-time teaching at the school. Teaches at home as well. No TEFL qualification. Attended a weekend ESL training course.

4.4.4 Ethical issues

The data collection was conducted according to the ethical guidelines provided by the British Educational Research Association (BERA 2000). The following is of special importance in conducting research.

- Research was conducted based on informed consent. The headmaster and the teachers were informed of the purpose, the reason, research design etc. of this research and all signed an informed consent form.
- The children were also informed of the research. However, permission from parents was not obtained as the school advised against doing so.
- The researcher tried not to cause disruption to on going school programmes as much as possible and not to cause stress or a negative reaction among the children in the course of data collection.
- The participants were offered appropriate guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity.

4.5 Types of Data

Three kinds of data were collected as follows:

- a. audio and video recordings of classroom interaction
- b. field notes of lessons observed
- c. interviews with teachers and pupils

Of these the data obtained from a) the audio and video recordings of classroom interaction occurring during normal lessons provides the primary source of data relied upon in the research. Observations drawn from this primary source have then been re-examined and supplemented in the light of the researcher's observations in b) field notes of lessons observed together with c) interviews with teachers and pupils.

Chapter 5 Data Collection

This chapter describes the data collection methods adopted in this research.

5.1 Audio-recording and Video-filming

Audio-recording and video-filming of normal classroom lessons was conducted in two periods with the intent to identify longitudinal development. The first period of data collection occurred between early November and early December 2002, the second from mid February through to mid March 2003. Each data collection period was a three weeks long database permitting subsequent:

- a. Identification of the types and patterns of classroom discourse (Research Question 1 in Section 3.1)
- b. Analysis of the process of teaching and learning. In particular identification of:
 - i) affordances (Research Question 2.1)
 - ii) how affordances are given to pupils (Research Question 2.2)
 - iii) how pupils use affordances (Research Question 2.3)
 - emergence of linguistic and participatory development
 - what enables or prevents pupils making use of affordances
- c. Comparison of the development of the two different age groups
- d. Collection of cross-sectional data on the children's development in order to approximate longitudinal changes in linguistic development and changes in the nature of participation.

A Mini Disk (MD) player was placed in the classroom to audio-record both the teachers and pupils. Initially it was planned that the teacher would wear a clip-on radio controlled microphone. However, when the method was suggested to the teachers, they perceived it as being too intrusive. Thus the original plan was changed and the MD player was placed at the side of the classroom. This was close enough to both the teachers and pupils to record utterances but not so close as to impinge on classroom engagement. The microphone was able to collect both teacher and pupil utterances with reasonable clarity, that is, to record discernable speech. The children were informed of the recording method. Although pupils near the MD player were initially conscious of it, they soon got used to the recording method.

The aim of video-recording was to obtain a record of both teacher and pupil non-linguistic activity. Classroom activity does not have to take only the form of language use. It can take the form of eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and so on. A video camera is of course

directional and thus selective in its recording. Consequently it cannot record everything in a class. Additionally, it is important that the camera should be fixed as moving around a classroom with a camera is likely to distract the children, interfering with the normal process of classroom interaction (Swann 1994). In using the video-recorder, prime focus was given to the teacher though data relating to most of the children was also obtained on the recording. The recorded data was transcribed orthographically with some prosodic information added. (See Abbreviation and Transcript Conventions)

5.2 Note Taking

Audio recording and video recording were supplemented with field notes in order to provide contextual information. Field notes were aimed to identify and provide information on the following characteristics of the classroom:

- a. The nature of classroom organisation: whole-class activity, pair work, group work, or individual work
- b. Types of classroom activities: choral work, games, stories, communication tasks etc.
- c. Topic, language, and function
- d. Types of language use and participation
- e. Classroom environment
- f. Any other contextual information

During data collection in the classroom, the researcher took the role of a minimal participant. While children and the teacher were interacting, the researcher avoided engagement with the children and the teacher. The intent was that they would become used to the researcher's presence and that this would in consequence cause a minimum of disruption. However, during breaks between classes the researcher assumed the role of participant as observer and engaged in informal talk with pupils in order to gather information on aspects of classroom activity in need of clarification at the end of a lesson. Informal talk ranged from finding out about the pupils' feelings towards and perceptions of particular aspects of activities observed in the classroom to general information on the pupils lives and interests. These informal conversations were recorded as field notes.

5.3 Teacher Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers to develop both a deeper understanding of lessons observed and also of teacher perceptions and beliefs. Interviews were conducted once in each period of data collection. In each period, interviews were conducted in the third week. These occurred occasionally as informal talk during breaks. However, as the teachers' role/activity is of particular significance in the literature of sociocultural perspectives

of learning (the expert's role in mediation and the notion of "guided participation" in sociocultural theory, the learning environment and the creation of "affordances" in ecological theory), it is important to obtain the teachers' account. Therefore more formal interviews that were audio-recorded were also carried out. Teachers were asked about their perceptions of various aspects of the children such as personality, attitudes, and progress. They were also asked about their perceptions and beliefs of teaching as well. In the first interview in particular, they were asked their views of the children rather than about their lessons as it was felt the teachers might find it difficult to talk feely about themselves to an unknown outsider. Additionally, they were asked about aspects of observed classroom practice such as why they took a particular action or their view on the degree of success or difficulty of particular lessons. The interview schedule is attached as Appendix A.

5.4 Pupil Interviews

Interviews were conducted with the focus pupils in pairs. The children were interviewed in Japanese and the interviews semi-structured. The interviews were conducted twice: once each data collection period. On each occasion this was done in the third week as it was felt the pupils needed time to get used to the researcher's presence. As with the teacher interviews, the aim was to find out pupil attitudes and perceptions of English learning. It was also intended to identify alternative forms of participation and exposure to English outside the classroom including parental support. The pupils were asked, for example, whether they watched English TV programmes, read English storybooks, or used the Internet in English. Another purpose was to identify the pupils' imagined communities.

Among the limitations associated with the interviews as carried out during this study are the following. First, the interviews could have been conducted at a better time. They were conducted during the lunch break, the only time available, as some pupils did not live near the school and had to take a train or a bus to return home immediately after class. Additionally, some pupils were busy with after school activities such as sport and private lessons. However, lunchtime is also the pupils' playtime. Thus it can be expected that some of the pupils were unhappy at not being able to play with their friends during interviews and this might have affected the quality and quantity of information obtained. Secondly, the interviews did not initially aim at revealing the pupils' "imagined communities" and information related to "imagined communities" was not specifically elicited. Instead, the data used for identification of "imagined communities" was collected from informal talks. Therefore it is felt the data obtained was insufficient to provide fully informed insights. As it was decided to conduct an analysis to identify "imagined communities" only after data collection had finished, a lack of data relating to "imagined communities" is inevitable. Data obtained from interviews with the specific

purpose of eliciting “imagined communities” would have provided the researcher with a better source of data. An interview schedule was developed and piloted at a different primary school during the pilot study. (Appendix B)

5.5 Summary Tables of Data Collection Methods and Collection Schedule

The following tables present the data collection methods and time schedule for each method of data collection.

Table 5.1 Summary of Methods of Data Collection

Method of Data Collection	Purposes
Audio recording	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of the nature and types of classroom discourse. 2. Analysis of the process of teaching and learning: identification of affordances. 3. Identification of longitudinal development through linguistic development and change in participation. 4. Comparison of the different age groups.
Video recording	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paralinguistic information to supplement the data obtained by audio recording.
Note-taking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contextual information
Teacher interviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of teacher perceptions of the pupils. 2. Identification of perception and beliefs about teaching and learning.
Pupil interviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of attitudes towards and perceptions of learning English. 2. Identification of alternative forms of participation. 3. Identification of “imagined communities.”

Table 5.2 Summary Data Collection Schedule—Audio Recording and Video Filming

	November 2002	Feb-March 2003	Total
Year 3 Pupils	3 lessons/week for 3 weeks 45min x 3 x 3 = 6h 45mins	3 lessons/week for 3 weeks 45min x 3 x 3 = 6h 45mins	13h 30mins
Year 5 Pupils	3 lessons/week for 3 weeks 45min x 3 x 3 = 6h 45mins	3 lessons/week for 3 weeks 45min x 3 x 3 = 6h 45mins	13h 30mins
Total	13h 30mins	13h 30mins	27h

Table 5.3 Summary Data Collection Schedule—Interviews

	November 2002	Feb-March 2003	Total
Teachers	30 min x 4 teachers x 1 = 2h	30 min x 4 teachers x 1 = 2h	4h
Year 3 Pupils	20 min x 3 pairs of children = 1h	20 min x 3 pairs of children = 1h	2h
Year 5 Pupils	20 min x 3 pairs of children = 1h	20 min x 3 pairs of children = 1h	2h
Total	4h	4h	8

Chapter 6 A Choice of Discourse Analysis Method

In this chapter an appropriate research method is developed, one drawing upon, adapting and incorporating features derived from the Structural-functional Analysis approach of the Birmingham School (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), Vygotsky's (1978) genetic method, ecological theory and the concept of affordances (Gibson 1979). The resulting method is one felt suitable to capture and interpret of data, illuminating the key concepts of this research, that is, a sociocultural interpretation of classroom interaction in which the processes of teacher and pupil scaffolding, affordances and participation are held to be vital elements in the language learning process.

6.1 Adoption of Discourse Timescales

Vygotsky's genetic method implies the need for analysis to be carried out over a period of time in order to trace the process by which pupils develop new learning while being engaged in activity (Vygotsky, 1981b). Ecological theory also implies that the emergence of affordances resulting from interaction needs to be understood over time as interaction proceeds (Gibson 1979). Consequently, for purposes of this research, analysis will be made over two time scales, a shorter timescale and a longer timescale. The shorter timescale will be used to observe microgenesis (Vygotsky, 1978), that is, to record moment by moment the educational actions of both teacher and pupil. These include, for example, teacher mediational actions such as the provision of modelling and clues, and pupil actions such as repetition after teacher modelling to integrate new learning. This requires that for the shorter timescales of discourse two sets of categories are called for: one for teacher actions, the other for pupil actions. The unit for the shorter time-scales is defined as Discourse action (See 6.2). The longer timescale will be used to observe pedagogic activities, that is, activities such as singing a song, playing a game or listening to a story. The unit for this longer time-scale is defined as Lesson Stage (See 6.4 and 7.4). By adopting the two levels of timescale, the analysis will seek to identify how teacher and pupil actions at the micro-level are related to change in learning and participation in the larger unit of pedagogic activities at the macro-level. (Cameron, 2003)

6.2 Unit of Analysis on the Shorter Timescale

A sociocultural approach argues that the social and interactional nature of human mental processes are best understood in the context of sociocultural activity. The strength of a sociocultural approach is its recognition that human nature contains many dimensions. Thus Wertsch (1998) suggests that an appropriate unit of analysis to be employed is one of human

action, a unit capable of capturing human nature in its totality. Acknowledging this complex reality, a sociocultural study should not seek to break down phenomena into smaller units such as language, behaviour or mental activity each isolated one from the other. Instead, it should seek to understand the fullness of observed phenomena, recognising that this is a totality consisting of many elements. A sociocultural study should therefore seek to understand how mental functioning is socially achieved and also recognise that this is a process occurring over time.

6.2.1 Discourse Action

The unit of analysis on the shorter timescale is established as *discourse action*, an action in which individuals interact by using language for the purpose of accomplishing an educational activity Cameron (2003). This reflects a major focus of this research, classroom mediation of learning observable in classroom discourse. Accordingly, the unit of analysis employed is that of discourse actions identified in the sociocultural context of classroom language learning activities. These are not only verbal linguistic units but also, at the same time, units of social action. That is, discourse actions whose pedagogic functions are realised through the mediational use of language. The intention here is not to categorise utterances in terms of the linguistic form of discourse as carried out by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) (See 2.12.1 Structural-functional Analysis (the Birmingham school)). Rather, it is to identify teacher and pupil sociocultural processes by means of language use, processes that enable pupils to develop their language and participate in a variety of language learning activities. Thus categories defined as discourse actions are those perceived as pedagogical actions realised by means of language use.

6.2.2 Two Sets of Categories of Discourse Actions

Two sets of categories for Discourse actions were created, one for teacher actions on the shorter timescale, the other for pupil actions of the shorter timescale, in order to reveal the inter-related nature of discourse between the two short scales.

In order to understand the process by which the human mind functions, human action needs to be understood as an interactional flow. Vygotsky (1978) suggests that cognitive development can be viewed on the timescales of ontogenesis and microgenesis (see 2.4.3 Genetic method). An ecological approach suggests that affordances emerge when the classroom environment and learners interact and there is matching between them. Further, an ecological view of classroom language learning suggests that the learning environment and learning opportunities are constructed as a result of dynamic co-adaptation (van Lier 2000). (See 2.5.1 Affordances) It is hoped to reveal this process of dynamic co-adaptation by showing the inter-related timescales of discourse actions, permitting insight into how change on one scale yields change on another by

making use of the concept of affordances. Thus it is necessary to understand phenomena on a timescale, to see how teacher actions on one scale interact with pupil actions and participation in an activity on the other scale. The ecological nature of such interaction and emergent affordances requires the categorising system of discourse actions be applied to both teacher and pupil discourse actions in order to enable qualitative analysis of affordances. (A detailed approach to analysis of affordances is provided in Chapter 9). Categories will be assigned to every discourse action in order to reveal this interrelatedness. It is intended making use of two sets of categories in this way will provide a thorough and exhaustive process of assigning categories.

6.2.3 Patterns of Discourse Activity

Although this research does not focus upon the linguistic structure of discourse, it benefits from the example of the method of analysis developed by the Birmingham School, a systematic and comprehensive coding scheme which can be applied to the whole data. For the analysis of discourse dynamics, it is necessary to analyse discourse comprehensively, that is, as complete, sustained discourse. Thus the approach of the Birmingham School is more suitable to my purposes than Conversation Analysis with its focus upon fragments of discourse. However, the drawback of the Birmingham approach is that their system is too rigidly organised. Classroom lessons may have predictable patterns but the classroom is also unpredictable, as it is after all part of the human world. Thus patterns to be identified should not be too stringent as each interaction for learning is complex, context-bound and therefore different, unlike the linguistic structure of discourse. Additionally, to identify the discourse dynamics of the classroom, it is necessary to find patterns that are not only larger than those of the Birmingham school, but also ones not as rigidly structured as exchange structure. The work of Jarvis and Robinson is useful here. Although Jarvis and Robinson (1997) did not look at the interrelatedness of how teacher language use affects student participation, they did identify patterns of discourse larger than the exchange structure of the Birmingham school, patterns capable of capturing the educational process. Thus the length of each pattern in this research varies depending on how mediated activities proceed. It is intended then to identify patterns in a similar way to that of the Jarvis and Robinson study.

After assigning categories to each unit of *discourse action*, it is then hoped to identify emerging patterns of discourse activity, that is, patterns revealing the nature of inter-relatedness among discourse actions resulting in the creation of mediated educational activity. These patterns of discourse activity, consisting of a sequence of *discourse actions*, are patterns of activity in which a sequence of discourse actions results in a particular educational outcome. (See 2.4.4 Activity theory) Each discourse pattern will reveal particular types of educational activities in which the teacher mediates (or fails to mediate) learning, creating (or failing to create)

opportunities with a particular intended educational outcome. (A more detailed account is provided in 7.2). Several of these discourse patterns exist within and together make up Lesson Stages, the unit of analysis for the larger timescale.

6.3 Unit of Analysis for the Larger Timescale: Lesson Stages and Lesson Steps

After the bottom-up process of applying categories to the data and the identification of emergent patterns, the next stage is to grasp the overall nature and tendency of discourse on the longer time-scale. In order to do so, the transcribed data already assigned into categories will be segmented into pedagogic activities such as Singing or Storytelling, these being referred to as *Lessons Stages*. Lesson Stages are further divided into *Lesson Steps*, such as Vocabulary Review, Drilling, etc. (See 7.4 Segmenting Lesson Stages) The discourse patterns identified earlier and comprised of a number of discourse actions will then be examined in relation to actual pedagogical activities to determine which pedagogic activities contain which discourse activity. This will be realised by conducting a quantitative description, showing the frequency of patterns in each Lesson Stage to show the relationship between discourse patterns and Lesson Stages. Any significant variation or changes of pattern or frequency will assist the researcher to determine which patterns call for greater attention and qualitative analysis at the next stage.

Chapter 7 Coding the Data

In this chapter more detail is provided concerning categories of discourse actions and how these are derived from the data. Specific categories of teacher discourse actions are identified and examples from the data provided. Similarly, categories of pupil discourse actions are identified and examples provided. Questions of accuracy and consistency of codification are also addressed (Inter-rater reliability). Reasons underlying the allocation of labels to discourse patterns—larger patterns comprised of discourse actions—are discussed and seven patterns identified and outlined with examples provided. Finally, ten Lesson Stages are identified and outlined in greater detail, again with examples provided.

7.1 Categorisation of Discourse Actions

As already stated, the units of analysis for use in the analysis of data in this study are discourse actions (Chapter 6). This choice reflects a sociocultural perspective of learning, recognising the social and interactional nature of human mental processes and arguing that these are best understood when observed in the context of sociocultural activity. From such a perspective human actions are concrete dynamic moments of activity, each bearing psychological dimensions. Therefore, as the focus of this research is classroom mediation of learning observable in classroom discourse, the units of analysis employed are discourse actions identified in the sociocultural context of the classroom language learning activities. That is, discourse actions whose pedagogic functions are realised through the mediational use of language. Thus categories are defined as discourse actions that are perceived as language-mediated pedagogical actions.

Discourse actions provide this researcher with a means by which to analyse the emergence of affordances and the nature of pupil participation (Chapters 9 to 13). Their strength as a unit of analysis is their ability to capture the ecological features of interaction and learning. As Gibson (1979) notes, humans as agents create the richest and most elaborate of affordances and it is humans as active agents that are the concern of this study, the teachers and pupils who have contact and interact with each other in the classroom and afford the behaviour of others (See 2.5. Affordances). Thus it is expected that the identification of discourse actions and discourse patterns, patterns consisting of a sequence of discourse actions (See 7.3 Patterns of discourse activity), will enable this researcher to uncover the emergence of affordances.

Discourse actions as a unit also facilitate analysis of learning as participation. Rogoff (1990) argues that the child develops through active participation in the sociocultural activities of a

community. She further argues that cognition is inseparable from social engagement and that child development emerges in the form of role transformation, the child's ability to manage an activity or activities within the community. This is achieved through a process of "guided participation". Accordingly, learning is not perceived as the acquisition of knowledge but rather as the mediated development of more responsible and independent role in the sociocultural activities of a community. Discourse action as a unit of analysis is felt able to capture and reveal participative moments and dynamics in this process of "guided participation". Discourse actions are not isolated units of language, behaviour or mental activity. Rather, discourse actions are units that reflect multiple dimensions of human nature in the form of social action by means of language use (See 6.2 Unit of Analysis on the Shorter Timescale). This represents cognition within a community.

The system of categorization for discourse actions was developed through an interpretive, exhaustive and recursive process. The first tentative categories were developed using transcribed data of a typical Year 3 lesson involving regular classroom activities. Transcribed utterances were analysed one by one all through the data in order to interpret the educational functions achieved by discourse actions. This was by no means an automatic category-assigning process, as it required interpretation of each action in each particular context. Thus the process was interpretive in nature. The evidence for such interpretation is largely the discourse itself; what a teacher says is followed by what a child says or does. In order to assist in interpreting this educational discourse, the researcher's own knowledge of teaching and learning was inevitably involved as interpretation required an understanding of language learning activities. The video data also supplemented the process of interpretation, providing visual information of the actions taken by teacher and pupil.

The system of categorization was constructed based on the work of Cameron (2003), Tharp and Gallimore (1988), Edwards and Mercer (1998) and Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976). However, the systems of categorization of these authors were based on data from first language (L1) and English as an additional language (EAL) situations, not the EFL context that is the concern of this study. Therefore, although the system of categorisation used in this study reflects the existing systems of these authors, adjustment was required to describe and permit interpretation of the nature of EFL learning and teaching activity. Such adjustment was needed particularly in coining the main actions of classroom language use in order to reflect the nature of EFL learning activities observed. The most common type of teacher action in the observed lessons was that of *elicitation* of language use, that is, getting the children to make use of particular kinds of language. Care should be taken here not to confuse elicitation as a category used in this study with that of elicitation as used in structural discourse analysis by the Birmingham School. The term *Elicitation* was chosen in this study because it does precisely describe the nature of the

activity observed. Of the other categories used in the study, category 2 *Framing*, 9 *Summarising*, 10 *Explanation*, and 11 *Evaluative feedback* were adapted from Cameron's (2003) system of categorization. Category 5 *Modelling language* was adapted from Tharp and Gallimore, while categories 6 *Giving clues*, 7 *Marking critical features*, and 8 *Encouragement* were adapted from the scaffolding process devised by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976). The remainder of the categories have been developed by the researcher in order to cover the full range of activity found in the Japanese classroom. The categories are presented below in two sections: categories of teacher discourse actions, and categories of pupil discourse actions. Once the initial system of categorization was developed, this was applied to the rest of the transcribed data. In the process of applying the system to the entire data, the system was recursively refined, making adjustment to the system as a consequence of examining data from different lessons and from within the same lessons. Finally, reliability was confirmed by making use of the inter-rater reliability check (See 7.2 Inter-rater reliability check).

7.1.1 Categories of Teacher Discourse Actions

The categories of teacher discourse actions used in analysis of the data are as follows:

- 1. Greetings**
- 2. Framing**
 - 2.1 Organization*
 - 2.2 Agenda management*
- 3. Eliciting**
 - 3.1 Elicitation of specific and limited information (individual)(Information known to the teacher)*
 - 3.2 Elicitation of specific and limited information (choral) (Information known to the teacher)*
 - 3.3 Elicitation of genuine unknown information*
 - 3.4 Elicitation of choral repetition*
 - 3.5 Elicitation of translation*
 - 3.6 Elicitation of singing*
 - 3.7 Elicitation of reading aloud*
 - 3.8 Elicitation of a question and an answer*
 - 3.9 Elicitation of physical response*
 - 3.10 Elicitation of volunteers*
 - 3.11 Elicitation of listening*
- 4. Giving instructions**
- 5. Offering a model to imitate**
 - 5.1 Partial modelling*
 - 5.2 Complete modelling*
- 6. Giving clues**
- 7. Marking critical features**
- 8. Encouragement**
- 9. Summarising**
- 10. Explanation**
 - 10.1 Rephrasing*
 - 10.2 Explication*
 - 10.3 Examples*
 - 10.4 Translation*
- 11. Evaluative feedback**
 - 11.1 Positive evaluative feedback*
 - 11.1.1 Direct feedback*

11.1.2 Repeating pupil form

11.1.3 Repeating, and direct feedback

11.1.4 Recast and direct feedback

11.1.5 Repeating, direct feedback and recast

11.2 Negative evaluative feedback

11.2.1 Direct feedback

11.2.2 Repeating children's form

12. Reference to the past

13. Contingency management

14. Giving genuine information

14.1 Agreement or disagreement

14.2 Opinions.

14.3 Personal information

14.4 Factual information

15. Confirming understanding

16. Confirming information

17. Singing

18. Reading aloud

19. Teacher-teacher talk

20. Nominating

21. Giving specific information

22. Others

7.1.2 Identification and Examples of Categories of Teacher Discourse Actions

In the following each type of discourse action is described and examples provided from the data. Some examples are shown in longer excerpts in order to provide context and, in order to signal the example within an excerpt, the example is presented in bold typeface. Additionally, abbreviations and conventions commonly used through out this thesis are also used. (For abbreviations and transcript conventions, see Abbreviations and Conventions).

1. Greetings/farewell

Language used by the teachers and pupils to greet at the beginning and at the end of the lesson. These appear as adjacency pairs, that is, a pair of utterances which are often mutually dependent, for example, greetings (Schegloff and Sacks 1973).

Example 1

TF: ok, it's time to start..are you ready?

Pp: yes. we are

TF: good afternoon

Pp: good afternoon

TF: how are you today

Pp: I'm fine thank you and you?

2. Framing

2.1 Organization

The category labelled organization, adopted from Cameron (2003), is used for structuring of the learning environment, the teacher giving instructions or information about the logistics of the classroom. This involves hardware such as the arrangement of desks or usage of a textbook (Example 2). The teacher also prepares pupils or seeks their attention and concentration (Example 3). When the teacher gives instructions to organise activities, the form is that of an imperative, a statement or an interrogative. If the teacher simply gives information, the form will be a statement.

Example 2

TT: now everybody, please take out your textbook.

Example 3

TS: are you ready?

2.2 Agenda Management

This category, also adopted from Cameron's (2003) categorization, involves the teacher talking about what will happen subsequently in a lesson and a task. Thus agenda management is concerned with task setting by means of giving directions or information about the lesson and a task. Agenda management occurs at the beginning of the lesson and each task.

Example 4

TT: today you are taking the speaking test. we will first practice for it. yes.

Example 5

TS: ok. now. let's practice for the test.

3. Elicitation

The teachers use various kinds of elicitation to get pupils to use language. By means of elicitation, they allocate actual tasks following Agenda Management (2.2 above). Elicitation appears during the earlier stages of a task as well as in the middle of a task to maintain direction so that pupils continue to pursue the desired objective. Eleven different kinds of eliciting are identified, each categorised by the type of response to be elicited.

3.1 Specific and limited information (individual)

3.2 Specific and limited information (choral)

The teacher encourages pupils to provide specific information, the pupils making use of previously learned and memorised materials, selecting from a limited range of answers made available by the teacher, or making use of more flexible and creative use of language. These discourse actions of the teacher are called 'display questions' as the teacher often already knows the answer. The form can be imperative, interrogative or declarative in form.

Example 6

This is a routine question asked at the beginning of every lesson thus the children know that they are expected to give a choral answer. The teacher points at the date written on the board while asking the class the question.

TS: **what's the date today?**

Pp: it's November 15th

Example 7

The teacher shows a picture card of a sweater as a stimulus to pupils and a nominated pupil has to make a sentence using the word on the card.

TS: next question is...ok?...**what do you wear in winter. what do you wear in winter.**
who knows the answer. **what do you wear in winter.** Kumiko.

3.3 Elicitation of unknown information

For conversational and communicative purposes the teacher asks pupils to supply information unknown to the teacher. It can be factual, pupils' own ideas, opinions or feelings. Pupils can use formulaic language for this purpose and choose among many possible forms which have been previously learnt. Also they can express themselves with more creative usage of language. However, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between *Elicitation of specific and limited information* and *Elicitation of genuine unknown information* in communicative type activities. For example in an activity where a teacher asks a question to find out where a pupil lives, it is not sure whether teacher already knows where the pupil lives or genuinely does not know.

Example 8

Miki: ((laugh))

TS: ((laugh))Miki. **happy?**

Miki: happy

TS: oh good good. ok. **what's so funny**

Miki: ((laugh))

TS: **excited?**

Miki: ha ha

3.4 Choral repetition

The teacher uses language to get pupils to repeat after him/her for practising purposes. When a new language item is introduced, the teacher uses repetition to consolidate the new language item (learning to sing a new song in Example10). Repetition is also used for reviewing previously learned language to check pupil understanding, to consolidate, and to increase confidence (Example11). Elicitation of repetition appears in declarative forms by saying a phrase to be repeated as a cue, and/or in the imperative, explicitly giving instruction.

Example9

The teachers are introducing a new song.

TT: **now. repeat after Mr Conway**

Shota: ((unint.))

P?: ((unint.))

TS: ok. Ready?

.....

TS: **child of mine**

TTPp: child of mine

TS: **what a beautiful name**

TTPp: what a beautiful name

Example10

TS: very good. **everybody. I feel scared**

Pp: I feel scared

TS: good. how do you feel raise your hands. Sachiko

3.5 Elicitation of translation

The Japanese teacher gets pupils to translate English expressions into Japanese when the new expression is a difficult one for the pupils or when they review the learned items to check their understanding. Frequently she uses the phrase, “what does it mean?” in eliciting translation.

Example 11

TT: ok. do you understand? **we need golf ball. what does it mean.** do you know?

Megumi: *yes yes yes*

Daisuke: *you are loud*

TT: we need?

TS: sport. ice-hockey,...what do we need to play

Miki: *I know I know*

P?: *yes yes*

TS: ice skate ball. Stick. Net.

Shota: *yes yes yes*

TT: **so. what does it mean.** Daisuke-kun. listen carefully. ok

Sachiko: ice skate. need ice skate

TT: **means, what does it mean. do you understand?**

P?: *she's asking the meaning isn't she?*

3.6 Elicitation of singing

The teacher gets the pupils to sing a song. Elicitation can take the form of explicit direction or simply a statement of the name of a song and playing a tape.

Example 12

TT: ok, now next. **let's sing Jingle Bells**

Pp: ok.

Example 13

TT: page eleven. **Who's that boy**

Pp: ((Sing))

3.7 Elicitation of reading aloud

The teacher asks pupils to read aloud. The teachers did so for various purposes. Elicitation can take the form of explicit direction

Example 14

TT: **will you read it? question part**

TS: [**read it**]

Kumiko: what do you-

TT: what is,

Kumiko: what is do you

TT: your, blood type

Kumiko: blood type

3.8 Elicitation of a dialogue

The teacher prompts students to ask and answer questions in the form of a dialogue.

Example15

TT: **Misaki-san, please, ask Tomoya-kun. Misaki-san please ask Tomoya-kun**

TS: [just ask a question]

Misaki: when.....when is your birthday

TT: [when is,]

Tomoya: my, birthday is August fourth.

3.9 Elicitation of physical reaction

The teacher elicits pupils' physical reaction. Elicitation is carried out using the interrogative or declarative form.

Example16

The class play a touch game. TS says a sentence. On hearing the sentence, two contestants representing competing teams have to touch an appropriate picture card on the blackboard.

TS: for example... ready?...**we need a soccer ball.**

Miki: ((touches a picture of a soccer ball))

Sachiko: ((unint. but explaining the game in L1))

3.10 Elicitation from volunteers

The teacher addresses the class and invites volunteers to provide information of a general nature without specifying what sort of language use s/he wants. Thus the situation is much more open-ended than 3.2. *Elicitation of specific information (choral)* in which it is clearly manifested what information the teacher is seeking. Elicitation from volunteers appears in the interrogative or takes the form of addressing the class with words such as "everybody".

Example17

TT: ok. **who knows the answer.** how do you spell mind

3.11 Elicitation of listening

Teachers elicit listening to songs, stories, explanation and their modelling of language use. Elicitation is carried out using the interrogative or declarative form.

Example 18

When the teacher introduces a new song, "Santa Claus is on his way", she elicits listening to the song.

TT: very good. well done. *the song says that Santa Claus is coming on Christmas Day. he is on this way.* wow. very good. **now at first listen to the tape**

4. Giving Instructions

This is used to give directions, make requests or give commands concerning actions the pupils are expected to perform. This is different from elicitation of physical reaction, as it does not demand a response such as language use in a task or activity. This also includes strategic advice. The form can be either interrogative or imperative.

Example 19

TT: after that. I'll ask you. **so listen carefully**

5. Offering a model

The teacher provides a model, fully or partially, of the desired language act to be performed by the pupils. *Offering a model to imitate* serves the function of extending pupils' current abilities by presenting a new model which pupils are not yet familiar with. The teacher provides idealization of the act to be performed so that pupils can imitate. Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) call this category Demonstration.

5.1 Offering partial modelling to imitate

Partial modelling is used for prompting pupils to speak and helping pupils to produce a correct utterance when they have difficulty. The pupils use the partial demonstration as a cue to complete the rest of the task. According to Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) the teacher "imitates" in an idealised form a solution attempted by a pupil, in the expectation that the pupil will then "imitate" it in a more appropriate form so that appropriation occurs.

Example 20

TS: who are your homeroom teachers

Sachiko: *yes*

Shota: I,

TT: **my**

TS: **my**

Shota: my..English

TT: **homeroom**

TS:**homeroom**

Shota: homeroom teachers

TT: **are**

Shota: Mr.....Yamamoto

P?: ((laugh)) *it's not Mr Yamamoto*

TT: **Noguchi**

Shota: Mr Noguchi and

TT: **and?**

Shota. Mrs Tanaka

5.2 Offering complete modelling for input

This serves the function of presenting a model which pupils are not yet familiar with. Complete modelling occurs at the presentation stage.

Example 21

TT: **ok. now. new question. listen carefully.. where. does he live. where does he live**

Pp?: ah::

P?: *I see*

TS: he: live-

TT: do you understand. I live in Nakano,

TS: **he lives in Nakano.**

TT: [lives in Nakano]

TT: ok. do you understand? let's say it together

P?: *I don't understand*

TTPp: he lives in Nakano

TT: very good.

6. Giving clues

The teacher gives clues in order to simplify the task and to reduce the number of constituent acts required to reach a solution. The teacher gives a clue so that the level of the task is lowered to the point where the learner is able to recognize and complete the rest of the task by themselves (Wood et al. 1976). Clues can be given as a piece of information in the declarative form or as a question both prompting language production that the pupils cannot otherwise provide alone, enabling them to produce an answer. Gestures and picture can be used. Translation can be used to provide clues. Partial modelling has a similar function, as after imitating the model provided, it may trigger the remainder of the desired performance. However, although both partial modelling and giving clues allow the pupils to stretch their abilities and build joint performance, modelling should be differentiated from giving clues because imitation offers behaviour whereas giving a clue does not. Clues are without doubt a form of help but they differ from modelling in that they do not provide the student with an explicit answer. The pupil has to think about how to use the clue.

Example 22

Pupils are individually working on a word puzzle in which they have to assemble jumbled English words.

TT: **for example if I jumble. Daisuke. your name like this**

Daisuke: *oh what's this. no I can't read this*

TT: **what can you do to make Daisuke. Because your name Daisuke is jumbled**
((unint.))

7. Marking critical features

The teacher provides information that marks or accentuates certain features of the task or the target language to be produced. The teacher provides information about the discrepancy between what the pupils actually produced and what they ought to produce (Wood et al. 1976).

Example 23

TS: yes I am. I am tired. ok? good. is he hungry?

Takumi: no I am-

TS: is he: hungry... yes,

Takumi: I am

TS: **oh. are you hungry? no. is he: hungry?**

Takumi: yes he: hungry.

TS: [he]

TS: yes he is,

Takumi: yes he is hungry

TS: he is hungry ok *once more*

TakumiTS: Yes he is. he is hungry.

TS: Ok. very good... is he hot?

8. Encouragement

The teacher uses language to encourage pupils to continue and to give confidence. The teacher also uses language to lessen the stress on pupils e.g. face saving purposes when a pupil makes an error (Wood et al. 1976). This may make the form of complimenting and praising.

Example 24

Yuya: my..*no no it's not right*

TT: *it's ok. let's try*

9. Summarising

As Cameron (2003) defines, summarising is the language used by a teacher to recap or (re)formulate (Heritage and Watson 1979) all or part of the content of the preceding discourse. It is also pointed out that the use of *so* often occurs and that the discourse topic changes immediately after summarizing.

Example25

After reading a story, TS summarises the story.

TS: so Minni likes the spaghetti. now Freddie likes the spaghetti

TT: [yes]

10. Explanation

The teacher uses language to explain the meaning of vocabulary, an expression, and pronunciation.

10.1 Rephrasing

The teacher uses a different way of expression to explain the same thing so that it is easier for pupils to understand.

Example 26

TS: ok. today's story is called. the circus is in town

P?: circus is in town

Sachiko: circus is in town

P?: [se: kia] town

TS: **in town means it's coming here..**the circus is in town

10.2 Explication

This is a direct verbal explanation. In the data for this study, the Japanese teacher explains in Japanese more difficult concepts of grammar or skills such as how to pronounce the 'th' sound.

Example 27

The Japanese teacher explains how to pronounce "th" sound.

TT: *that's right. when you pronounce the th sound. as Josh-sensei showed you, your tongue is between the upper teeth and lower teeth*

10.3 Examples

The teacher uses language, pictures or realia as examples to explain.

Example 28

Teacher explains three pronouns, pointing at himself, a girl and a boy.

TS: good yes. just watch me. it's easy. **I. she. he**

10.4 Translation

Teacher sometimes uses translation for explaining new vocabulary and new expressions.

Example 29

The Japanese teacher translates the first few lines of a new song after the pupils had just repeated them following modelling by the Canadian teacher.

TT: *ok. this song is about a beautiful name. everyone has got a beautiful name. yes*

11. Evaluative feedback

The teacher gives both positive and negative evaluative feedback. In positive feedback, the teacher often repeats a pupil's answer to show acceptance or makes a positive comment to show satisfaction. In negative feedback, the teacher makes a negative comment to show that a pupil's answer is not acceptable.

11.1 Positive evaluative feedback

11.1.1 Direct feedback

Teacher gives direct feedback such as “good” or “perfect”

Example 30

TS: perfect. wow. very good

TT: good.

11.1.2 Repeating children’s form

The teacher repeats children’s form to show acceptance.

Example 31

Sho: mother

TS: yes

TT: yes very good

TS: **mother. mother**

11.1.3 Repeating children’s form, and direct feedback

The teacher repeats children’s form first and then gives direct feedback.

Example 32

Yuya: lion lion

TS: **lion. very good**

11.1.4 Recast and direct feedback

The teacher offers a corrected form and direct feedback.

Example 33

TS: no.w where. where, where *where* did he eat. the spaghetti.

Sachiko: *yes*

.....

P?:house

TT in house

TS: **ok, in the house? the house.**

11.1.5 Repeating children’s form, direct feedback and recast

The teacher repeats a pupil’s answer to show acceptance.

Example 34

TT: what’s his name. ok. Tomoko-san. what’s his name

Tomoko: Toma

TT: **Toma. that’s right. his name is Toma.**

11.2. Negative evaluative feedback

11.2.1. Direct feedback

Teacher gives direct negative feedback such “not eggs” below.

Example 35

TS: yes A group, do you know?

....

Daisuke: eggs..eggs

TS: **not eggs.**

11.2.2 Repeating children’s form

The teacher repeats a pupil’s answer without any positive comments.

Example 36

TS: what time is it. who knows the answer...ok. Megumi

Megumi: it’s ((unint.)). nine

TS: **ne. nine?**

(It was eight o’clock.)

12. Reference to the past

The teacher refers to the past to help pupils remember the desired answer.

Example 37

TT: do you remember? *we did this before didn’t we.* who can read this. please raise your hands.

13. Contingency management

The teacher uses language to stop unwanted behaviour and behaviour disturbing the lesson. Alternatively the teacher focuses on positive behaviour and gives positive rewards or praise to reinforce pupils’ appropriate behaviour.

Example 38

TT: sh::::...excuse me... excuse me you are too noisy. we can’t hear. *it’s not a good behaviour to talk loud.* and don’t shout. *there is no need to shout in this room*

14. Giving genuine unknown information

Teacher gives his or her own personal opinion or ideas in response to pupils’ elicitation.

14.1 Agreement

Short response to express agreement.

Example 39

TT: let’s sing together

TS: **ok**

14.2 Opinion

The teacher uses language to expression their opinion.

Example 40

TS: ok. now. do you like the story?

TT: [wow. **Interesting story**]

TT: **I like it**

14.3 Giving personal information

The teacher gives their own personal information.

Example 41

Masaki: do you like hotdog?

TS: **yes I do. I like hotdogs.**

P?: wo::::

P?: *I thought so*

14.4 Giving factual information

The teacher states that information is true or correct.

Example 42

Hiroshi: *it's your turn isn't it*

TT: **yes your turn**

15. Confirming understanding

The teacher explicitly asks pupils whether their understanding is definite or not.

Example 43

After listening to a story

TT: **do you understand?**

16. Confirming information

The teacher confirms information provided by pupils.

Example 44

BG: I don't like tennis

TS: **I don't like tennis. this one?**

17. Singing

Teachers sing songs together with pupils.

18. Reading aloud

Teachers read a story book aloud for pupils.

19. Teacher-teacher talk

Teachers talk to each other to negotiate and organize various aspects of classroom activities.

Example 45

TT: and, he is very good. Hiroshi-kun

TS: **extra points?**

TT: **yes extra points.**

20. Nominating

Teachers nominate pupils orally and/or with a gesture.

Example 46

TT: a group. It's your turn

21. Other

Teacher discourse actions that are not covered by the other categories.

The above categories of discourse actions provide a complete list of all teacher actions observed during this study. They do however provide only limited insight into the classroom dynamic, providing little information on pupil discourse actions and the full richness of the interactive processes within the classroom. In order to obtain greater insight it is therefore also required to develop a similar categorisation of pupil discourse actions. This is done in the following sections, 7.1.3 and 7.1.4.

7.1.3 Categories of Pupil Discourse Actions

The categories of pupil discourse actions for use in analysis of the data are given below. Most of them represent pupil responses to teacher discourse actions. That is, pupils provide appropriate language use as required depending upon the types of language use sought by the teacher through elicitation. Categories 1 to 8, 12 and 17 complement the categories of teacher discourse actions, that is, they form adjacency pairs. However, they can be pupil initiated language use as well.

1. Giving specific information (Information already known to the teacher)

1.1 Giving specific and limited information (individual)

1.2 Giving specific and limited information (choral)

2. Giving genuine unknown information

2.1 Personal information

2.2 Factual information

2.3 Feelings

2.4 Opinion

2.5 Expressing comprehension and non comprehension

2.6 Expressing agreement and disagreement, refusal

3. Repetition

3.1 Individual repetition

3.2 Choral repetition

4. Translation

5. Singing

6. Reading aloud

7. Physical reaction

8. Eliciting information

8.2 Specific and limited information

8.2 Eliciting genuine unknown information

9. Request

10. Confirming information

11. Counting

12. Bidding

13. Addressing

14. Interjection

15. Discipline

16. Giving evaluative feedback

17. Greetings

18. Other

7.1.4 Identification and Examples of Categories of Pupil Discourse Actions

1. Giving specific information

1.1 Giving specific and limited information (individual)

Nominated pupils individually respond to teacher elicitation and give specific, predictable and limited information that the teacher already knows.

Example 1

TS: very good. what grade are you in

Pp: yes yes yes

TS: Kumiko

Kumiko: **I'm in the third grade**

1.2 Giving specific and limited information (choral)

Pupils give the same type of information as above but in the form of a class choral response, giving specific and predictable information.

Example 2

TS: what's today

Pp: **it's Friday**

2. Giving genuine unknown information

Pupils give genuine unknown and unpredictable information in response to teacher elicitation using their own ideas, opinions, feelings and factual information. Alternatively, pupils initiate giving such information without elicitation. Information is given by choosing among many possible answers which have been previously shaped or by creatively constructing answers, making use of analysed language. The following illustrate the range of information. Information the pupils provide can be sometimes tangential to lesson content.

2.1 Personal information

Pupils give information about themselves. This is given in the declarative form.

Example 3

Pupils play a guessing game.

Miki: do you like ice cream?

Masaki: **no I don't**

2.2 Factual information

Pupils use language to give factual information that may be observable in nature or general truth.

Example 4

TS: who is absent today. Daisuke

Daisuke: **well. Ken...is absent**

TT: Ken-kun,

Daisuke: **one is absent**

TT: only one?

Daisuke: ***Shota came to school but has gone somewhere***

TT: *oh I see.* Ken-kun is absent

TS: ok, thank you

TT: ok, thank you Ken-kun is absent. one is absent

2.3 Feelings

Pupils use language to convey how they feel.

Example 5

Miki: ((laugh))

TS: haha ((laugh))Miki. happy?

Miki: **happy**

TS: oh good good. ok. what's so funny.

Miki: ((laugh))

TS: excited?

Miki: ha ha ((laugh))

2.4 Opinions

Pupils use language to express their opinions. These are often given in Japanese due to the high language demand and the pupils' lack of language ability.

Example 6

P?: *he must be a monster. the planet of the apes*

2.5 Expressing understanding

Pupils express whether they have understood or not. It can be as short a response as "ok" or "yes".

Example 7

TS reads a story book to pupils)

TS: oh no I can't play with you. Freddie, ok? now. can't you see? I am eating spaghetti...ok? Freddie. And Minnie..monkey names

Sachiko: **ok ok**

TT: do you understand?

Sachiko: ***I understand all***

2.6 Expressing agreement

Pupils give short responses to show agreement, acceptance or approval of teacher or peer pupil offers, instructions, discipline etc.

Example 8

TT: no:w. shall we sing a song, Jingle bells.

Pp: **ok**

3. Repetition

Pupils repeat after the teacher or tape. Most repetitions are elicited by the teacher. However, pupils sometimes voluntarily repeat individually without teacher elicitation.

3.1 Individual repetition

Example 9

TS reads title of a story book.

TT: ok? good night gorilla

Tomoya: **good night gorilla**

Yuya: **good night gorilla**. *I'll remember that*

3.2 Choral repetition

Example 10

TS: very good. everybody. I feel scared

Pp: **I feel scared**

TS: good.

4. Translation

Pupils translate English expressions into Japanese. For an example, see teacher's discourse action 3.5 Elicitation of translation. Additionally, translations may be self-initiated by pupils.

5. Singing

Pupils sing a song. See teacher's discourse actions 3.6 Elicitation of singing. Additionally, pupils may quietly sing to themselves.

6. Reading aloud

Pupils read a text aloud. See teacher's discourse actions 3.7 Elicitation of reading aloud.

7. Physical reaction

Pupils give non linguistic responses and paralinguistic responses. For an example, see teacher's discourse action 3.9 Eliciting physical reaction.

8. Eliciting information

8.1 *Specific and limited information*

Pupils ask questions the answer to which they may already know. This occurs when the teacher requires the pupils to ask questions of the teacher or each other.

Example 11

After Tomoya answers to the teacher's question, "How do you feel?", the teacher elicits a third person question about Tomoya from Miki.

TS: what what question do we ask about our feelings? ((points at Tomoya))

Miki: **how does he feel?**

8.2 *Eliciting genuine unknown information*

Pupils take the initiative to ask questions. Some questions may be tangentially related to the lesson.

Example 12

In a guessing game.

Miki: **do you like ice cream ?**

Masaki: no I don't...

Yuya: **do you..hotdog?**

TT: do you like?

Yuya: **do you like hotdog?**

9. Request

Pupils make a request.

Example 13

P?: **one more time one more time**

TS: ((laugh)) one more time?

TT: next time. we will sing it again

10. Confirming information

Pupils ask a question for the purpose of confirming information that they are not quite sure about.

Example 14

TS: what time is it. who knows the answer...ok Megumi

Megumi: it's ((unint.)) nine

TS: ne. nine?

P?: **nine?**

P?: *really?*

11. Counting

Pupils count numbers to check their team's score at the end of a team competition.

Example 15

TT: now, let's count it together. how about A group. ten-

P?: **forty forty**

TTTS: twenty thirty forty

12. Bidding

Pupils bid for nomination by means of raising a hand, saying 'Teacher' or 'yes' in Japanese.

Example 16

TT: who are your homeroom teachers

Sachiko: *yes*

TT: yes please

13. Addressing

Pupils address the teacher to get attention. This is different from bidding which is a formal means to signal a desire to contribute to the discourse and to compete for the floor.

Example 17

Tomoya: **James-sensei** ((sensei means teacher in Japanese))

TS: yes

14. Interjection

A pupil breaks into another pupil's attempt to answer.

Example 18

TT: when. when is your birthday. when is Christmas

Sachiko: December twenty-

Daisuke: **[ah:: stop]**

Sachiko: fifth

Daisuke: [five]

15. Discipline

Pupils use language to voluntarily stop each other's unwanted behaviour, behaviour disturbing the lesson and misbehaviour that may lead to subtraction of group points if competing in games

Example 19

P?: *Dai-chan be quiet*

Daisuke: ok

16. Giving evaluative feedback

Pupils give both positive and negative evaluative feedback to each other in group work and class work.

Example 20

Daisuke: my English teachers are Mr..Southwell and Mrs.....Tanaka

Sachiko: [my English teachers are Mr Southwell and MrsTakahara] ((whisper))

TT: not Tanaka

Misaki: *that's wrong*:

17. Greetings

Pupils greet at the beginning and at the end of the lesson. This greeting is the second part in adjacency pairs. See teacher's discourse actions 1. Greetings

18. Others

Pupil discourse actions not covered by the other categories

7.2 Inter-rater Reliability

Inter-rater reliability is concerned with the accuracy and consistency of the system of codification. Sarantakos (1993) insists that researchers have to ensure that the methods of analysis used are stable, that is, the methods produce findings roughly the same each time when applied to the same data. He also emphasises that the methods should be representative, that is, they produce the same or similar results with different data. To check the consistency of the system of data codification used by a researcher (Rater A), another rater follows the same procedures of coding devised by Rater A to determine whether the result of coding corresponds to that of the researcher. In this way an inter-rater reliability check aims at achieving consistency in the application of methods of analysis in the research process.

For this research two fellow PhD students Rater B and Rater C (the researcher herself is Rater A) cooperated to conduct an inter-rater reliability check of the system of data codification. First, the coding system was explained using guidelines (tentative guidelines, which were eventually developed to become 7.1. Categories of Discourse Actions) the researcher had devised. Each of the categories to be used was explained and accompanied by an appropriate example. Then Raters B and C categorized part of the data, two pages of transcript, following procedures for application of the coding system contained in the guidelines. Finally, the result of their application was compared with the researcher's own coding of the same two pages of transcript, and comments and feedback were provided by Rater B and Rater C.

7.2.1 Reviewing the guidelines

During the initial explanatory session of the guidelines three major issues of concern were raised by the other raters before they attempted application of the system of codification. Concerns raised by the other raters related to the categories of teacher discourse actions only and were as follows:

Concern 1: *Inaccurate and insufficient description*

3.2 Elicitation of specific and limited information (choral repetition) and 3.10 Elicitation from volunteers

Both Rater B and Rater C stated that it was difficult to differentiate categories 3.2 and 3.10 from one another as in both categories the teacher addresses the class. At first the researcher could not understand why the two categories were confusing to the two raters. To the researcher, the difference between the two categories was clear: whereas in 3.2 the teacher seeks to elicit

specific information from the class and the students know what information the teacher is seeking, in 3.10 the situation is much more open-ended, the teacher addressing the class and inviting volunteers to provide information of a general nature without specifying what sort of response h/she wants. The confusion was cleared up when the researcher realised that she had used a wrong example for 3.2 and that it was this wrong example that was confusing the other raters.

Concern 2 *Constructs whose boundaries were not clear and possibly overlapping*

8. Encouragement and 12. Reference to the past

Rater B felt that the difference between these two categories was unclear, pointing out that the example used for *12 Reference to the past*, “do you remember”, could also be categorised as *8 Encouragement*. As a result of the discussion, it was concluded that the definition for *12 Reference to the past* was too broad and that the example used for *12 Reference to the past* should be categorized as *8 Encouragement* and *12 Reference to the past* should be restricted to more explicit utterances such as “we did this before didn’t we.” However, even this utterance can be considered to be encouragement.

Concern 3 *Representation of text in the transcript*

8. Encouragement and 11.1.1 Direct feedback: positive

Rater B expressed confusion over the above two categories, pointing out that the expression “*it’s ok*” provided in the example for category *8 Encouragement* could be interpreted category *11.1.1 Direct feedback* within the broader category of *11.1 Positive evaluative feedback*. However, on the audiotape the teacher says “*it’s ok*” using a gentle soft tone with a slight rising intonation, and this is followed by “let’s try”, prompting an answer. This was interpreted by the researcher, Rater A, as being intended to assure and encourage the pupil to further continue performance and accordingly was categorized as encouragement. Undoubtedly there is a problem here. If the utterance is interpreted from the transcript, a piece of written text divorced from the context and a live recording, then it is indeed possible to interpret it as *feedback* rather than *encouragement*. Thus, in order to avoid this type of confusion between category *8. Encouragement* and *11.1.1 Direct feedback*, it is necessary to provide more information in the transcript on features of utterances such as intonation and tone of voice, and also to include features of intonation in the definition of categories contained in the guidelines. Rater B also pointed out that the use of non-linguistic information, for example gestures such as nodding, would also help in identifying categories more easily. However, inclusion of very detailed description of intonation and non-linguistic information such as gestures may go beyond the realm of discourse analysis intended for this study.

Other Concerns

Rater B pointed out that whilst there are categories for teacher elicitation there are no categories for teacher response to pupil utterances. It was explained that, whilst categories like response and elicitation are commonly used in structural discourse analysis, the focus of my research was to carry out an analysis of the educational and mediational process of discourse, not of structural discourse. Accordingly, teacher responses were categorised according to their educational functions such as 5. *Offering a model to imitate* and 11. *Evaluative feedback*. With regard to elicitation, however, in devising my system of codification, it had not been possible to think of another word for Elicitation as the nature of activity in the language-learning classroom of the young learners is precisely that of elicitation, getting the children to make active use of various kinds of language (See 7.1 Categories of Discourse actions). Rater B also suggested that categories should express whether utterances are truly communicative or intended solely for teaching purposes. It was pointed out that categories should be descriptive and neutral at this initial stage of analysis. It is in the later stages of analysis and interpretation that such differences will be sought. One last comment from Rater B was that there ought to be independent categories to label emotions. This it is felt is covered within the categories of pupil discourse actions by categories 2.3 *Feelings* and 2.4 *Opinions* under the broader category of 2. *Giving genuine unknown information*

7.2.2 The result of the inter-rater reliability exercise

After explanation of the guidelines, Rater B and Rater C attempted to apply the categories to two pages of transcribed data. The researcher (Rater A) identified 42 categories. Rater B agreed with 36 of these categories and Rater C agreed with 38 categories, giving a reliability rate of 85% with Rater B and 90 % with Rater C. Both Rater B and C failed to assign three categories due to inaccurate description of the categories and wrong usage of an example for 3.1. *Eliciting specific and limited information* as mentioned above. In addition, Rater B failed to identify one further category due to lack of understanding of English learning in an EFL as opposed to an ESL context. As Rater B is from an ESL background she had little appreciation of the level of the pupils' English in the data. Where a pupil was supposed to read aloud a phrase "where do you live", she said "what do. you. live". It did not occur to Rater B that the child simply could not read the word "where" and thus this utterance by the child was incomprehensible for Rater B.

Other than the above, there were only two instances of different categorizations between Rater B's and those of Rater A. The first difference was, as mentioned above, the interpretation of "do you remember?" to which Rater B assigned 8. *Encouragement*. It was agreed that it is more appropriate to categorise this phrase as 8. *Encouragement* as Rater B suggested. The other difference is the interpretation of the phrase "where does he live" used by a teacher. After a

teacher asked Pupil A “where do you live” and elicited an answer from him, the teacher asked Pupil B “where does he (Pupil A) live?” Both Rater B and the researcher identified the first phrase of “where do you live” by the teacher as 3.3. *Elicitation of genuine information*. We were aware that it is necessary to acknowledge the possibility that the teacher knew the address of Pupil A. The disagreement occurred over identification of the second phrase “where does he live” by the teacher. Rater B identified this as 3.3. *Elicitation of genuine information*. However, the teacher already knew where pupil A lives, after having already asked Pupil A. Thus this should be categorized as 3.1. *Eliciting specific and limited information* and Rater B agreed with this.

Rater C had two disagreements. The first disagreement involved interpretation of a teacher’s utterance “where do you live” which was followed by the class repeating after the teacher, saying “where do you live”. Rater A assigned the utterance to 3.4. *Elicitation of choral repetition*. Rater C, however, assigned the utterance to category 5.2. *Offering a model to imitate: complete modelling*. By means of his action the teacher certainly provided a model to imitate. However, the main purpose of the action in this context was to elicit choral repetition to consolidate a phrase with which the pupils were already familiar. On the other hand, category 5.2 *Offering a complete model to imitate* serves the function of extending pupils current abilities by presenting a new model with which the pupils were not yet familiar. Accordingly, it is clear that in both categories the two actions are taken with different purposes in mind. The disagreement with Rater C arose due to the inadequate description of the two constructs in the guidelines. This led the researcher to further reconsideration and refinement of the description. The second disagreement was a minor one due to a simple mistake of omission by Rater A, forgetting to include category 20. *Nominating* on the list of teacher discourse actions presented to Rater C.

7.2.3 Issues Arising from the Inter-rater Reliability Check

Issues arising from the inter-rater reliability check are summarised as follows:

1. Accurate description is required to eliminate careless mistakes.
 - a. Use appropriate examples for 3.2 *Eliciting specific information (choral repetition)* and 3.10 *Eliciting volunteers*
 - b. Add a new category, *Nominating* to Teacher Discourse Actions
2. Mutually exclusive constructs are required for clear boundaries.
 - a. Redefine 8. *Encouragement* and 12. *Reference to the past* in Teacher discourse actions
3. More precise and exact definition of constructs is required.
 - a. Clarify the definitions of 5.2 *Complete modelling* within the broader category of 5. *Offering a model to* in teacher discourse actions.

language learning, the main activities are those of language learning carried out by means of language use. This is not to deny the existence of non-linguistic actions and they do certainly assist the process of language learning, especially at the primary level, and although the teachers observed did not make use of gestures very often, such non-linguistic actions will be used to assist in the interpretation of discourse actions. Nevertheless, the unit of analysis still remains language-mediated pedagogic actions.

Finally, a limitation of the reliability check. Despite the two raters' full cooperation, the check procedure did not cover all categories, that is, some of the categories remained unchecked. The categories of discourse actions are scattered throughout the data. It was therefore impossible for the two raters to go through all the data in order to make sure that all the categories were checked.

7.3 Discourse Patterns

After assigning categories to each discourse action, larger patterns were identified. As discourse action as a unit in this study is not perceived as a linguistic unit but rather as a sociocultural/educational unit, these larger patterns are also perceived to be sociocultural/educational in nature. According to sociocultural theory, learning occurs through mediational interaction. Thus, applying this to the classroom, a sociocultural/educational pattern is identified as an educational activity in which the teacher (and/or the pupils themselves) mediates (or fails to mediate) learning, creating an opportunity with the concrete goal of permitting pupils to achieve an intended learning or understanding by means of discourse actions and resulting (or failing to result) in successful pupil performance. (see 2.4.4., 6.2.3) Each discourse pattern identified contains a sequence of discourse actions each with the purpose of advancing pupil understanding and participation, that is, providing affordances to achieve the overall objectives of a pedagogic activity. Thus the boundary between patterns marks the beginning and the end of an activity that has as its goal, a concrete intended learning outcome. For example, an identified pattern may start with the teacher's action of elicitation of translation and end when the intended action of translation is achieved and teacher feedback provided.

Identification of discourse patterns was carried out by qualitative and interpretive examination of the data. To identify a pattern, evidence of teacher and pupil discourse actions was used together with the researcher's interpretation of whether an intended action was completed successfully or not. The patterns usually consist of both teacher and pupil discourse actions, as it is through the interaction of the two that learning/participation occurs. The number of discourse actions in a pattern depends on each activity and situation. Some may be short if an intended activity is easy to achieve. One drawback of this approach is that it can be difficult to identify exactly what the intended goals are. Thus it was felt appropriate to claim that an intended action

was an action observable by the researcher from the data and determined by the researcher's own interpretation.

Were this research project solely concerned with the linguistic nature of classroom interaction, then the work of the Birmingham School would have much to recommend it. The School's pattern of 'Initiation-Response-Feedback' (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) is one easily applicable to analysis of the classroom discourse. However, the focus of the Birmingham School is purely upon linguistic form, a description of the *pattern* of interaction, the form or structure of discourse. It gives no recognition to the educational intent. In seeking to broaden our understanding of classroom interaction and what makes for successful educational outcomes, such a focus is called for. An understanding of the educational process needs to go beyond a description of linguistic form, should seek to identify the educational functions and/or intents, associated linguistic activities (discourse patterns), and associated educational outcomes (successful or otherwise).

The main pattern identified by the Birmingham School is that of 'Initiation-Response-Feedback'. However, 'Initiation' is an insufficiently defined word if our concern is with learning intent rather than structure of discourse. 'Initiation' may initiate a short focused activity to practise previously acquired lexis. It may be concerned with reinforcement of grammatical structure. It may simply involve the teacher passing the time of the day, making small talk, asking the pupils whether the classroom is too hot or cold in order to adjust the air conditioner. That is, 'Initiation' can include a wide range of intents, which may or may not be educational in nature, may or may not be related to a particular intended learning activity.

Similarly, a term giving greater recognition to learner activity than the term 'Response' also appears justified. As used in the Birmingham School's description, 'Response' refers to a pupil's move in response to teacher 'Initiation'. Again, the concern is with the form or pattern of discourse. There is no recognition of what learning was intended or of whether the response was successful or unsuccessful in nature. In their 'Response' pupils may be taking actions for learning, efforts to achieve the intended educational activity complementing the teacher's educational elicitation for language use, for example, singing, repetition, translation, etc. Consequently, there appears a need to identify and interpret 'Response' not simply as a linguistic turn as the Birmingham School does, but to more specifically differentiate patterns in which pupil response (language use) is reflective of intended learning content and outcomes, can be regarded as successful or unsuccessful. Whether pupils' attempted language use is successful or otherwise is a major factor determining the nature of the next stage of discourse, whether further teacher intervention in the form of assistance (as opposed to 'Feedback') is

required and what type of assistance. However, the 'Response' in the 'Initiation-Response-Feedback' discourse pattern has little to say about what learning is taking place.

Finally, in a study such as this whose primary concern is with the learning process, it is felt that 'Evaluation' is a more appropriate term than 'Feedback'. The latter, 'Feedback', as associated with the Birmingham School, denotes a linguistic understanding of discourse whilst 'Evaluation' as used by this researcher denotes teacher reaction to pupil learning. The focus is an educational one rather than a linguistic one. Preferring the term 'Reconceptualization', Cazden (1988) points out "it often serves not to deliver a verdict of right or wrong but to induct the learner into a new way of thinking about, categorizing, reconceptualizing, even recontextualizing whatever phenomena (referents) are under discussion" (p111).

The pattern of 'Initiation-Response-Feedback' fails to recognise the content, the process and the success or otherwise of learning activities in terms of achieving the educational objectives set for a particular lesson, informing us only of the structural pattern used. It does therefore offer insufficient insight into the learning process. There is then a need to go beyond the terms 'Initiation-Response-Feedback' as employed by the Birmingham School and give greater acknowledgement to the educational intent behind discourse, the reason why a discourse pattern is being employed, its function, and to seek to determine the usefulness of a particular pattern or patterns in the achieving particular intended learning objectives. To understand the educational processes, learner outcomes and associated discourse patterns, terms more descriptive of these factors are called for.

As a result of examination of the data, a total of seven Discourse Patterns were identified. Although some of these, patterns C, D, E, F, resemble the three-part Exchange structure identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) as these patterns contain the term Elicitation, it should again be stressed that the identified patterns are not linguistic patterns but discourse patterns with educational functions. As explained in 7.1 Development of Categories of Discourse Actions, some of teacher assistance teacher is rightly to be perceived as the teacher action of *eliciting* various types of pupil language use. This derives from the pedagogic nature of the English language learning classroom with its ultimate goal of learning language use. Alternatively, as in patterns E and F which resemble general conversation, the teachers and the pupils are engaged in purposeful actions of *eliciting* information needed for further understanding of each other or lesson content. Therefore, although a pattern including the term 'Elicitation' may initially be confused with the Birmingham School labels, the term as employed in this study is used to describe patterns with a different intent. The seven Discourse Patterns identified from the data analysis are as follows:

Pattern A: Framing

Pattern A consists of several teacher actions of framing and pupil reactions. It occurs at the beginning of a lesson and each separate Stage of a classroom activity. At the beginning of the lesson, the pattern is longer and more pronounced than in subsequent occurrences. While some other patterns such as Pattern C start with one or two actions of framing, the framing actions are incorporated into other patterns as they are immediately followed by other actions such as eliciting information. However, in Pattern A the action of framing lasts longer and the pattern appears to be one exclusively of framing.

Pattern B: Greeting

Pattern B involves actions of greeting between the teacher(s) and pupils. It appears at the beginning and at the end of the lesson.

Pattern C: Unassisted language learning activity

This is a discourse pattern of a language learning activity that describes the following educational features and learning process. The intended learning is a particular type of language use, for example, singing, translation, or reading aloud. No secondary assistance is provided following the teacher's initial Elicitation. The learning outcome is successful and the discourse pattern concludes with teacher Evaluation.

Occasionally in Pattern C a stimulus such as a teacher reading a story or showing a flash card may precede initial teacher *Elicitation language use*. Most commonly, however, Pattern C takes the form of the following progression:

Elicitation (T)→Successful Language Use (Pp)→Evaluation (T):

1. Elicitation

- a) teacher *Eliciting language use* which may include any of the teacher discourse actions of 3 *Eliciting (3.1-3.10)* (See 7.1.1 Categories of Teacher Discourse Actions)
- b) pupil discourse action of 12 *Bidding*
- c) teacher discourse action of 20 *Nominating*

2. Successful Language Use

- a) pupil *Successful language use* such as pupil discourse actions of 1 *Providing information* or 5 *Singing* (See 7.1.3 Categories of Pupil Discourse Actions)

3. Evaluation

- a) teacher closes the activity using the teacher discourse action of 11 *Evaluative feedback*.

In the data when Pattern C occurred in association with a reading activity, the teacher read a story page by page (Eliciting language use) and this was then followed by pupil reaction taking the form of listening to the story, followed by a variety of pupil actions, for example, 2 *Giving genuine unknown information (2.1-2.6)* such as opinion in Japanese or English (See 7.1.3 Categories of Pupil Discourse Actions). Noticeably, the teacher provides no specific *Evaluation*. As a result, this pattern might be categorised as Pattern G Teacher talk, owing to its resemblance to a one-way transmission of information. However, as the teacher elicits pupil language use of listening and the pupils use English to comprehend the story and, as a result, provide their opinions and reactions on the story, it is more appropriately classified as Pattern C.

Pattern D: Assisted language learning activity

As with Pattern C, this is also a discourse pattern of a language learning activity in which pedagogic language use is intended. However, unlike in Pattern C, the pupils fail to achieve the intended language use after the initial Eliciting. As a result, the teacher is required to provide assistance to help pupil performance. Subsequently the pupils may achieve the intended language use or again fail to do so.

Pattern D is similar to Pattern C with the addition of *Assistance* in the middle of the pattern. *Assistance* is defined as an action or actions provided by either the teacher or pupils as a means of assisting pupils unsuccessful in achieving the intended use of language in performance following the initial teacher action of *Elicitation*. The pattern develops with an alternating mixture of pupil(s) actions for language use and various assisting actions by the teacher(s) and fellow pupils. Assistance may take a number of forms, for example, teacher discourse actions of 5 *Offering a model to imitate*, 6 *Giving clues*, 7 *Marking critical features*, 8 *Encouragement*, 9 *Summarising*, and 10 *Explanation* (See 7.1.2 Categories of Teacher Discourse Actions). There is no fixed order or pattern to these actions. The process is flexible, gradual and contingent and the teacher(s) adopts actions giving consideration to task demand and pupil abilities. Eventually pupils manage to use language successfully (*Successful language use*) or fail to do so (*Unsuccessful language use*) and teacher *Evaluation* is provided.

Most commonly, Pattern D commonly takes the form of the following progression:

Elicitation (T)→Language Use (Pp)+ Assistance (T)→Evaluation (T).

(As with Pattern C, *Elicitation* may be preceded by a *Stimulus*.)

1. Elicitation

- a) teacher *Eliciting language use*
- b) pupil discourse action of 12 *Bidding*

- c) teacher discourse action of *20 Nominating*

2. Language Use+ Assistance

- a) pupil *Unsuccessful language use*
- b) teacher (and/or pupil) *Assistance*
- c) pupil *Successful or Unsuccessful language use*

3. Evaluation

- a) teacher closes the activity using the teacher discourse action of *11 Evaluative feedback*.

Pattern E: Teacher initiated conversational activity (Teacher initiated discourse that can be either general conversational talk or concerned with lesson content)

Pattern E, and Pattern F which follows, have features associated with general conversation where participants seek genuine unknown information. This pattern, which appeared most often in non-instructional contexts, is always very short and measures of assistance do not seem to occur. This may be because pupil utterances are very short in nature or take a non-verbal form due to the pupils' limited English ability. As a result, discourse does not develop sufficiently to provide a teacher with an opportunity to provide assistance. It may also be the case that corrective feedback is unusual and infrequent in the discourse of general conversation.

It is possible for Pattern C to start with teacher Elicitation of genuine information as does Pattern E. The difference between the two patterns is that Elicitation of information in Pattern C is intended to use particular expressions within the predetermined task framework of the lesson. Elicitation of genuine information in Pattern E is often unrelated to lesson content. It is therefore unpredictable and accordingly Pattern E is less controlled than Pattern C and has greater similarity to general conversation.

Pattern F: Pupil initiated conversational activity (Pupil initiated discourse that can be either general conversational talk or concerned with lesson content)

Pattern F, unlike Patterns C, D and E, is initiated by the pupils themselves and begins with pupil initiated *Elicitation of genuine information* or *Giving genuine information* as their own agenda. Although Pattern F did not occur many times in the data, a particular feature of note is that it can be both related and unrelated to lesson content. When related to lesson content, the pupils engage in negotiation of specific feedback to assist and advance their learning and the teacher

provides attuned assistance. Alternatively the pupils may initiate their own language use on issues unrelated to lesson content to express their feelings rather than to request specific assistance. When Pattern F was observed to occur after a lesson, the pattern was started by a pupil's elicitation of genuine unknown information as would naturally occur in normal daily conversation. The exchange then changed into the discourse of providing *Assistance* in which teacher modelling and pupil response occurred, although this does not necessarily happen.

Pattern G: Teacher talk (Teacher dominant talk— Explanation, presentation, instruction, announcements)

In Pattern G the teacher dominates talk with the pupils being passive recipients. The pattern involves the one-way transmission of information from the teacher to the pupils. However, although not required or specifically elicited, it is possible that there may be a pupil response demonstrating comprehension, agreement or disagreement.

Summary List: Seven Discourse Patterns

The following is a summary list of the seven discourse patterns identified from the data:

1. Pattern A: Framing
2. Pattern B: Greeting
3. Pattern C: Unassisted language learning activity
Elicitation (T)→Successful Language Use (Pp)→Evaluation (T):
4. Pattern D: Assisted language learning activity
Elicitation (T)→Language Use (Pp)+ Assistance (T)→Evaluation (T).
5. Pattern E: Teacher initiated conversational activity
6. Pattern F: Pupil initiated conversational activity
7. Pattern G: Teacher talk (T dominant talk—Explanation, presentation, instruction, announcements)

The patterns of discourse activities identified above are further examined and quantitatively described in Chapter 8 to determine frequency of occurrence within pedagogic activities. For this purpose, the following section will attempt a segmentation of pedagogic activities.

7.4 Segmenting Lesson Stages

This section presents how the transcribed data is segmented into units of pedagogic activities. To examine what types of discourse offer what types of learning opportunities, Discourse Patterns first need to be identified. Then these need to be examined in relation to pedagogic activities to determine which pedagogic activities contain which Discourse Patterns and finally what learning opportunities emerge. The pedagogic activities are referred to as Lesson Stages. Lesson Stages are further divided into Lesson Steps such as Vocabulary Review, Drilling, etc. As a result of examining the Year 3 lessons, a total of 10 Lesson stages were identified. These together with their accompanying Lesson Steps are as follows: (Not all the steps necessarily occur during one lesson.)

Lesson Stage 1: Greeting

This stage consists of the following two steps:

Step 1: The teacher organises the class to get ready for a lesson

Step 2: The class greets the teacher.

Lesson Stage 2: Review

This is a routine activity in which the class reviews the same basic set of expressions every lesson. The pupils learned these expressions earlier in the school year so they could make a speech about themselves during the school open day. Since then they have been reviewing the same expressions. The teachers occasionally change some of the expressions. Some of the expressions reviewed are as follows:

1. What's today (tomorrow)? It's a day of the week.
2. What's the date today (tomorrow)? It's month and day.
3. What grade are you in? I'm in the third grade.
4. Who are your homeroom teachers? My homeroom teachers are Mr. Noguchi and Mrs Tanaka.

This stage consists of the following steps/actions:

Step 1: Individual focused review.

Step 2: Whole class review: together.

Step 3: Whole class review: choral repetition.

Lesson Stage 3: Singing Songs

The class sing one or more of songs each lesson. This stage consists of the following steps/actions:

- Step 1:* Introduction: T introduces individual songs, talking about the topic with Ps.
- Step 2:* The class listen to the song.
- Step 3:* TS reads the lyrics and TT explains the meaning line by line.
- Step 4:* Whole class choral repetition of the lyrics.
- Step 5:* The class sing the song.

Lesson Stage 4: Language-focused Activity

In this part of the lesson, the class practice English with a focus on grammar and accuracy. In some lessons new expressions are introduced; the routine expressions reviewed in Stage 2 are developed into expressions with the third person singular pronoun. In some lessons expressions that the pupils studied earlier are reviewed to prepare for term tests. Some of activities and associated language focus are as follows:

1. Personal information about a friend (a development from a speech about themselves)
 - ✧ Grammar: Third person singular pronoun
 - ✧ Structures
 - a. Where does he/she live? He/she lives in Osaka.
 - b. When is his/her birthday? His/her birthday is July 28th.
 - c. How many brothers and sisters does he/she have? S/he has a brothers and two sisters. S/he is an only child.
 - d. What is her/his blood type? Her/his blood type is A.
 - e. What subject does s/he like? S/he likes English.
 - ✧ Vocabulary: dates, subject names

2. Personal information about feelings (preparation for a test)
 - ✧ Grammar: First person singular and third person singular pronouns and verb inflections.
 - ✧ Structures:
 - a. How do you feel? I feel happy.
 - b. How does s/he feel? S/he feels happy.
 - ✧ Vocabulary: adjectives for feelings

3. Personal information about clothing
 - ✧ Grammar: First person singular and third person singular pronouns and verb inflections. Singular and plural forms of nouns using the indefinite article.
 - ✧ Structures:
 - a. What do you wear in winter/summer? In winter/summer?? I wear a coat.
 - ✧ Vocabulary: names of clothes

This stage consists of the following steps/actions:

- Step 1:* Introduction
- Step 2:* Reviewing a previously learned structure by reading aloud. T shows an expression on a card and gets a pupil to read aloud the expression. (e.g. “Where do you live?”)
- Step 3:* The class practice the structure by choral repetition.
- Step 4:* The class practice using the structure individually: T asks a question of the whole class and nominated pupils answer individually. (e.g. “Where do you live?” “I live in”)
- Step 5:* The class practice the structure chorally.
- Step 6:* T presents a new structure.
- Step 7:* The class practice the new structure by choral repetition.
- Step 8:* The class practice using the new structure individually: T asks a new question of the class and nominated pupils answer individually. (“Where does he live?” “He lives in”)
- Step 9:* T orchestrates choral practice of the new structure by the whole class.: T asks a new question of the class and the class answer chorally.
- Step 10:* T asks questions to develop understanding of the new grammatical item.
- Step 11:* T gets two pupils to ask the old question and answer.
- Step 12:* T gets two pupils to ask the new question and answer.
- Step 13:* Choral practice of the new expression.

Lesson Stage 5: Reading

The class read aloud the textbook. This stage consists of the following steps:

- Step 1:* Listen to a tape.
- Step 2:* Spelling check.
- Step 3:* Comprehension check
- Step 4:* Nominated pupils read aloud the text line by line individually.
- Step 5:* Nominated pupils translated individually.
- Step 6:* The class practice reading the text aloud together, repeating after the T.
- Step 7:* The class practice reading the text aloud together, along with the T.
- Step 8:* The class practice reading the text aloud together, without the T.

Lesson Stage 6: Storytelling

The teacher reads a story. Before beginning to read, the teacher arranges the class into groups. While the teacher reads, the pupils are allowed to share their reactions with one another. After the story, the teacher asks each group a question about the story. Several rounds of questions are

asked. The children discuss the questions before they provide a group answer. This stage consists of the following steps:

Step 1: Introduction.

Step 2: The teacher reads the story and the pupils listen. (Whole class listening)

Step 3: The teacher asks each group questions and the pupils discuss the answer in their groups. (Post-listening comprehension quiz)

Lesson Stage 7: Games

The pupils play two kinds of games and compete in teams. The games played, the target language required, and how to play are as follows:

1. Touch game

✧ Structures: I like baseball, I don't like swimming, We need a soccer ball.

✧ Vocabulary: the names of sports, the names of sports equipment.

✧ How to play: The class is divided into two teams. One pupil from each team comes to the front of the class. There are many picture cards displayed on the white board. The two pupils stand with their backs to the board. The teacher says a sentence and on hearing the sentence, the pupils turn around and touch a card matching the sentence. The pupil who touches the right card first receives a point for her or his team.

2. Guessing game

✧ Structures: Are you excited? Yes I am. I am excited. No, I'm not. I'm not excited.

✧ Vocabulary: feelings.

✧ How to play: One pupil comes to the front of the class and chooses a feeling or a favourite food. Other pupils try to guess the pupil's choice by asking a question. The pupil who guesses the correct answer is the winner and comes to the front of the classroom. The class then try to guess his or her feeling or a favourite food.

This stage consists of the following steps:

Step 1: Introduction

Step 2: The class practice individually the structure and vocabulary necessary for the game. T shows the structure cards/vocabulary cards and a nominated pupil reads the expression.

Step 3: The class practice the structure and vocabulary chorally.

Step 4: T explains and demonstrates the game.

Step 5: Pupils rehearse the game.

Step 6: The class play the game.

Lesson Stage 8: Watching a Video

The class watch videos in English. There are no related language activities such as worksheets or quizzes.

Lesson Stage 9: Counting Scores

Each team counts up its score and announces the score to the class.

Lesson Stage 10: Farewell

The class say goodbye.

Summary List of Lesson Stages

The following is a summary list of the ten Lesson Stages identified from the data:

- Lesson Stage 1: Greeting
- Lesson Stage 2: Review
- Lesson Stage 3: Singing Songs
- Lesson Stage 4: Language-focused Activity
- Lesson Stage 5: Reading
- Lesson Stage 6: Storytelling
- Lesson Stage 7: Games
- Lesson Stage 8: Watching a Video
- Lesson Stage 9: Counting Scores
- Lesson Stage 10: Farewell

Chapter 8 Quantitative Description of Discourse

This chapter presents quantitative descriptions of discourse in the data obtained from a total of eight lessons, four from the first observation period (lessons 1, 3, 5, and 6), and four from the second observation period (lessons 13, 14, 15 and 16). (See 5.2 Data collection for data collection schedule).

The quantitative descriptions in this research arise as a result of counting the number of occurrences in the data of the seven discourse patterns identified (7.3 Discourse Patterns). As noted earlier (7.1 Categorisation of Discourse Actions), the data was first coded according to types of discourse actions and the identified actions then grouped into seven patterns (7.3 Discourse Patterns). Subsequently, the transcribed data was segmented into lesson stages (7.4 Segmenting Lesson Stages). This data is now presented quantitatively in two different ways. In the first two sections the focus is upon the frequency (Figure 8.1) and distribution (Figure 8.2) of discourse patterns in the transcribed data. The intent here is to provide an overview of the general nature of the entire data and, in particular, highlight any significant variations in the patterns and their frequency. The resulting descriptions will contribute to the selection of Discourse Patterns and Lesson Stages to be focused upon in the qualitative analysis in chapters 10 to 13.

8.1 Total Occurrences of Individual Discourse Patterns

The total number of occurrences for each discourse pattern across the eight lessons is shown in Figure 8.1. Out of the total number of pattern occurrences in the data, a total of 983, Pattern C is by far the most frequently occurring pattern with a total of 685 occurrences. Pattern D, which occurs 152 times, is the second most frequent pattern. These are followed by Pattern A (62 times) and Pattern F (50 times). The remainder, Pattern B (14 times), Pattern E (7 times) and Pattern G (13 times) appear infrequently.

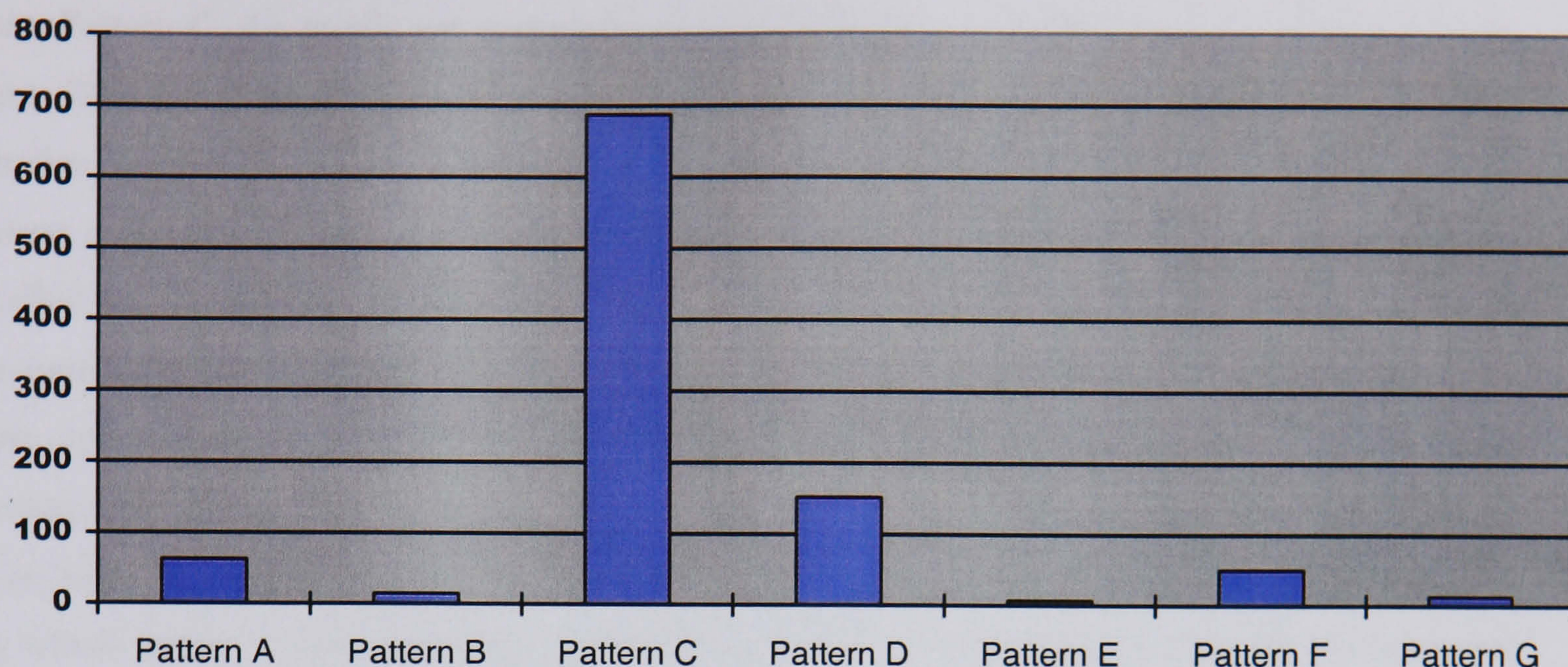


Figure 8.1.1 Total occurrences for each discourse pattern across eight lessons (Column chart)

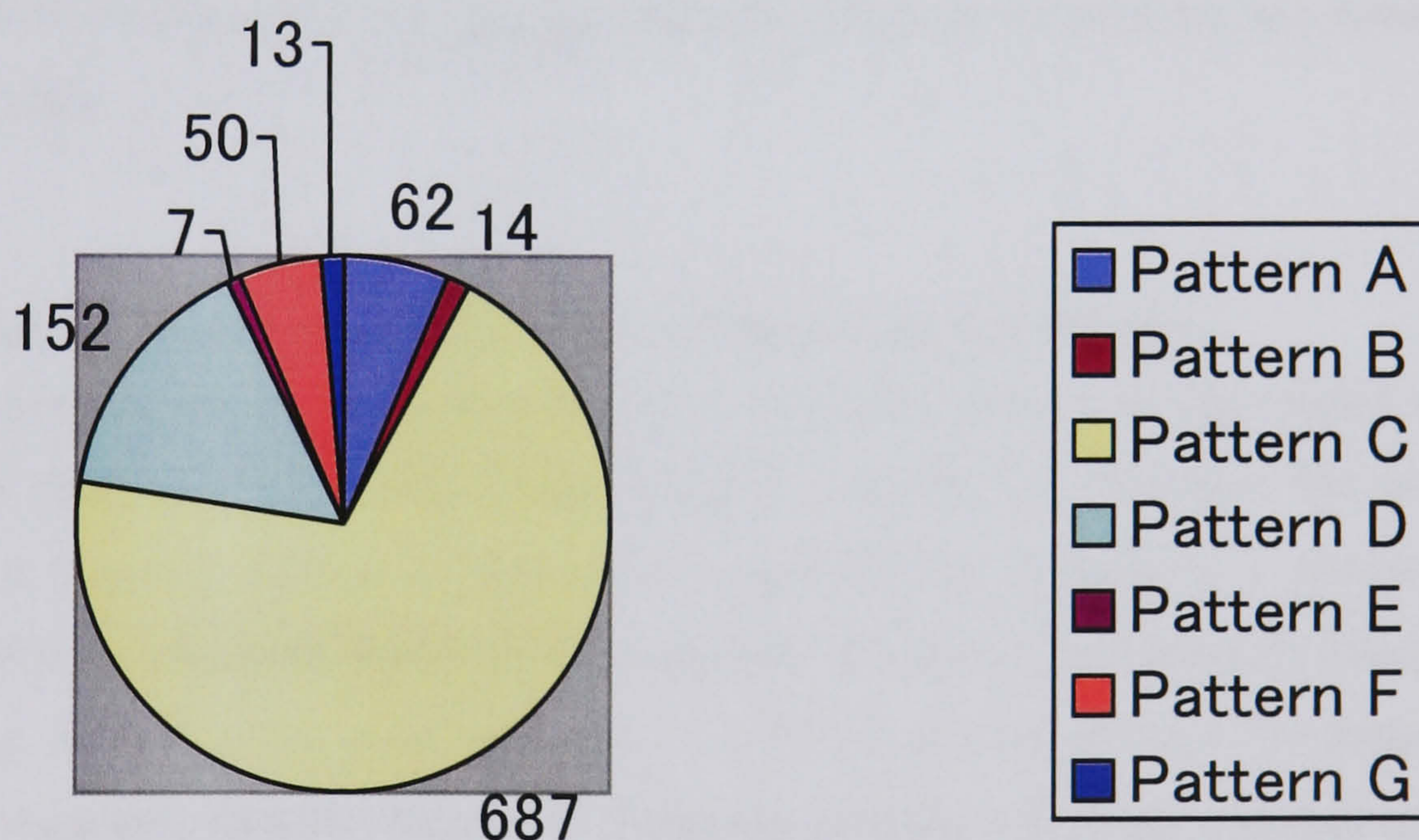


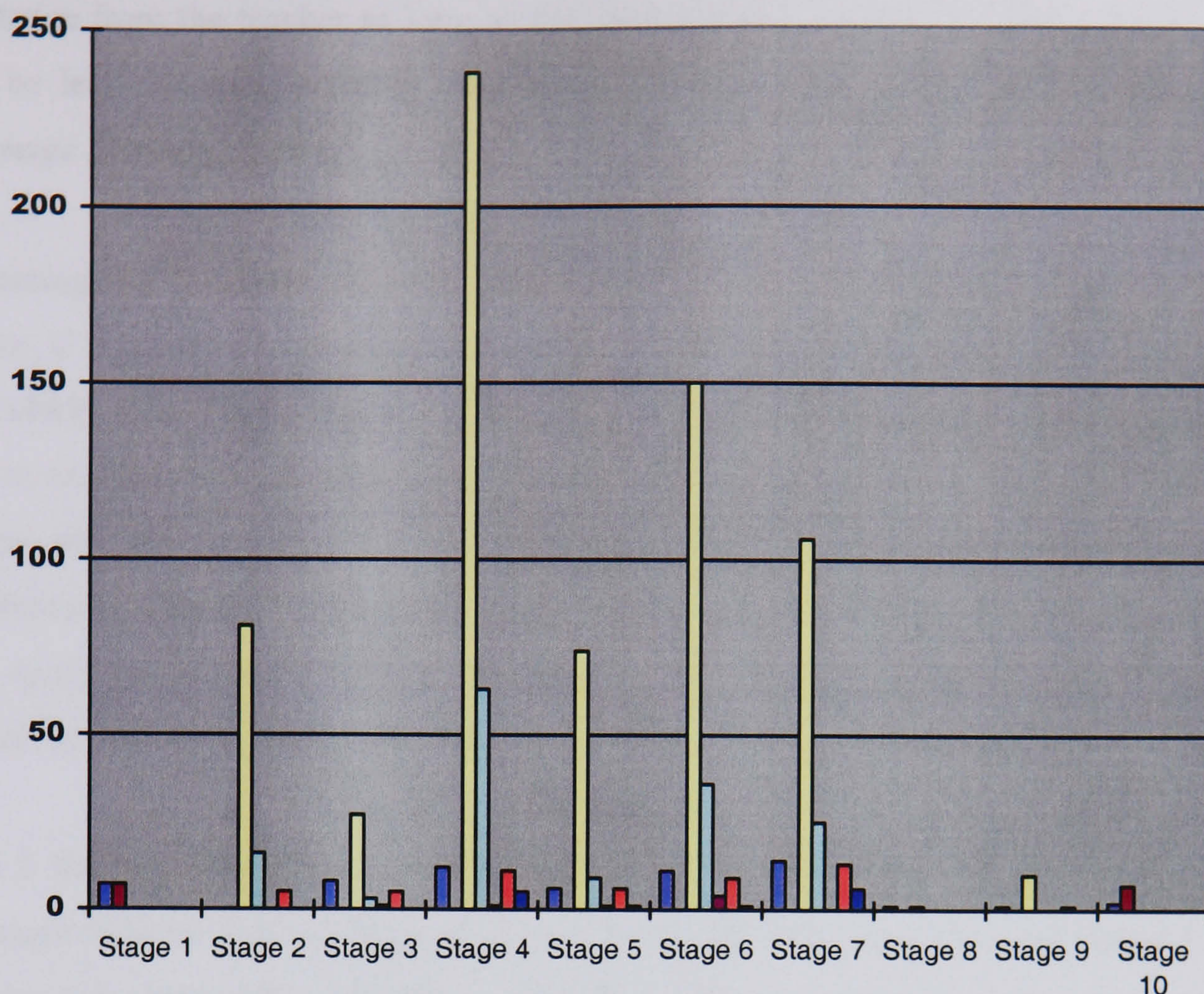
Figure 8.1.2 Total Occurrences for Each Discourse Pattern across Eight Lessons (Pie chart)

Pattern C: *Unassisted Language Learning Activity* and Pattern D: *Assisted Language Learning Activity* (See 7.3 Discourse Patterns), the two most frequently appearing discourse patterns, comprise 85 percent of all occurrences (837 out of a total of 983). The dominance of these two patterns is noteworthy, implying that discourse in the class is teacher-controlled and predictable, teacher and pupil observing “classroom specific rules”. In such discourse, the teacher elicits specific language use in a pre-planned manner and the pupils provide the language use required.

Finally evaluative feedback from the teacher may then be given. Pupils are controlled and not allowed to deviate from the classroom specific discourse. The data also appears to indicate that because Pattern D, which involves the teacher in offering assistance, occurs far less frequently than Pattern C, the pupils are successful in performing the required language use most of the time. This raises the question of whether the tasks in the lessons are sufficiently demanding and challenging for the pupils. It also appears to indicate that discourse in the classroom may not create sufficient productive affordances, that is, affordances in which pupils are provided with scaffolding appropriate to their ZPD (See 2.4.1 The Role of Mediation) and resulting in the occurrence of new learning (See 2.5.1 Affordances). Also of particular note in Figure 8.1 is the low occurrence of Pattern F: *Pupil initiated Conversational Activity* (See 7.3 Discourse Patterns). This is a study of an EFL classroom in which it is to be hoped the overall goal of the classroom experience is to develop in pupils an ability to use the language. However Pattern F, in which pupils initiate discourse, comprises only 5% of total discourse pattern occurrences, although it does occur with regularity (see Figure 8.2). This may be a sign that the pupils are not provided with affordances where they are encouraged to initiate active use of language and to participate with greater independence. Also of note is the low frequency of occurrence of Pattern G: *Teacher Talk*, which would appear to indicate that, though there is infrequent initiation by pupils of discourse (Pattern F), classroom discourse is nevertheless not dominated by teacher one-way talk.

8.2 Distribution of Discourse Patterns within Lesson Stages

Figure 8.2 below shows in greater detail how the seven discourse patterns are distributed within each Lesson Stage (See 7.4 Segmenting Lesson Stages) over the eight lessons. The patterns cluster intensively at Stages 2: *Review*, 4: *Language-focused Activity*, 5: *Reading*, 6: *Storytelling* and 7: *Games*. As is to be expected from the above analysis of Figure 8.1, Pattern C: *Unassisted Language Learning Activity* is the most frequently occurring pattern, followed by Pattern D: *Assisted Language Learning Activity*, Pattern A: *Framing* and Pattern F: *Pupil initiated Activity Initiated by Pupils*.



Lesson Stage 1: Greeting	Lesson Stage 6: Story telling
Lesson Stage 2: Review	Lesson Stage 7: Games
Lesson Stage 3: Singing songs	Lesson Stage 8: Watching a video
Lesson Stage 4: Language-focused activity	Lesson Stage 9: Counting Scores
Lesson Stage 5: Reading	Lesson Stage 10: Farewell,
(See 7.4 Segmenting Lessons Stages)	

Figure 8.2 Distribution of discourse patterns within lesson stages

Throughout the eight lessons, Stages 2 *Review*, 4 *Language-focused Activity*, 5 *Reading*, 6 *Storytelling* and 7 *Games* have similar discourse patterns, that is, the distribution of the patterns within each stage is similar, as is the proportional balance between the discourse patterns. The patterns in Stage 2 *Review* are not so dissimilar to the patterns in Stages 4, 5, 6, and 7 except for the fact that there is no occurrence of Pattern A. This is due to the nature of Stage 2 *Review*. As the teacher asks almost the same questions every time and the questions have become routine, there appears to be no need to frame the activity. Stage 3 *Singing Songs* is slightly different from the above five stages in that the second most frequent pattern is not Pattern D *Assisted Language Learning Activity* but Pattern A *Framing*. During Stage 3, activity is relatively simple

with the teacher eliciting and the children singing. Accordingly, the pupils seem to need less assistance from the teacher as long as the song is not entirely new. This indicates that Stage 3 may be less dynamic, possibly with less affordances due to the lack of Pattern D *Assisted Language Learning Activity*.

Examining the frequency at each stage more closely, it is noticeable that the frequency of Pattern C *Unassisted Language Learning Activity* in Stage 4 *Language-focused Activity* is particularly high. This is due to the fact that the class spent considerable time preparing for end of term examinations. As both stages of data collection were carried out at the end of term, the autumn and winter terms, 6 out of 8 lessons involved time given over to preparation for examinations. These tested what the pupils had done in class and, to prepare pupils, the teachers used recitation to check whether the pupils could answer questions orally using structures learned. In such an activity, that of checking, Pattern C is used frequently.

Stage 5 *Reading Aloud* has fewer occurrences of Pattern C than Stage 2 *Reviewing*, Stage 4 *Language-focused Activity*, Stage 6 *Stories*, and Stage 7 *Games*. However Stage 5, which also involves test preparation, reviewing children's ability to read aloud text in the course book, occurred only in the four lessons of the second data collection period. With this in mind it is fair to conclude that Stage 5 *Reading Aloud* also comprises a high frequency level of Pattern C, involving the students in a pre-planned activity in which they provide the teacher with already known information and have little or no opportunity to deviate from the intended discourse or to initiate discourse. The same kind of a recitation method as in Stage 4 *Singing* is used to check whether the pupils can read aloud the text, resulting in a high frequency of Pattern C.

Stage 6 *Storytelling*, contains the second highest frequency of Pattern C among the ten stages. This is partially due to the way the patterns have been categorized, Pattern C including both *Elicitation with Stimulus* and *Elicitation without Stimulus* (see Chapter 7.3 Discourse Patterns). In the case of *Storytelling*, the teacher's reading of a story is regarded as a stimulus. During Stage 6 of Lesson 1, the teacher did elicit information explicitly from pupils while reading. However, in the other lessons, when the teacher read each phrase or each page, pupils gave responses voluntarily. Such a discourse pattern of read and voluntary response is slightly different from that typical of Pattern C involving explicit teacher elicitation of information, pupil response and teacher feedback. However, whether explicit or implicit, the pupils are still reacting to a form of elicitation, responding to a stimulus. This is very different from, for example, Pattern F, in which the pupils themselves initiate discourse. Therefore, the discourse pattern of read and response in *Storytelling* is counted as Pattern C and is one factor contributing to the high frequency of Pattern C in Stage 6. Furthermore, in Stage 6 read and response is followed by quizzes about the story that again take the form of Pattern C in that the teacher asks

questions and pupils answer in teams. Thus, *Storytelling* actually consists of two activities and as a consequence this results in a high frequency of Pattern C.

Finally Stage 7 *Games* has the highest frequency of occurrence of Pattern F, pupil-initiated discourse, although Pattern C and Pattern D remain more frequent. This suggests that Games have the potential to offer a different type of discourse, not one solely based upon teacher elicitation.

8.3 Summary of Key Findings

The following is a summary of the findings revealed in Figure 8.1 *Total Occurrences for Each Discourse Pattern Across Eight Lessons* and Figure 8.2. *Distribution of Discourse Patterns Within Lesson Stages*:

- Stages 1 *Greeting*, 2 *Review*, 3 *Singing Songs*, 8 *Watching Videos*, 9 *Counting Scores*, and 10 *Farewell* contain a very low frequency and variety of discourse patterns, whereas Stages 4 *Language-focused Activity*, 5 *Reading*, 6 *Storytelling* and 7 *Games* contain a high frequency and variety of the patterns. This appears to indicate that Stages 4, 5, 6 and 7, which show significant frequency and variety of the patterns, are a potentially richer source of data, containing more information concerning the nature of the classroom environment and learning process. In particular, if Pattern D provides scaffolding and expands the ZPD (See 2.4.2 *Scaffolding*), and initiation in Pattern F is a sign of active participation (See 2.6 *Participation Metaphor: Participation Theory*), then these Lesson Stages are to be viewed as being more educationally dynamic than other Lesson Stages. Accordingly, in seeking to understand the nature of learning processes in the classroom, these Stages call for further enquiry.
- Although Stages 2, 4, 5 and 7 have a similar distribution and proportional balance of discourse patterns, the qualitative nature of each discourse pattern and resulting affordances may not be the same. Thus qualitative analysis of the patterns in each stage is called for.
- The dominant discourse patterns are Pattern C *Unassisted Language Learning Activity* (70 % frequency) and Pattern D *Assisted Language Learning Activity* (15% frequency).
- From the dominance of Pattern C it can be assumed that the pre-eminent method of teaching adopted by the teachers is one of recitation and repetition.
- Pattern C is teacher-controlled discourse and the activity is easily manageable for the pupils as *Assistance* is not provided. This suggests that Lesson Stages containing Pattern C may not offer many affordances. The fact Pattern C is overwhelmingly the most frequent discourse pattern observed also suggests the pupils' entire learning experience

may not be one rich in affordances.

- Although Pattern D is teacher-controlled, it may provide more affordances than Pattern C, as assistance is provided by the teacher and possibly other pupils as well. However, the lower frequency of Pattern D when compared to Pattern C suggests that the pupils are exposed to a limited number of affordances. Additionally, the affordances provided may not provide scaffolding. At issue is whether the assistance provided in Pattern D takes the form of scaffolding or not. It is then necessary to qualitatively examine whether all of the assistance does provide scaffolding for expanding the pupils' ZPD. If it does not, it means there are two types of pattern D: One with rich affordances and successful learning outcomes and the other with less productive affordances and unsuccessful leaning outcomes despite the existence of assistance. If all pattern D do not necessarily result in successful affordances, the amount of affordance resulting from pattern D is less than what is assumed from this quantitative description.
- The dominant patterns C and D call for detailed qualitative analysis, as their dominance means the patterns are the main features of classroom discourse in the data. The two patterns are similar in terms of teacher control but contrasting in terms of assistance and affordances. Thus qualitative analysis is required to reveal the differences and similarities in the nature of affordances and learning outcomes in the two patterns.
- Pattern F consists only of 5% of discourse in the data. Therefore pupil-initiated discourse occurs infrequently. Pupil initiation can assumed to be a sign of active participation from the perspective of the participation metaphor (See 2.6 *Participation Metaphor: Participation Theory*). If that is the case, the data appears to indicate that pupils are provided with few opportunities for learning and participation, far fewer than might reasonably be expected to be the case.
- According to the frequencies revealed by the quantitative description, notably the significantly high frequency of pattern C, it is assumed that the classes observed were not provided with a high level of affordances. However, the quantitative description does not reveal anything about the nature of the affordances provided, that is, whether they are rich in quality or not.
- The quantitative description adopted does not indicate the length of each discourse pattern. However, even if the revealed frequency is a low one, each occurrence may be long enough to provide a rich affordance, although not all long affordances will be rich one either.

8.4 A Guide for Qualitative Analysis

Although it is possible to draw tentative conclusions making use of the quantitative descriptions given above, a fuller picture will emerge from a qualitative analysis. Quantitative description

does not reveal all the phenomena associated with a purely quantitative representation of the data, does not sufficiently illuminate the richness of the classroom that it is essential to interpret in order to achieve insight into the sociocultural and interactive nature of learning. Nevertheless, the above key findings drawn from quantitative descriptions of the research data do provide guidance for qualitative analysis. They draw attention to Lesson Stages 4, 6 and 7 which are revealed as being dynamic and involving a variety of discourse patterns, indicating that qualitative analysis might provide further insight, particularly given this researcher's focus upon the sociocultural environment of the classroom, participation, and the role of affordances. That is, it is now required to examine the data qualitatively to seek to determine which discourse patterns provide what affordances and in which lesson stages. In particular, the data above draws attention to the prominent patterns, Pattern C, Pattern D, and the infrequent Pattern F, but provides little insight into how these are related to types of affordances. Thus, in the following chapters (Chapter 9 to 13), qualitative analysis will be employed to seek a greater understanding of what is happening in Lesson Stages 4, 6, and 7 and in which there is a high incidence of Discourse Patterns C, D and F.

Chapter 9 The Qualitative Analysis of Affordances

In this chapter an approach to the qualitative analysis of affordances (cf. 2.5.1 Affordances) is presented. Firstly, the notion of the classroom as ‘environment’ is briefly discussed. Secondly, with ecological theory and the concept of affordances (Gibson 1979) in mind, six *dimensions* of affordances are identified. Thirdly, resulting from the interactions of the six dimensions, four *types* of affordances are presented. This framework for analysis is then employed in subsequent chapters to carry out an analysis of data from the Year 3 classroom. This approach, making use of the six dimensions of affordances, was devised by the researcher as a result of an attempt to identify the ecological nature of learning in discourse. It arises from an analysis by this researcher of the data collected and from reference to existing literature. The chapter also lists types of affordances identified as a result of applying the dimensions to the data. This categorisation of affordances was established as findings from the actual application to the data rather than as a priori definition.

9.1 The Classroom as Environment

The central focus of this study is discourse within the foreign language learning classroom. However, by ‘classroom’ it is meant not the inert space in which instruction is given and received but rather the classroom as environment, a ‘living’ and multi-variant ecology with and within which pupils interact. When viewed in this way, the classroom itself becomes worthy of study, an environment that may foster or even inhibit the learning experience of pupils as inhabitants of that environment, pupils as participants in activities within that environment. It is a place in which affordances are both deliberately created and arise naturally, affordances both perceived as providing opportunities for learning by those within the environment and also utilised by them for learning (See 2.5 Participation Metaphor: An Ecological View).

A perception of the classroom as ‘environment’ giving rise to affordances, a place generating of affordances that are to be seized upon for learning, requires that pupils be viewed as active learners, not simple recipients of knowledge, learners who try to discover meaning and purpose in classroom activities and in so doing transform the nature of their participation, becoming more able to participate in those activities. Thus, fundamental to this research, is the assumption that when pupils are learning new language they actively seek meaning and share understanding with others. That is, that pupils bring to the classroom environment their natural desire and ability to make sense of the new, and that they make use of the classroom environment in ways relevant to their needs.

9.2 Six Dimensions of Affordances

In order to gain understanding of the classroom as environment, to gain insight into the complex and 'living' process of learning, it is required that an attempt be made to describe that environment. The purpose in doing so is to identify features of the environment that give rise to the emergence of affordances, the nature of those affordances, and to discover how the pupil as active learner makes use of the environment and its emergent affordances. Evidence of learning that results from this interactive process is then to be observed in subsequent transformation of pupil participation in classroom activities. This of course requires that a clear picture is first formed of affordances themselves, for without identification of affordances, it is not possible to identify those features of the environment that give rise to them. However, within the field of EFL, affordances have been little researched. Indeed, within the broader field of education in general there is a need for more understanding of the nature of affordances, how they arise, are perceived and utilized. Given the lack of research within the field of EFL, it was necessary for this researcher to establish her own approach to analysis of classroom discourse and the identification of affordances. In seeking to accomplish this task, the researcher drew upon sociocultural theory and in particular upon features deriving from an ecological perspective of learning. Six dimensions of affordances were established, the key factors being those of interaction, complementarity, mediation and time-order. It is as a result of interaction between these six dimensions that the emergence of affordances occurs. The six dimensions of affordances identified are as follows:

1. Activity
2. Pupil intended action
3. Discourse pattern
4. Primary assistance
5. Secondary assistance
6. Eventual success

According to Gibson (1979), affordances emerge from the interaction of four elements: the environment an agent is surrounded by, the agent's goal, the agent's perception and the agent's readiness (See 2.5.1 Affordances). These four dimensions identified by Gibson have been developed by this researcher into the six dimensions noted above. Of the four dimensions by Gibson, it is difficult to identify the agent's goal in discourse, as each pupil may have different goals and goals may change as activity develops (See 2.4.4 Activity Theory). Thus in this research, goals are determined as *Dimension 2: Pupils Intended actions*, revealed by teacher and pupil behaviours and utterances observable in data.

The environment surrounding the agent(s), another dimension of affordance identified by Gibson in the language learning classroom, is developed into the following four dimensions in this research: *Dimension 1: Activity*, *Dimension 3: Discourse Pattern*, *Dimension 4: Primary Assistance*, and *Dimension 5: Secondary Assistance*. *Dimension 1 Activity*, is established as a unit segmenting data for the analysis of affordances. This provides background information relating to the task or activity a class is engaged in. *Dimension 3 Discourse Pattern*, is concerned with the discourse patterns an affordance contains and thus is used in seeking the relationship between discourse pattern and types of affordances. Dimensions 4 *Primary Assistance* and 5 *Secondary Assistance* are concerned with types of assistance that occur in the classroom. The classroom is organised and led by the teacher, who brings in and implements planned lesson plans. This has a major impact in creating and characterising the learning environment of the classroom. As tasks and activities, which set demands on pupils (Cameron, 2001), are considered as acts of mediation if they successfully stretch pupil ability (See 2.4.1 The role of Mediation), the initial plan of tasks and activities implemented in lessons is determined as *Primary Assistance*. This creates the initial conditions of the environment to which subsequent reaction occurs. The term *assistance* is used here rather than mediation or scaffolding, as unless assistance results in cognitive change or successful learning, it cannot be called mediation (See 2.4.1 The Role of Mediation). *Dimension 5: Secondary Assistance* is assistance provided by either teacher or pupil after *Primary Assistance* has been provided and occurs when pupils have difficulty in performing tasks or an activity. Finally, *Dimension 6: Eventual Success* describes affordances that occur as a result of the complementary reaction between pupil perception and readiness and teacher assistance. Dimensions for the agent's perception and readiness have not been created as it is difficult to specify either of these. However, perception and readiness were interpreted from pupils' behaviour and performance and are incorporated in the description of 6 *Eventual Success*, that is, how the pupils react to teacher assistance and whether the pupils make use of such assistance or not.

9.2.1 Dimension 1: Activity

The term activity is commonly used to refer to pedagogic activities engaged in by pupils. In this study, however, for purposes of data analysis, activities are referred to as Lesson Stages (See 7.4. Segmenting Lesson Stages), activities such as Singing, Storytelling, Games, and Language-focused Activity. Lesson Stages are further subdivided into Lesson Steps and it is these steps that are used as units for the analysis of affordances. For example, analysis of the activity of Singing (Lesson Stage) is subdivided into the steps of Framing, Practicing (repeating lyrics after the teacher), and Practice (singing the whole song). It is during these steps that affordances emerge, steps identified by this researcher as a focus of analysis in seeking to determine the nature of affordances, how they arise, and how they are utilised by the active learner.

9.2.2 Dimension 2: Pupils Intended Actions

In approaching the learning objectives established for a particular lesson, a teacher is able to make use of a variety of lesson stages, for example, singing a song or listening to a story. However, in order to make successful use of these stages, the teacher is required to build pupil awareness by breaking down the stage into a number of more easily comprehensible steps. These steps should each have concrete learning goals or pupil intended actions. It is these intended actions that are identified as the second dimension of affordances. The intended action is supposed to create a “space for growth” (Cameron 2001), for new learning and the appropriation of language that is slightly above the current level of pupil’s ability but is achievable with assistance. If the intended learning is well beyond a pupil’s ZPD or is too easy, the result will be one in which no suitable gap is created, no space in which to stretch pupil ability. Indeed, whether the gap created by the intended action is one appropriate to pupil ZPD is of crucial importance if affordance is to occur. Affordance can only occur when a learning opportunity is perceived by pupils as both available and necessary, and is made use of for new learning. Where the gap created is not within pupils’ ZPD, they will not be able to perceive such an opportunity.

An additional factor here is that children sometimes have their own intended actions or goals, actions and goals other than those intended and defined by the teacher. Evidence of such differences of perspective towards a Lesson Stage can be witnessed in 15.3.1. In 15.3.1 when the teacher is framing a singing activity, two boys who do not want to sing express their opinion in English. They find their own intended action of subverting the lesson using English. Generally, the teacher creates intended learning actions but in this instance the boy’s language use was not something the teachers intended. It is however an instance of the emergence of new language use, both in the construction of a phrase and in the use of a formulaic expression. When pupils through their discourse and actions reveal the existence of alternative perceptions of the actions and goals, this is likely to be associated with the emergence of Contingent Affordances (See 9.4.1 Contingent Affordance).

9.2.3 Dimension 3: Discourse Patterns

Each Lesson Step contains patterns of discourse. These patterns were categorized earlier (Section 7.2) as falling into seven pattern types, Patterns A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Two of these patterns, Patterns A and B have not been examined during the course of this research. They are patterns that appear in greetings and lesson framing. As such, they do not have a significant and dynamic effect on learner development and thus were omitted from the study. The remaining Patterns C, D, E F and G were examined, it being required in seeking to understand the nature of affordances and learning in the classroom environment to focus on those patterns of discourse

associated with affordance, patterns likely to result in the emergence of affordance, patterns associated with particular types of affordance.

9.2.4 Dimension 4: Primary Assistance

Teacher and peer pupil assistance has a significant role to play in achieving an intended action, one slightly above the current level of pupil ability though one within pupil ZPD. This assistance can be categorised as being either Primary Assistance or Secondary Assistance, and each of these can take a number of forms. The first type of assistance, Primary Assistance, occurs at the stage of lesson preparation and may involve all or some of the following:

- Planning and selection of materials to be used in tasks
- Sequencing of tasks
- Arranging participation structure such as whether tasks should be implemented as whole class, group, pair or individual work

Although these aspects of preparation are not directly observable in classroom discourse, their realization as assistance in the form of discourse actions is evident in the following:

- Elicitation of information, reading aloud, singing, physical response
- Providing information
- Framing
- Explanation

Primary Assistance does not always occur as a deliberate form of assistance provided by the teacher. It can take the form of the linguistic environment resulting from a teacher's planned Lesson Stage, something perceived by pupils as an opportunity for learning different from that originally intended by the teacher. It can be an opportunity for learning that occurs accidentally in the classroom and is then exploited by the pupils for language use and learning. That is, it is assistance that is not consciously created by the teacher but nevertheless, as with other forms of Primary Assistance, provides an initial context for learning. The pupils notice what happens in teacher planned Lesson Stages and seize upon opportunities for language learning which typically involve elements of similarities, differences, gaps, and juxtapositions. This emergence of unintended assistance (or accidental linguistic environment) is, in a similar way to the emergence of pupil's own goals and actions in Dimension 2, often associated with the emergence of Contingent Affordance.

9.2.5 Dimension 5: Secondary Assistance

The fifth dimension of affordances is that of Secondary Assistance. This occurs when a teacher provides interactive assistance adjusted to pupil performance and is comprised of the following discourse actions: (See 7.1.1 Categories of Teacher Discourse Actions, 7.1.3. Categories of Pupil Discourse Actions)

Teacher Discourse Actions	Pupil Discourse Actions
7: Marking critical features	1, 2: Giving information
8: Encouragement	4: Translation
6: Giving clues	19 :Others (Explanation, Encouragement)
5: Offering a model to imitate	
10: Explanation (Rephrasing, Explication, Examples, Translation)	

It is important to note that Secondary Assistance is contingent in nature, that is, it is dependent on the prior occurrence of Primary Assistance. This means that the main functions of Primary Assistance is to set context, to establish the classroom environment in which learning is to occur. Only then, and as a result, may the teacher subsequently provide pupils with Secondary Assistance. A further important feature of Secondary Assistance is that it may also come from the pupils themselves in the form of peer assistance. Once again, this is contingent in nature, as pupils do not plan such assistance in advance.

9.2.6 Dimension 6: Eventual Success

A crucial feature of affordance is that it cannot be said to exist until eventual success or failure is observed in performance, as “affordances are properties of things *taken with reference to the observer*” whether what environment offers is beneficial or not. (Gibson 1979, p137) It is therefore necessary for the researcher to make an interpretive analysis of the data in order to determine whether success or failure can be observed. In pursuing such an interpretive analysis based on success, it is useful to make use of insights derived from sociocultural and participation perspectives of learning. From a sociocultural perspective, success can be defined as the stretching of pupil ZPD and the emergence of new language use, a result of pupils being able to make use of assistance provided, performance pupils could not have achieved by themselves. In addition, from a participation perspective, in seeking to determine the existence of success, it is also necessary to determine whether new language use observed yields a subsequent transformation of the child’s role, and the Lesson Stage itself, as participation theory argues that a child’s performance is inseparable from sociocultural engagement. Even when contingent adjustment occurs, if pupils cannot achieve a new performance that enables participation, it is not possible to state that an affordance has emerged, the assistance of

contingent adjustment being inappropriate to pupil ZPD. Thus a final and crucial dimension in determining the existence of affordance is the eventual observable success or failure of learners as demonstrated in performance. It is then necessary to seek clear and observable evidence of such new performance on behalf of the pupils.

The other crucial factor in determining success is the question of time scale. In this research, the focus is the microgenetic development within a lesson on a local time scale. Therefore, if new language use enabling pupil participation emerges within a lesson, it is regarded as success. However, some affordances may not appear to be contributing much to pupil participation and learning within a discourse pattern, that is, there is little observable indication of success. Nevertheless, it is possible that change and learning is happening internally (Larsen-Freeman, 1997 in section 2.2.4) Thus, if initial unsuccessful participation eventually develops into successful participation at a later stage of the lesson, the initial seemingly unsuccessful performance is determined as *delayed* observable success. If successful participation appears on time in a discourse pattern, it is called *immediate* success.

An issue here is the difficulty in determining whether performance is successful or not. In some cases although pupils are able to achieve a new performance with the help of a teacher, they may in fact be simply imitating the teacher's model language use and may not have appropriated the language. It is only through long-term observation that true appropriation can be determined. However, on a short-term basis, as long as learners are able to demonstrate characteristics of learning intended by the teacher then, for the purposes of this research, this is regarded as successful performance. That is, affordances enable the learners to participate and by doing so confirm the existence of the affordance. Another difficulty is that different pupils may show different outcomes. As every child has a different level of readiness and different perception, it is anticipated that there are multiple forms of participation and outcomes (See 2.7 Legitimate Peripheral Participation). However, it is difficult to describe the outcome for each individual child, particularly where this may involve mental forms of participation such as answering quietly in the mind. Therefore, research is likely to record forms of participations and outcomes observable and manifested in the data.

9.3 Application of the Dimensions

It is with the above six dimensions of affordances in mind that it is possible for the researcher to turn to the task of identifying and classifying types of affordances in the classroom environment. This requires an examination involving a number of steps and should not be regarded as a mechanical process. Rather, it is a qualitative and interpretive one requiring in-depth examination and interpretation of the dynamic interaction between the six dimensions of affordances outlined above and involves the following:

- i. Check the dimension *Pupils' Intended Actions* to determine the intended goal of each Lesson Stage. This is the base or starting point of analysis enabling subsequent determination of whether the assistance provided is appropriate or not for the intended actions to successfully occur.
- ii. Check the dimension *Discourse Patterns* to determine the relationship between discourse patterns and the nature of associated affordances. Of particular note here is who initiates the discourse.
- iii. Check the dimension *Primary Assistance* to determine whether the initial design of the Lesson Stage is suitable for the intended learning outcome. In particular it is important to determine whether an activity is designed with a clear language focus and whether meaningful discourse is created.
- iv. Check the dimension *Secondary Assistance* to determine whether contingent assistance is adjusted to pupil response to tasks and is suitable for helping pupils accomplish the activity.
- v. Finally, check the dimension *Eventual Success* to determine whether the pupils have benefited from the activity and have successfully managed to achieve the intended actions, resulting in a new performance with new language use. Here, it is perhaps important to note that it is only by taking into consideration the eventual success or failure of assistance as realized in performance that it is possible to determine whether *Primary Assistance* and *Secondary Assistance* are appropriate or not for the intended actions.

This process of identifying types of affordances utilising the approach established will be demonstrated in the subsequent chapters ten to fourteen.

9.4 Types of Affordances

In applying an analysis of interactions across the dimensions of affordances as suggested above to the research data obtained in the course of this study, two possible ways to categorize affordances emerge, and it is to these that we now turn. The first of these is Categorisation 1 involving the designating of affordances as being either strong or weak in nature according to their effectiveness in facilitating pupils learning. That is, it is the degree to which success is achieved that determines whether an affordance is strong or weak. This requires an examination of pupil performance, of pupil success or failure in participation, and of transformation of pupil participation. The second, Categorisation 2, consists of designating affordances as being either planned or contingent. In making this distinction it is whether there is agreement or disagreement with the intended action that determines whether an affordance is planned or contingent in nature.

9.4.1 Categorisation 1: Strong and Weak Affordances

A Strong Affordance is one in which pupils make use of an opportunity provided and benefit from the opportunity resulting in new language use enabling a transformation of participation within a Lesson Stage. There are two types of Strong Affordances, depending on when Eventual Success occurs: an immediate Strong Affordance is an affordance in which pupils succeed in achieving participation immediately in a discourse pattern; a delayed Strong Affordance is one in which pupils' transformation does not appear observable immediately but eventually leads to success in participation at a later stage of a lesson (See 9.2.6 Dimension 6: Eventual Success). The indication arising from this research is that Strong Affordances are associated with the following dimensions of affordances:

1. *Discourse Patterns*: All the Pattern Fs observed in this study resulted in Strong Affordances. Additionally Pattern D is also observed to create Strong Affordances most of the time. Patterns C and G show mixed results, at times being associated with Strong Affordance and at other times with Weak Affordances.
2. *Primary Assistance*: Activities that offer Strong Affordances are well designed, containing a clear focus on language gain and have an appropriate means for achieving an objective. Additionally they are meaningful and interesting to the pupils in both content and resulting discourse.
3. *Secondary Assistance*: Strong Affordances contain various means of contingent assistance adjusted to the pupils' initial response to the activity.
4. *Eventual Success*: Strong Affordances, by definition, were revealed to result in the achievement of an intended action within a lesson whether success appears immediately in a discourse pattern or is delayed to a later stage of the lesson. This demonstrates that Strong Affordance beneficial to pupil development has occurred, that an activity is within the ZPD, and has stretched the pupils' current level to a slightly higher one.

A Weak Affordance is one in which pupils fail to make use of an opportunity provided, or make inadequate use, owing to a failure to perceive the opportunity or a mismatch between the opportunity and pupil ZPD within a lesson. Weak Affordances emerged as being associated with the following dimensions of affordances:

1. *Discourse Patterns*: Weak Affordances were revealed to be most likely to occur in Patterns C and G. In both patterns little pupil elaboration is required and as a consequence pupils are likely to take a passive role. Pattern D also can result in Weak Affordances. The fact that Pattern D contains assistance means that an activity that pupils are engaged in is likely to be more challenging and thus pupils pushed to stretch their current ability. However, if success

does not occur in Pattern D, it means either that the activity is too difficult for them or the assistance provided by the teacher is inappropriate.

2. *Primary Assistance*: An activity that is likely to result in Weak affordances is one without clear and appropriate goals, or a design able to effectively develop pupil English. Alternatively it is possible that the activity is not meaningful and interesting to the pupils and therefore they are insufficiently motivated to engage in the activity.
3. *Secondary Assistance*: Weak affordances often do not contain Secondary assistance. When they do, the research appears to indicate that the Secondary Assistance provided is likely to be insufficiently adjusted to pupil ability and thus is unusable.
4. *Eventual Success*: Weak affordances do not lead to new learning. The pupils fail to achieve what is intended in an activity. Even if they manage to perform what is expected, their performance appears superficial, doing what is expected rather than understanding and appropriating new language use. In such cases pupil performance cannot be regarded as successful.

9.4.2 Categorisation 2: Planned and Contingent Affordances

A second way in which affordances can be categorized is according to whether they are planned or contingent in nature (Cameron, 2004). Planned Affordances emerge when a pre-designed task is implemented and the pupils perceive an opportunity as useful. Contingent Affordances, on the other hand, are incidental to, that is, “spring out” of a Planned Affordance but provide an opportunity that may be exploited in an unexpected way as the pupils perceive a different need from that originally planned. If pupils’ intended actions (intended by the teacher) are achieved in eventual performance, it is a Planned Affordance. If pupils achieve new understanding different from the intended action, the affordances are contingent. If the pupils continue to follow the original activity, whether or not various means of assistance appear contingently, it remains a Planned Affordance. If pupils find a different goal in the activity or a different meaning in the discourse created within the activity, take an action to change the direction or make unexpected language use (not using the imposed and desired language) or form of participation, the environment is one of Contingent Affordance.

A Planned Affordance performs the role of setting up the context for subsequent continuation of discourse and involves the implementation of tasks designed in advance. The lesson follows a pre-determined plan, the teacher and possibly pupils knowing what they are going to do and the teacher able to predict the response pupils are likely to provide. Additionally, the teacher is able to control classroom discourse so that the course of the lesson does not deviate from the plan. The teacher makes sure that what s/he planned is delivered to the pupils and checks this by eliciting responses from pupils and giving feedback. It has the merit of leading the pupils in a pre-determined direction, one that hopefully has been carefully planned by matching a task goal,

a task demand and support. If carefully planned, the teacher can lead the pupils to expand their ZPD by providing appropriate scaffolding. Discourse Patterns C, D and G are examples of Planned Affordance.

Contingent Affordances are, as the name implies, contingent. That is, they are not pre-planned and arise contingently, emerging from Planned Affordances. In the context of this particular study, the educational setting of a foreign language learning classroom, such Contingent Affordances might rightly be expected to emerge when learners interact with the linguistic environment. This is a point that van Lier (1996) also draws our attention to, pointing out that the conditions for a contingent language act are established when the learners notice that something new, meaningful and useful for them has arisen. That is, a rich linguistic environment is likely to stimulate pupil engagement, provide the motivation for active pupil initiated language use as they make use of Contingent Affordances available. Pupils involved in conversational interaction characterised by contingency are likely to find such interactions motivating, more likely to contribute linguistically, more likely to elaborate their language use. It is with this stimulating and motivating role of Contingent Affordances that Cameron (2004) is concerned. Learners actively engaged in classroom activity are immersed in an ambient that is a familiar, given and shared environment. Then, as Cameron notes, surprise springs when learners notice Contingent Affordances involving the new, the unexpected, differences, similarities, gaps and juxtapositions, six qualities of the linguistic environment that are key features of Contingent Affordances. As Cameron points out, in instances of contingency, pupils seize the opportunity to express their own perceptions, needs and purposes by using language creatively. For example, as cited in 9.2.2 Dimension 2: Pupils Intended Actions, the two boys expressed their unwillingness to sing a song, an opportunity to use English for the purpose of subversion. On another occasion a pupil created an echo and a reminder, saying “four apple” after hearing the teacher say, “for example” (See 15.3.1). In addition to creative language use, this research reveals that when Contingent Affordances arise, pupils also engage in initiating their own agenda and negotiating for specific information.

Thus the feature of Contingent Affordances is that pupil performance is likely to involve the creative use of language and negotiation. When something new or unexpected is noticed by pupils, and joint interpretive work is undertaken, the new is connected to what is known, and this further sets up expectations for what is to happen next (van Lier 1996 p.172). Thus pupils are motivated to initiate creative language use or initiate negotiation when Contingent Affordances emerge. Although the occurrence of Contingent Affordances is accidental and not planned by the teacher, Planned Affordances do contribute to the emergence of Contingent Affordances. A rich environment created by the teacher is likely to stimulate and provide the pupils with more opportunities for Contingent Affordances.

Chapter 10 Qualitative Analysis 1 (A) Storytelling

Making use of the system of analysis for affordances devised in Chapter 9, this and the following chapters, Chapters 10-13, present a qualitative analysis of discourse illustrating (1) how affordances are provided (2) how language use emerges as pupils make use of affordances and (3) how pupils participate in an activity as a result (See Research Question 2 in 3.1). Affordances are identified and analysed in two different types of storytelling at Lesson Stage 6 (Chapters 10 & 11), two different types of games at Lesson Stage 7 (Chapter 12), and two different types of Language-focused activity at Lesson Stage 4 (Chapter 13). Throughout the analysis, context is first described with excerpts. Affordances are then identified and finally a profile of affordances for each excerpt is presented.

The choice of lesson stages for qualitative analysis was determined by observations arising from the quantitative description of discourse (See Chapter 8). In addition to revelations of the frequency of occurrences of discourse patterns (See 8.1) it was revealed that the patterns cluster intensively at certain lesson stages. Among these are those of *Storytelling*, *Games*, and *Language-focused activity* (See 8.2). These stages were therefore selected owing to the high frequency and variety of patterns occurring, that is, these stages were determined to offer a potentially rich source of data (See 8.3). Additionally, as a prime concern of this researcher is to gain insight into the nature of affordances, it was important to select lesson stages with affordances in mind. These stages meet this need, containing more occurrences than other lesson stages of Pattern D involving secondary (contingent) assistance and Pattern F involving pupil initiation. Both of these have the potential to create Strong Affordances (See 9.4.1), suggesting that they are potentially dynamic patterns calling for further and detailed analysis.

When thinking about storytelling as an activity it might naturally be assumed that this is a passive activity, the pupils listening while the teacher reads. However, the quantitative analysis of Lesson Stage 6 *Storytelling* (See 8.2) indicates that storytelling is indeed as dynamic as Lesson Stage 7 *Games* in terms of the variety of discourse patterns used. Indeed, when qualitatively analysed, emerges a picture of discourse that is dynamic, with active pupil participation in the learning process. In the majority of instances the native English speaker teacher (TS) reads a story and pupils listen, although they are allowed to make comments and give opinions. Normally, after listening, a competition is held in which the teacher asks comprehension questions and the pupils answer in teams. Analysis of storytelling in Lesson 1, however, reveals a procedure of 'joint' storytelling requiring a far higher degree of active pupil participation owing to the activity framework. As TS reads the story to the class, TS tells the

class that he has forgotten words and asks the class to help him by providing words and phrases. Both TS and the Japanese teacher (TT) assist the class both to understand the story and to promote transformation of participation in the activity by providing help such as modelling language use and giving clues.

10.1 Initial Elicitation

After introducing the story *The Enormous Turnip* by giving the title and showing the picture on the cover of the book, TS informs the class that he needs their help to tell the story. TS starts to read the story and then stops to elicit the new word ‘turnip’ by pretending he has forgotten the word.

Excerpt 10.1 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (A)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Pattern
1	TS: the man is hungry. he wants to eat the,	T3.2 Elicit specific info.	Pattern D1 :
2	((points at the turnip))	T6 Clue	
3	P?: ((unint.))	P?	
4	TS: forgot ((uses a gesture for forgetting))	T3.2 Elicit info. T6 Clue	Pattern F1
5	P?: ((laugh))	P2.2 Provide info: feeling	
6	TS: what is it	T3.2 Elicit specific info.	Pattern D2
7	TT: turnip turnip ((whisper with singing tone))	T5.2 Model: complete	
8	Sachiko: [turnip]	P1.1 Provide info.	Pattern F2
9	TS: oh. thank you. turnip	T11.1 Feedback	
10	P?: <i>what is</i> turnip	P8.2 Elicit unknown info.	Pattern F2
11	Tomoya: <i>it's turnip</i>	P1.1 Provide info.	
12	TS: the man holds the... ((uses a gesture for pulling out the turnip))	T3.2 Elicit info.	Pattern F2
13	Sachiko: turnip	T6 Clue	
14	TS: very good.	P1.1 Provide info.	Pattern F2
15	Daisuke: Cabrella ((a name of an American baseball player. Cabu is a Japanese word for turnip))	T11.1 Feedback	
16		P2.4 Provide info	
17			
18			

In the excerpt above, pupils are engaged in the action of joint storytelling by trying to provide a word for TS. TS provides careful support to prompt pupil participation, as this is the first time they have encountered the word ‘turnip’. He first elicits with a rising intonation, pointing at the picture of a turnip (L 1-2). Then he elicits indirectly by saying he has forgotten the word (L 4). Once more he attempts to elicit the word, directly asking “what is it?” (L 6). Still pupils cannot provide the word. Finally, TT models an answer by whispering the word twice with a soft singing tone (Line 7). Immediately Sachiko provides the answer (L 8). She speaks confidently with good pronunciation imitating the pronunciation of TS, a native English speaker, rather than the pronunciation of TT, a Japanese teacher. To Sachiko’s answer TS says, “oh thank you,” (L 9) in appreciation although it is not ‘real’ appreciation as the teacher planned the elicitation, and the teacher already knew the answer. TS’s utterance, “thank you” is encouraging, making pupils feel more relaxed and showing that the pupil’s answer was significant and appreciated.

The activity framework elicits active pupil engagement in joint storytelling by asking for help to complete the activity. To achieve this, the pupils provide the missing words. This requires them to search for affordances available in the environment, of which there are many. First, there are the teachers' ways of elicitation that frame the activity. These create pupil need for pragmatic engagement. Second, there is the teachers' support resulting from responsiveness to pupil need, for example, the use of gesture, pictures, and modelling of the correct word. The social relationship between teacher and pupil also contributes to affordances. As this is the first elicitation of the story, the pupils may be hesitant and awkward. The teachers endeavour to create a non-threatening atmosphere, willing and encouraging pupils to initiate language, jointly creating and sharing the experience of learning. By asking for pupil help the teachers invite their participation in a less authoritarian and threatening way. The result is discourse providing a number of opportunities for pupils to make use of affordances for comprehension and use of a new word. Throughout TS varies his method of eliciting, asking for the pupils' help, using gestures and pointing at the pictures. It is also observable that peer help is taking place between a pupil and Tomoya (L 10-11).

It is Sachiko who first successfully makes use of all the affordances mentioned above. Sachiko, who takes private lessons, has the best English in the class, is confident, and has a positive attitude. She seizes the opportunity available and provides the missing word. As a result language use emerges. This opportunity is not limited to Sachiko. All the other pupils share the opportunity to make use of the affordances available and are, as peripheral participants, also able to make use of Sachiko's success. Although the pupils appear to be quiet and inactive, many (all?) can be expected to be learning and answering quietly in their own minds through listening to the talk between Sachiko and the teachers. In this way, Sachiko provides the class with valuable affordance, a model of language use for other pupils.

When TS elicits again (L 12), Sachiko does not need much help (L 14). She has learned quickly and become more autonomous. She grasps the opportunity and provides TS with the word he needs to complete the story. However, it is also possible to interpret Sachiko's utterance as a guess based on the rising tone of TS's intonation and her own commonsense. She may reason that a word challenging enough to be elicited is likely to be a word just introduced. Although heavily scaffolded by means of prompting and modelling, Sachiko succeeds in participating in the activity of joint storytelling, providing a small contribution by giving a word (L 8). Sachiko shows quick progress in participation, providing the word at the second time of elicitation as well (L 14). On the other hand, some pupils still do not understand (L 10). Nevertheless, pupils are already becoming more autonomous, teaching and learning from each other. For example, Tomoya provides information to another pupil (L 11) while Daisuke, who is bossy, playful and often makes naughty comments, plays with language by associating the sound of the Japanese

word “cabu” meaning turnip with an American baseball player named “Cabrella” (L 17). Although the same affordance is available to all, how pupils make use of it seems to be influenced by their perception resulting from a complex combination of attitude, personality, language ability, general knowledge, and other possible factors.

An analysis of affordances identified in Excerpt 10.1 above is presented in Table 10.1 below. The table consists of five columns and seven rows. The left column lists the main categories of analysis. These comprise the six dimensions of affordances (See 9.2) making up six of the seven rows and a seventh category to identify types of affordances (See 9.4) forming the bottom row, row seven. The remaining four columns present profiles of affordances identified in the excerpt. In the data transcribed, although there is only one activity, four affordances are identified, thus, the need for four columns. This excerpt details an activity of whole class listening (Row 1 Activity) that contains two types of discourse patterns, two Pattern Ds two pattern Fs (Row 3 Discourse Patterns). The two Discourse Pattern Ds create opportunities for listening comprehension and the learning of a new word (Row 2 Pupils’ Intended Actions). In column 1 in the assisted discourse of Pattern D1, the teachers elicit (Row 4 Primary Assistance) and provide modelling (Row 5 Secondary Assistance). However, the pupils are not able to provide the required word (Row 6 Eventual Success). In column 2 in the assisted discourse of Pattern D2, the teacher elicits and provides a clue and then one pupil, Sachiko, manages to provide the required information successfully (Row 6 Eventual Success). This means she benefited from Discourse Patterns D1 and D2 (listening comprehension, learning to use the new word “turnip”). The other pupils may be assumed to have benefited from listening to Sachiko and the teachers, as later more pupils manage to provide information in a similar elicitation by the teachers. The above analysis reveals the existence of planned and Strong Affordances, demonstrating that multiple affordances can exist within and emerge from one source discourse.

Of the two Discourse Pattern Fs in Excerpt 10.1, the first (L10-11) provides an opportunity for learning the new word ‘turnip’ (Row 2 Pupils Intended Action). In the teacher-led elicitation, the pupils hear the word ‘turnip’ and initiate elicitation of information, asking for meaning (Row 4 Primary Assistance). Then a peer pupil (Tomoya L11) provides information (Row 5 Secondary Assistance). In this way the pupils learn the meaning of the word (Row 6 Eventual Success). This is an example of contingent and Strong Affordance. The second Pattern F, consisting only of Daisuke’s utterance (L 17), creates an opportunity for creative language use (Row 2 Pupils’ Intended Action). After hearing the new word ‘turnip’ (Row 4 Primary Assistance), Daisuke plays with the word and creates a reminder and an echo (6 Eventual Success). ‘Turnip’ in Japanese is ‘cabu’ and Daisuke associates ‘turnip’ with the name of an American baseball player, ‘Cabrella’. He found in the meaning of the word ‘turnip’ an echo in the Japanese word

'cabu'. 'Cabu' and 'Cabrella' may help him to remember the word 'turnip'. This is also an example of a contingent and Strong Affordance.

Table 10.1 Affordances in Excerpt 10.1 (Storytelling Lesson 1) The Enormous Turnip (A)

1. Activity	Whole class listening (read and elicit)			
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding a story • Understanding T's instructions & explanations • Predicting the story line Learning a new word <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the sound. • Noticing the meaning Using it	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding a story • Understanding T's instructions & explanations • Predicting the story line Learning a new word <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the sound. • Noticing the meaning Using it	Learning a new word <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the meaning 	Creative use of language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating reminders and echoes
3. Discourse Patterns	D1,	D2	F1	F2
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation of specific information	Elicitation of specific Information	Encountering a new word. Initiation of eliciting information.	Difference of sounds in the new English word "turnip" and the Japanese word for turnip, "cabu". Similarity of the sounds in cabu and Cabrella, an American baseball player's name.
5. Secondary assistance	Clues (gestures, pictures) Modelling Elicitation with a stimulus (picture and gesture) Peer modelling.	Clues (gestures, pictures) Modelling Elicitation with a stimulus (picture and gesture) Peer modelling.	Peer explanation	—
6. Eventual Success	+No pupils have immediate success in D1. However, Sachiko has a delayed success, capable of providing information in D2.	+Sachiko manages to provide the word to participate in join-story telling. Other pupils may be learning quietly by listening to Sachiko and the teachers.	+A pupil understands as meaning is provided by another pupil	+Emergence of creative language use
7. Type of affordance	D1: Delayed, planned and Strong Affordance	D2: Immediate, planned and Strong Affordance	Contingent and strong	Contingent and strong

10.2 Elicitation of Characters' Names

In Excerpt 10.2 below, TS elicits from pupils the characters who pull the turnip in the story (L 4 & 12). In the first elicitation (L 4), the pupils have difficulty in providing the required information. In the second (L 12), they also struggle but eventually succeed. The excerpt reveals instances of creative language use and peripheral participation.

Excerpt 10.2 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (B)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: the man sees the woman. come and help	T18Reading.	
2	come and help he says ((TS uses a gesture))	T6 Cue	
3	P?: help me	P2.3 Provide info.	Pattern F
4	TS: the woman pulls the man. the man pulls	T3.2 Elicit specific info.	Pattern D
5	the,	P1.1 Providing info.	
6	Megumi: pull	P2.2 Eliciting info?	
7	Shota: pull?	T3.2 Elicit specific info.	
8	TS: the man	T3.2 Elicitation of specific	
9	TT: the man	info.	
10	Daisuke: <i>oh heave ho</i>	P2.4 Providing info.	
11	Shota: <i>oh heave ho</i>	P 3.1Repetition.	
12	TS: the woman pulls the man. the man pulls	T3.2 Elicitation of specific	
13	the, (gestures and points at the picture)	info.	
14	Megumi: man	P1.1 Providing info.	
15	P?: [turnip]	P1.1 Providing info.	
16	Daisuke: turnip	P1.1 Providing info.	
17	TS: turnip. very good.	T11.1 Feedback	
18	TT: [very good]	T11.1 Feedback	

10.2.1 Creative Language Use 'help me'

Despite the absence of elicitation, contingent and creative language use emerges autonomously. "Help me" (L 3) is a simpler expression than "come and help" which the pupils have heard used in the story and also perhaps as a formulaic phrase encountered in the past. Its use could simply be the child's attempt to imitate "come and help" or, listening to the teacher's "come and help", s/he might have wanted to express her/his feelings and to use her/his own language, not an exact copy of what the teacher says. S/he therefore uses language in a creative way, adding the word 'me' to the teacher's language use. In so doing the pupil reveals her/his self to be actively trying to understand the story and to contribute to the storytelling.

Throughout, the relaxed atmosphere of the classroom environment is supportive of the pupil's effort. The pupil is encouraged to speak and make use of language used by the teachers ("come and help" L 1-3) to provide the phrase "help me" (L 4). The atmosphere invites the pupils to seek for and utilise affordances available, affordances such as the context and events of the story, the teacher's use of picture and gesture. All provide rich affordances for the child. With the affordances provided, a pupil finds and seizes opportunities that enable him/her to participate in and contribute to the activity of joint storytelling. That is, the affordances allow

the pupils to be more autonomous participants, able to initiate and provide expressions on their own and in their own creative ways.

10.2.2 Peripheral Participation by Shota

The pupils in Excerpt 10.2 appear to be in need of assistance and thus are dependent on the teachers. At this early stage of the storytelling, the pupils are not yet full participants. To the teacher's elicitation (L 4) the pupils cannot provide the required information and thus the teachers provide modelling. Megumi fails to provide the word "turnip" and instead provides a wrong word "pull". Shota (L 7) does not know what the word "pull" means. He repeats the word after Megumi, asking for the meaning. This lack of understanding at this stage is in marked contrast to that later in the lesson when Shota uses the word "pull" correctly and autonomously to provide required information (Excerpt 10.4 L 6). That is, while in the early part of the storytelling (Excerpt 10.2), it is necessary to assist pupil participation, the teachers are able to gradually reduce the assistance provided such that in the later stages of storytelling (Excerpt 10.4) the pupils are able to assume control of their participation.

In Excerpt 10.2 Shota may not be the only pupil who does not understand. However, despite some of the pupils not understanding the teacher's elicitation, they enjoy the story. This is reflected in Daisuke's utterance "*oh heave ho*". Shota also says, "*oh heave ho*" repeating after Daisuke. This shows that Shota is participating through imitation. It reveals that the social relationship between pupils affects the types of participation. As Shota and Daisuke are close friends and Shota is somewhat a follower of the bossy Daisuke, Shota immediately repeats the same phrase after Daisuke.

10.2.3 Peripheral Participation by Megumi

When TS seeks to elicit the words, "the man" (L 4) and "turnip" (L 12), Megumi tries but fails on both occasions. She simply repeats a word from the teacher's immediate utterance. Megumi is a sociable, talkative child, not afraid of trying and making mistakes. She certainly has a positive attitude and is participating actively. However, her utterances raise the question of whether active participation itself leads to language development. The strategy Megumi adopts is one of repetition of the immediate word, a basic and instinctive strategy. Though the teacher provides an opportunity for participation, Megumi is not ready to make use of the affordance and it is not sufficient to develop Megumi's understanding and analysis of language use. She needs more focused and adjusted assistance appropriate to her ZPD. Thus although the affordance provided enables a pupil (L 15) to answer, it is insufficient for Megumi at her level of development.

Two types of affordances may be identified in Excerpt 10.2. These are presented in Table 10.2 below and analysed in columns 2 and 3. Discourse Pattern D (Row 3 Discourse Patterns), reveals the pupils are engaged in two types of actions (Row 2 Pupils Intended Actions), listening comprehension and possibly, for weaker pupils, learning to use the word “turnip”. The teacher’s elicitation and the discourse of the story itself provide assistance (Row 4 Primary Assistance), establishing the framework of the activity. As the pupils cannot provide information, the teachers provide more assistance by eliciting again and providing modelling (Row 5 Secondary Assistance). Participation and learning by pupils varies; for some the assistance is enough to enable them to carry out the intended action, for others it is insufficient for immediate success (Row 6 Eventual Success). However, later in Excerpt 10.4 it will be observed that the class demonstrate delayed success in a similar type of elicitation. Therefore the affordance (Row 7 Type of Affordances) here in Excerpt 10.2 can be interpreted as both (1) immediate, strong and Planned Affordance, and (2) delayed, planned and Strong Affordance.

Pattern F (Row 3 Discourse Patterns) creates an affordance for creative use of language (Row 2 Pupil Intended Action). Language use in the story provides a pupil with an environment to trigger his/her language use (Row 4 Primary Assistance). The pupil notices a similarity in pragmatics and meaning between the phrase in the story “come and help” and her own language resource “help me”, which s/he would like to use. The outcome (Row 6 Eventual Success) demonstrates active and successful use of language, initiated by the pupil. It is an example of contingent and Strong Affordance (Row 7 Type of Affordance).

Table 10.2 Affordances in Excerpt 10.2 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (B)

1. Activity	Whole class listening (read and elicit)	
2. Pupils’ Intended Actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding a story • Understanding T’s instructions, explanations, • Predicting the story line. Learning words / phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the meaning Using it.	Creative language use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juxtaposition (Cameron 2004)
3. Discourse Patterns	D	F
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation of specific information, Discourse of the story	Similarity in pragmatics and meaning and a slight difference between the phrase in the book (“come and help”) and her own (“help me”).
5. Secondary Assistance	Elicitation of specific information (showing gestures, showing pictures) Modelling	—
6. Eventual success	-Megumi and Shota cannot provide the correct info. and have difficulty using the new words. Some pupils need more assistance. +However, another pupil manages to provide the required information.	+ The pupil is creatively using language that enables her to participate in joint storytelling.

7. Type of Affordance	Delayed planned Strong Affordance for Megumi and Shota as the class succeed in Excerpt 10.4. Immediate planned and strong for a pupil in L15 and Ketnaro.	Contingent and strong
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After Excerpt 10.2 the pupils successfully provide the additional required information in a choral answer in several elicitation, showing both the emergence of language and increased participation.

10.3 Emergence of Language Use (1) “Come and help”

So far the teachers have elicited two linguistic elements of the story, the object to be pulled, ‘turnip’, and the characters doing the pulling, ‘man’, ‘woman’ and ‘boy’. In Excerpt 10.3 below, the teachers intend to elicit the phrase “come and help” which has already appeared twice in the story and each time TS has provided a gesture. In the excerpt the teacher elicits the phrase “come and help” and Tomoko provides the phrase successfully (L 7).

Excerpt 10.3 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (C) Emergence of Language Use (1) “Come and help”

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: the turnip doesn’t move.	T18 Reading	Pattern C
2	what will we do?	T3.2 Elicit specific info.	
3	P?: ((unint.))		
4	TS: they see a girl	T18 Reading	Pattern D
5	TS: ((uses a gesture for come and help))	T3.2 Elicit specific info.	
6	P?: come here	P2.3 Provide info.	(Pattern F)
7	Tomoko: come and help. come and help	P1.1 Provide info.	
8	Megumi: come and help	P3.1 1.1Repeat	
9	TS: very good.	T11.1 Feedback	
10	TT: very good. Tomoko-chan	T11.1 Feedback	
11	TS: come and help come and help. they say.	T18 Reading	

When TS elicits the phrase “come and help”, TS uses gesture. Then a child says “come here” which is very close to the phrase “come and help”. “Come here” is an instance of “juxtaposition” (Cameron 2004), creative language use arising out of the child’s resources of words as a result of trying to remember and use a phrase appropriate to context. However, it is Tomoko who remembers and provides the exact phrase “come and help.” She has learned the phrase from the discourse by listening to the story and watching the gestures and pictures and finds the opportunity to use the phrase in a meaningful and contextualised way. Megumi cannot remember the phrase on her own. However, she is not hesitant in her language use and repeats after Tomoko immediately she hears the phrase, demonstrating her willingness and eagerness to participate in the activity and to connect with people.

In addition to the kind of assistance mentioned earlier (the framework of the activity (Elicitation), the use of the gestures and pictures), Excerpt 10.3 reveals another type of

affordance that enables Tomoko and another pupil to come up with the missing phrase. It is the repetitive occurrence of the phrase “come and help” in the book. They hear the phrase several times while listening to the story and when TS elicits it from the pupils some of them are ready to use it. Not only does the book provide the phrase but also the teacher repetitively uses the phrase several times affording the pupils an opportunity to learn it.

Affordances identified in Excerpt 10.3 are presented in Table 10.3 below. The table reveals multiple affordances and participations. Pattern D (Row 3 Discourse Patterns) is used by pupils to engage in two types of actions, listening comprehension and learning to use the new phrase “come and help” (Row 2 Pupils’ Intended Actions). Assistance takes two main forms, direct teacher elicitation of the new phrase and language use in the story (Row 4 Primary Assistance). By listening to the story, the pupils have heard the new phrase several times. Additionally a pupil’s creative language use “come here” (L 6) may also be interpreted as assistance (Row 5 Secondary Assistance), helping Tomoko to successfully provide the required information based on comprehension of the story. Her success shows a transformation in participation within the lesson (Row 6 Eventual Success), befitting from planned and Strong Affordance.

In addition to the affordance of listening comprehension, the same Pattern D discourse also provides an affordance for creative language use. A pupil (L 6) has the intention of creating juxtaposition. While s/he is expected to provide the required phrase “come and help”, s/he chooses to provide the phrase “come here” (Row 2 Pupils’ Intended Actions). The linguistic environment enables the pupil to perceive similarity and difference between the phrase in the book and her/his own (Row 4 Primary Assistance). Although the language s/he uses is different from what the teachers expect, it is still a successful use of language and could also be peer assistance for Tomoko (Row 6 Eventual Success).

Table 10.3 Affordances in Excerpt 10.3 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (C) Emergence of Language Use (1) “Come and help”

1. Activity	Whole class listening (read and elicit)	
2. Pupils’ Intended Actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding a story • Predicting the story line. Learning words/phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the meaning • Using it. Creative language use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juxtaposition 	Creative language use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juxtaposition
3. Discourse Patterns	D	(Pattern F)
4. Primary Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elicitation of specific information. • Language use and discourse of the story 	Similarity in pragmatics and meaning and a slight difference between the phrase in the book (“come and help”) and her own (“come here”).
5. Secondary Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P?’s answer (“come here”) has possibly become peer assistance 	

	for Tomoko?	
6. Eventual Success	+ Tomoko understands the story as she is successfully using the new language enabling her to participate in joint storytelling. Other children also might have benefited by listening to Tomoko and Megumi.	+A pupil is creatively using language. Tomoko might have benefited from listening to the pupil before herself producing “come and help”.
7. Type of Affordance	Immediate planned strong.	Contingent and strong.

The development of participation and emergence of language identified in excerpts 10.1 to 10.3 above continues as the storytelling develops but the amount of teacher assistance provided diminishes. Thus, TS continues to elicit the characters that pull the turnip and for each character TS provides a clue by pointing at pictures of the characters. However, TT no longer models the required language. As the Lesson Stage (Storytelling) develops the pupils successfully manage to give information in longer stretches of language use to tell the story together with the teacher. This reveals the pupils to be increasingly active participants performing the story jointly with the teachers.

10.4 Emergence of Language Use (2) “Pull pull pull”

In the following excerpt, the teacher elicits prediction of the storyline, events that will happen next in the story. Shota manages to predict what will happen by saying “pull pull pull” (L 6) although this is not syntactically or morphologically a complete sentence.

Excerpt 10.4 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (D) Emergence of Language Use (2) “Pull pull pull”

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: turnip. what’s going to happen	T3.1 Eliciting specific info.	Pattern C
2	Megumi: <i>noisy</i>	P2.3 Providing genuine info.	
3	TT: <i>yes</i>	T14.2 Confirming info.	
4	Takumi: ((unint.))		
5	TS: Daisuke	T13 Contingency management	
6	Shota: pull pull pull	P1.1 Providing information	
7	TS: ((unint. whisper))	T13 Contingency management	
8	TS: <i>they pulled and pulled. The turnip</i>	T18 Reading.	
9	<i>still doesn’t move.</i>		

As the storytelling develops more emergence of language use and participation occurs. After several attempts of eliciting the characters, TS asks “what’s going to happen?” (L 1). The pupils do not want or cannot reply to TS’s question. In the previous Excerpt 10.2 Shota did not know the word “pull”. However, Excerpt 10.4 shows that Shota has learned the pattern of the story by listening to the story. He knows what will happen. He suggests “pull, pull, pull”, a combination that has appeared in the story several times. As the excerpt shows, the next phrase the teacher reads in the book is “they pulled and pulled and pulled. The turnip still doesn’t move” (L 8-9). This reveals how quickly Shota benefited from participation in the activity, an example of microgenetic development (See 2.4.3 Genetic Method). The discourse pattern in this excerpt is

Pattern C (See Table 10.4), a pattern lacking in teacher assistance. Shota no longer needs Secondary assistance in order to participate actively in the activity.

Table 10.4 Affordances in Excerpt 10.4 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (D) Emergence of Language Use (2) “Pull, pull, pull”

1. Activity	Whole class listening (read and elicit)
2. Pupils’ intended actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding a story • Predicting the story line. Learning words / phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the meaning • Using it.
3. Discourse patterns	C
4. Primary assistance	Elicitation of specific information, Language use and discourse of the story
5. Secondary assistance	
6. Success	+Shota is capable of using language to participate in joint story telling..
7. Type of affordance	Immediate planned strong.

10.5 Emergence of Language Use (3) “Hurry up”

Previously in Excerpt 10.3 TS tried to elicit the phrase “come and help” (L 1) for the second time and Tomoko successfully provided the phrase for the first time (L 6). In the following excerpt another pupil also succeeds in providing the phrase (L 3). Additionally, the pupil initiates language use and contributes to the storytelling with his/her own words “hurry up” (L 2).

Excerpt 10.5 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (E) Emergence of Language Use (3) “Hurry up”

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: <i>the girl says to the cat,</i>	T3.1 Elicitation	Pattern C (Pattern F)
2	P?: hurry up	P2.3 Providing information	
3	P?: come and help	P1.1 Providing information	
4	TS: ((laugh))	T11.1.1 Feedback?	
5	TT: ((laugh))	T11.1.1 Feedback?	
6	TS: hurry up. good.	T11.1.3 Feedback	
7	TT: good	T11.1.1 Feedback	
8	TS: come and help good	T11.1.3 Feedback	
9	P?: come and help	P3.1 Repeat	
10	P?: come and help	P3.1 Repeat	

Shortly after the instance of language initiation by Shota (See Excerpt 10.4), another pupil also uses language creatively and contributes to the storytelling. When TS tries to elicit the phrase “come and help” (L 1), a pupil provides the phrase “hurry up” (L 2) before the desired phrase is given (L 3). This is another instance of juxtaposition. Both TS and TT laugh at the phrase (Lines 4-5), as they are very happy with the pupil’s contribution that is self-generated in his/her own words. Again the whole context, the activity framework in which the pupils are encouraged to contribute to storytelling, the picture the teacher shows the pupils, the emergent and meaningful discourse, all become affordances for the pupil who produces the phrase “hurry up”. It appears

that when pupils are engaged in an activity like story telling that has meaningful and interesting content with a clear purpose (predicting the story line) and effective language use (repetitive appearance of language), rich opportunities exist for pupils to explore language use.

Affordances identified in Excerpt 10.5 are presented in Table 10.5 below. The activity is one of whole class listening (Row 1 Activity) with pupils engaged in two types of actions, (1) listening comprehension and learning new words/phrases and (2) creative language use (Row 2 Pupils' Intended Actions). In Discourse Pattern C (Row 3 Discourse Patterns) for listening comprehension and learning to use a new phrase, the teacher's elicitation and language use in the story provide assistance (Row 4: Primary Assistance). Pupils successfully manage to use the phrase without additional help (5 Secondary Assistance). Therefore this is a planned and Strong Affordance. In addition to the Primary assistance available enabling the pupil to use "hurry up" creatively, the linguistic environment also enables her to notice similar pragmatics between the expression in the story "come and help" and her own language awareness of "hurry up". Thus she uses her own phrase to juxtapose, an example of successful creative use of language (Row 6 Eventual Success). Accordingly this is a contingent and Planned Affordance.

Table 10.5 Affordances in Excerpt 10.5 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (E) Emergence of Language Use (3) "Hurry up"

1. Activity	Whole class listening (read and elicit)	
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding a story • Predicting the story line. Learning words / phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the meaning • Using it. 	Creative language use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juxtaposition
3. Discourse Patterns	C	F
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation of specific information. Language use and discourse of the story	Elicitation of specific information. Language use and discourse of the story. Similar pragmatics between the expression in the story and her own language use.
5. Secondary Assistance	—	—
6. Success	+Pupils are using the new phrase that enables them to participate in joint storytelling. Other children also might have benefited by listening.	+Successful production of creative language use.
7. Type of Affordance	Planned and immediate strong.	Contingent and strong.

10.6 Emergence of Language Use (4) Tomoya

At the end of the joint storytelling activity, all the characters pulling the turnip are elicited. TS elicits pupils' participation by use of intonation, and the gesture of pointing at the pictures. This is detailed in Excerpt 10.6 below. The pupils jointly tell the story, managing to provide all the

names in chorus of the characters that pull the turnip. Tomoya even starts to say the whole sentences together with the teacher.

Excerpt 10.6 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (F) Emergence of Language Use (4) Tomoya

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: the mouse, pulls the , ((points at the picture))	T3.2 Reading/Eliciting info.	Pattern D
2	Pp: cat	P1.2 Providing information	
3	TS: the cat pulls the , ((points at the picture))	T3.2 Reading/Eliciting info.	Pattern D
4	Tomoya: [the cat holds the]	P1.2 Providing information	
5	Pp: dog	P1.2 Providing information	
6	TS: the dog pulls the , ((points at the picture))	T3.2 Reading/Eliciting info.	Pattern D
7	Tomoya: [the dog holds the]	P1.2 Providing information	(Pattern F for Tomoya)
8	Pp: girl	P1.2 Providing information	
9	TS: the girl pulls the , ((points at the picture))	T3.2 Reading/Eliciting info.	Pattern D
10	Tomoya: [the girl pulls the]	P1.2 Providing information	
11	TTPp: boy	P1.2 Providing information	
12	TS: the boy pulls the , ((points at the picture))	T3.2 Reading/Eliciting info.	Pattern D
13	Tomoya :[the boy pulls the]	P1.2 Providing information	
14	TTPp: woman	P1.2 Providing information	
15	TS: the woman pulls the , ((points at the picture))	T3.2 Reading/Eliciting info.	Pattern D
16	TTPp: man	P1.2 Providing information	
17	Daisuke : [<i>old man</i>]	P1.2 Providing information	
18	TS: the man pulls the , ((points at the picture))	T3.2 Reading/Eliciting info.	
19	Tomoya: [the man pulls the]	P1.2 Providing information	Pattern D
20	TTPp: turnip	P1.2 Providing information	

For the class the dialogue in Excerpt 10.6 is an opportunity to provide partial information, that is, the characters pulling the turnip. Tomoya has become more autonomous and active in his participation, providing whole sentences describing the activities of the characters, previously the teacher's role. This participation by Tomoya is a result of the type of elicitation employed and the type of story. Elicitation in the form of asking for pupil help to complete the storytelling naturally invites pupil participation. Secondly the story has rhythmic repetitive phrases. The rhythmic repetition attracts pupils and absorbs them; they enjoy anticipating what will happen next. Tomoya is absorbed in the story and taking a more active role.

The dimensions of affordances identified in Excerpt 10.6 are presented in Table 10.6 below. The whole class listening activity (Dimension 1 Activity) provides an opportunity for listening comprehension and for learning to use words (Dimension 2 Pupils' Intended Actions). The discourse pattern (Dimension 3 Discourse Patterns) is Pattern D and includes both Primary Assistance (Dimension 5) and Secondary Assistance (Dimension 5). The pupils have immediate success, capable of providing the words required (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). This is an instance of immediate planned and Strong Affordance. For Tomoya, the activity (Dimension 1) provides an opportunity for creative language use. In the linguistic environment created by the teacher and the story (Dimension 4), he finds a different aim and action to subvert the teacher's intended goal and initiate his own goal of providing whole sentences rather than simply the

words required (Dimension 2). Tomoya successfully manages to carry out his own intended actions (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). This is a contingent and Strong Affordance.

Table 10.6 Affordances in Excerpt 10.6 (Storytelling Lesson 1) *The Enormous Turnip* (F) Emergence of Language Use (4) Tomoya

1. Activity	Whole class listening (read and elicit)	
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding a story • Predicting the story line. Learning words/phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the meaning Using it.	Creative language use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subverting and changing the intended activity to a more active one (Tomoya)
3. Discourse Patterns	D	F
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation of specific information, Language use and discourse of the story.	The gap between his own agenda/capability and the required task demand.
5. Secondary Assistance	Pointing at the pictures.	Pointing at the pictures.
6. Success (New learning which enables participation)	+Pupils are using language to participate in joint story telling.	+ Depending on each pupil's readiness, the extent to which they take responsibility varies. Tomoya plays a more active role in participation by providing longer phrases.
7. Type of Affordance	Immediate planned strong.	Contingent and strong

At the end of the story, TS asks the pupils whether the turnip has come out or not. They answer in English saying “out” “out” “out”. They are clearly participating in the activity, thinking about the outcome of the story, and using English to talk about the result. For pupils at the beginner level, this is a sign of active participation. When they finish the story a pupil says in Japanese, “*I want to eat turnip now*”. Some pupils also make very realistic and sceptical comments about the concept of an enormous turnip. These comments after storytelling suggest that, in addition to participating in the storytelling, the pupils also comprehended and enjoyed the experience.

10.7 Summary

Close analysis of the discourse contained in Excerpts 10.1 to 10.6 above reveals a number of factors that may contribute to language use:

- (1) an activity has a framework that invites pupils' usage of language and participation
- (2) appropriate teacher support is provided, for example, pictures and gestures, support arising from teacher sensitivity to pupil need
- (3) repetitive use of language occurs
- (4) pupils are ready to use the opportunities available
- (5) supportive relationships exist between (a) teacher(s) and pupils (b) pupil and pupil.

Based on the bottom-up analysis carried out above and the ecological approach adopted, it is possible to suggest that activity and interaction are key factors in the creation of rich affordances for the emergence of language use. Van Lier (2002) argues affordances are created by our activity and the surrounding world when we are actively engaged in a setting. When we

are active and engaged in an activity, we search for and perceive properties relevant to the activity in the environment so that we can use them to actively engage in the activity. As van Lier (2002) states, “Practical activity provides a context within which language can emerge and grow”. Affordance depends on what we are doing, who we are, what we need and what is useful for achieving the activity. “The world is beginning to signal relevances, to offer affordances because of who we are and what we are doing, and we perceive these affordances” (van Lier 2002 p150). When the teacher introduces a story to the pupils, the pupils are actively engaged in understanding what the story is about. The activity creates the need to look for affordances. They perceive the picture in the storybook and the gestures the teachers use as affordances. Some pupils are ready to make use of affordances in the classroom and learn new words quickly. Some are not ready and take longer. Pupils like Sachiko in Excerpt 10.1, Tomoko in Excerpt 10.5 and Tomoya in Excerpt 10.6 are ready to use the affordances provided. In doing so, they provide opportunities of affordance for other pupils.

Throughout the excerpts presented in this chapter, the emergence of learning, although it remains at a very early stage, can be observed to be taking place through and as part of the process of classroom interaction. Pupils are acting vigorously in their efforts to understand the meaning of words. The joint focus of attention by teachers and pupils structures the learner’s activities and participation so that they can engage in the storytelling activity. This would seem to be similar to the process of “guided participation” as identified by Rogoff (1990, 1993) (See 2.6.2). Additionally, the increasing confidence and autonomous language use of pupils like Tomoya accords with an ecological view of learning (van Lier 2002) which suggests that individuals use affordances in an activity to relate themselves to the world. In the excerpts above, the pupils can be observed to make use of affordances to relate themselves to the classroom, to become more active participants of the EFL classroom community by means of the English language. The more successful in their use of the English language the pupils are, the more autonomous and independent members of the EFL classroom they become.

Finally, analysis of the excerpts in this chapter demonstrates that it is possible to perceive language learning as the transformation of participation. The process of the pupils gradually managing to provide the names of the characters is a good example of increased participation and responsibility. In Excerpt 10.1 the teacher had the largest responsibility and role, providing the model answer. In Excerpt 10.2 a pupil, following heavy assistance, manages to provide the name of a character for the first time. This shows the pupil assuming a degree of independence enabled by the emergence of new language use (being able to use the new word in the right situation). Thereafter the pupils’ performance of providing the names of the characters pulling the turnip gradually improved. Eventually, in Excerpt 10.6, a pupil shows he is capable of performing almost the same role as the teacher. This process of transformation reveals:

- the pupils perceived and made use of the affordances needed for their discourse action
- the affordances led to the emergence of language use
- the emerged language use enabled new forms of participation

The value of these excerpts is not in showing whether pupils acquired particular vocabulary or not. Rather, value lies in revealing the existence of certain learning opportunities and the fact that pupils made use of them in a particular situation. The type of learning revealed indicates that the participation metaphor is an applicable one, a valuable means of gaining insight into the process of development by which learners become capable of participation in a particular situation. Additionally, it can be said that the type of participation required in this activity was within the pupils' ZPD, the pupils eventually managing to improve upon their initial performance with teacher assistance gradually and greatly reduced. Thus the pupils were successful in achieving new performance within their ZPD.

Chapter 11 Qualitative Analysis 1(B) Storytelling

Storytelling as examined in the previous chapter, Chapter 10, actively involved pupils in the telling of a story, the teachers asking pupils to supply vocabulary that they, the teachers, had ‘forgotten’. However, this method of storytelling was observed only once during the course of this research. In this chapter, a further analysis of storytelling is carried out, an analysis of the method normally employed. It is a process in which the teacher, after introducing a story, reads the story aloud and the pupils listen without the teacher encouraging active participation. After one reading of the story, a competition is held to answer comprehension questions. This process reveals a very different pupil learning experience from that previously examined, one with fewer Strong Affordances and more Weak Affordances. This chapter attempts an analysis of how affordances are provided in this method using excerpts of Storytelling taken from two different lessons, Lesson 3 and Lesson 5.

11.1 Introduction to the Story: Role of Active Interaction

11.1.1 Active Interaction to Create Active Negotiation of Meaning

Storytelling normally begins with a framing stage in which the teachers explain what the class is going to do. This offers Strong Affordance for language learning when it involves teacher assistance and elicitation. This can be seen in Excerpt 11.1.1 below in which TS opens the discourse by introducing the story *Pancakes* (L1-2) and asking whether the pupils like pancakes or not (L 5 eliciting genuine information). This provides an opportunity for pupils to activate their schema. However, although most pupils understand the question, for some the word ‘pancakes’ prevents comprehension of TS’s question (L 9-15).

Excerpt 11.1.1 Introduction to Storytelling *Pancakes* (Lesson 5)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: ok. today I want to read you a story,..about	T2.2 Frame: agenda	Pattern A
2	pancakes	management	
3	Shota: [<i>breakfast?</i>]	P10 Confirm info.	Pattern E
4	T Tpp: pancakes	T2.2 Frame	
5	TS: raise your hand if you like pancake	T3.3 Elicit genuine info.	
6	P?: [pancakes]	P3.1 Repetition	Pattern F
7	Pp: <i>yes</i>	P2.1 Give genuine info	
8	Pp: <i>yes/I love it</i>	P2.1 Give genuine info:	
9	P?: <i>what is it</i>	P8.2 Elicit info.	
10	TS: I like pancakes	T14 3 Give genuine info.	
11	P?: <i>do you mean hotcake?</i>	P8.2 Elicit genuine info.	Pattern F
12	TS: hot cakes are the same..hot cakes,	T10.1 Explanation: explication	
13	pancakes		
14	P?: pan pan	P18 explanation: rephrasing	
15	P?: pan (<i>bread</i>) and hotcake are totally	P18 explanation: explication.	

16	<i>different</i>		
17	TS: I like pancakes with maple syrup	T14.2 Give info: opinion	
18	Miki?: <i>do you eat pancakes with maple syrup?</i>	P8.2 Elicit info.	

Some of the pupils ask for specific information to help their understanding. A pupil tries to negotiate meaning of “pancake” by asking “*what is it (pancakes)?*” (L 9). Then the pupil again asks a clarifying question “*do you mean hotcake?*” (L 11). This time TS replies to the pupil’s question (L 12), explaining the meaning. Another pupil (L 14) gives his/her interpretation to clarify the meaning saying, “pan pan”. The pupil thinks pancake is a kind of bread (‘pan’ in Japanese). Then another pupil replies, explaining the difference in meaning between pancakes and bread (L 15). The pupil (L 9) initiates clarifying questions for negotiation of meaning and both teacher and pupils provide assistance supplying an answer. As a result, a new understanding of these words emerges. This is an example of how pupils provide feedback to the teacher, seek tuned assistance from both teacher and fellow pupils and reveals how pupils are able to help each other.

Affordances in Excerpt 11.1.1 are presented in Table 11.1.1 below. Three affordances are identified but of particular note is the third, Contingent Affordance, which arises from the other two (Dimension 7, columns 2, 3 & 4). This process can be seen in Dimension 3. Some pupils did not understand the word “pancakes” (L 2 Pattern A, L 5 Pattern E) and seek clarification (L 9 Pattern F). A pupil initiates a question on the meaning of the word “pancake”, asking for feedback, and the teacher and other pupils provide an explanation (L 9-18). This is an instance in which an affordance for some pupils may be strong and immediate whilst for others the same affordance may be strong and delayed. That is, patterns A and E finally lead to Pattern F where understanding is achieved. Thus the framing stage can create a Contingent Affordance for negotiation of the meaning. This arises out of active teacher elicitation from the pupils and enables microgenetic transformation of pupil participation.

Table 11.1. 1 Affordances in Excerpt 11.1.1 Introduction to Storytelling *Pancakes*

1. Activity	Introduction of the story		
2. Pupils’ Intended Actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding T’s instructions, explanations Activating schema Learning words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noticing the meaning of a new word. 	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding T’s instruction Learning words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noticing the meaning of a new word. 	Learning words. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noticing the meaning of a new word.
3. Discourse Patterns	A	E	F
4. Primary Assistance	Framing with a picture	Eliciting specific info.	Gap in pupils’ understanding of a new word. The teachers do not control too tightly and accept the change of direction. Peer assistance.

5. Secondary assistance	Gestures	–	Explanation from both teacher and pupils.
6. Success	+Pupils are activating their schema. –However, many Pp did not understand T’s explanation.	+Pupils understand T and provide response. -However, many pupils do not understand the word “pancake”.	+Miki (L 18) shows understanding after explanations provided and she tries to participate in interaction with T although in Japanese.
7. Type of Affordance	For some Immediate strong Planned Affordance but for others Delayed strong Planned Affordance	Delayed strong Planned Affordance.	Strong and contingent

11.1.2 Difficulty of Adjusting Affordances in Framing to Different Pupils’ ZPD

The framing stage of Storytelling is not always one of Strong Affordance. As revealed in Excerpt 11.1.2 below where the process involves a one-way interaction, the transmission of information from teacher to pupil, the stage appears to provide an opportunity for comprehension only, one that risks being limited to those pupils with better English. Without elicitation by the teacher it is difficult to provide affordances adjusted to differing levels of pupil readiness. The danger is that of failing to provide assistance that recognises the existence and need for multiple forms of participation. (see 2.7 Participation Metaphor: Legitimate Peripheral Participation)

Excerpt 11.1.2 Introduction to Storytelling *More Spaghetti I Say* (Lesson 3)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	.....	.....
2	TS: ok, what’s next. I have today.. a special, story	T2.2 Framing	
3	.....	.....
4	TS: spaghetti yes..now.. today’s story..Daisuke. A	T11.1.2 Feedback	Pattern A 1
5	group ready? B group? today’s story, you have to	T2.2 Framing	
6	listen very carefully..because after the story. I’ll		
7	ask you questions		
8	Sachiko: <i>really? is it true?</i>	P8.2 Elicite genuine info.	(Pattern F1)
9	TS: yes.. like a test	T14.4 Giving info.	
10	Daisuke: <i>what? what’s going on?</i>	P8.2 Eliciting information	
11	P?: <i>what’s going on?</i>	P8.2 Eliciting information	
12	TS: ok?	T15 Confirm understanding	
13	Sachiko: oh my God	P2.3 Giving feeling	
14	TS: ((laugh)) and A group will get a chance to	T11.1 Feedback? 2.2 Framing	Pattern A 2
15	answer the question and B group we will give		
16	you points. so listen carefully		
17	TT: listen carefully ((singing))	T2.2 Framing	
18	Kumiko: <i>what does that mean.</i>	P8.2 Eliciting information	Pattern F2
19	Megumi: <i>what does that mean?</i>	P8.2 Eliciting information	
20	Sachiko: <i>Mr Conway will read a story and he will</i>	P2.2 Giving information	
21	<i>ask some questions</i>		

In this excerpt from Storytelling in Lesson 3, the teachers introduce the story *More Spaghetti I Say* and explain that there will be a team quiz after listening to the story. TS explains that there will be questions after the story (L 4-7). Sachiko understands and gives a reaction both in Japanese and English “*really? is it true?*” (L 8) and “oh my god” (L 13). Whereas Sachiko is

able to hold a short interaction with TS, others do not understand well, saying “*what’s going on?*” (L 10-11) “*what does that mean?*” (L 18-19). Then Sachiko explains and informs her classmates about what they are going to do (L 20-21).

There will always be more advanced pupils in any classroom and it is not wrong for teachers to make use of them. It is also sensible for the teacher to provide such pupils with an opportunity to make use of and stretch their abilities within their ZPD, involve them in classroom interaction. Nevertheless it is also required that the teacher be aware of the needs of those less advanced students when framing an activity. Undoubtedly it is the case that pupil active involvement via response in classroom interactions is vital if a teacher is to provide well-attuned assistance. Contributions such as Sachiko’s reaction to the teacher (“*really? is it true?*” L 8) further prompt TS to give more assistance in the form of rephrasing (“*like a test*” L 9). However, for the majority of pupils, understanding the teacher’s explanation is beyond their ZPD and they need more assistance to be able to participate in the interaction. To overcome their lack of understanding, the pupils themselves negotiate with each other to seek feedback, asking for direct help (L 18-19). Sachiko responds to their request, providing peer-assistance to help her fellow pupils interpret TS’s utterances (L 20-21).

Affordances arising throughout this framing stage are presented below in Table 11.1.2. In Discourse Patterns A1 and A2 (Dimension 3), the pupils are engaged in an action of listening comprehension to understand the teacher’s framing. For many pupils, this pattern provides a Weak Affordance not adjusted to their ZPD, as they do not understand, and there is no further development to achieve a successful action of listening comprehension. However, for Sachiko the affordance is immediate strong and Planned Affordance (Dimension 6, Eventual Success and 7 Type of Affordance). This affordance triggers another affordance for Sachiko. She reveals herself to be capable of developing the Discourse Pattern A2 into Pattern F1 (Dimension 3 Discourse Patterns) in which she engages in a conversational interaction (2 Pupils’ Intended Action). As she is capable of understanding the teacher’s explanation, she perceives that the teacher’s intention for the activity is surprising (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance). She successfully expresses her reaction, participating in a conversation (Dimension 6 Eventual Success) and the teacher provides her with further information to consolidate her understanding (Dimension 5 Secondary Assistance). However, Sachiko, appears to be an exception. Unlike the affordance in 11.1.1 above, framing in this excerpt fails to provide the majority of pupils with an affordance for understanding of the teacher and for greater participation. It fails to recognise and is insufficiently adjusted to the pupils ZPD.

Table 11.1.2 Affordances in Excerpt 11.1.2 Introduction to *More Spaghetti I Say* (Lesson 3)

1. Activity	Introduction to storytelling	
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension • Understanding T's instructions, explanations	Holding a conversational interaction • Understanding interlocutor and providing response
3. Discourse Patterns	A1, A2	F1
4. Primary Assistance	Framing with a picture	Surprise in new information
5. Secondary Assistance	Clues (Gestures)	Explanation: rephrasing
6. Eventual Success	-Many Pp do not understand T's explanation. +However, Sachiko is capable of understanding and participating in the activity.	+Sachiko manages conversation with appropriate use of a formulaic phrase
7. Type of Affordance	-Weak and planned for the class. +Immediate Strong and planned for Sachiko.	+Strong and contingent for Sachiko.

11.2 Whole Class Listening: Lack of Specific Focus on Language in Design

11.2.1 Lack of specific focus on language

In the regular approach to storytelling there are two marked differences from storytelling as described in Chapter 10. On the one hand is the nature of the story used, the lack of a clear language focus and, on the other, a failure to incorporate explicit use of language into the storytelling activity. The result is an activity providing for the emergence of Weak Affordances. This is illustrated in the following extracts.

First, the story *More Spaghetti I Say* does not appear to have strikingly noticeable phrases that the pupils are motivated to pick up. Certainly the story unfolds with a repetitive structure. One after another, the story reveals examples of how crazy the monkey is about spaghetti. For example, the story details the many different kinds of food such as ice cream and mustard that the monkey eats with spaghetti (See Excerpt 11.2.1). These are strange combinations and undoubtedly appeal to the pupils' sense of fun. Finally there is a surprise at the end. One of the two monkeys stops eating spaghetti but the other continues and shows signs of addiction. Repetitive phrases do occur in the story. However, they do not appear persistently throughout. This may help to explain why, at the preparation stage of the story, the teachers did not select and focus upon new language items to be learned nor did they devise a means by which new language learning was to be carried out. This in turn helps to account for the weakness of affordances revealed in Table 11.2.1. As the following extract reveals, no significant emergence of language use is demonstrated, other than perhaps reinforcement of vocabulary, though pupil comments indicate that they understand and are enjoying the story, that the story is meaningful and attractive to them.

Excerpt 11.2.1 Whole Class Listening (A) *More Spaghetti I Say* (Lesson 3)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: I love it (spaghetti) on pancakes	T18 Reading	Pattern C
2	P?: uuh((disgusted voice))	P2.3 Giving genuine info: feelings	
3	TS: with ice cream and ham	T18 Reading	
4	P?: uuh ((disgusted voice))	P2.3 Giving genuine info: feelings	
5	TS: with pickles and cookies	T18 Reading	
6	P?: <i>isn't it sweet</i>	P2.2 Eliciting genuine information	
7	TT: banana and jam?	T14.2 Giving info: feelings	
8	Sachiko: uuh ((disgusted))	P2.3 Giving info: feelings	
9	P?: <i>it must be sweet</i>	P2.4 Opinion	
10	TS: I love it with mustard and	T18 Reading	
11	marshmallow stuff. I eat it all day		
12	Sachiko: [uuh] [aah]	P2.3 Giving info: feelings	
13	Sachiko?: <i>really? why?</i>	P2.3 Giving info: feelings	
14	TS: I just can not get enough	T18 Reading	
15	TT: <i>really?</i>	T14.2 Giving info: feelings	
16	P?: <i>really? serious?</i>	P2.3 Giving info: feelings	
17	TS: wow.	T14.2 Giving info: feelings	
18	Tomoya: <i>eaten all?</i>	P8.2 Eliciting info;fact:	

Secondly, the pictures used and the structure of the story may not require the pupils to use language in comprehension. As noted above the pupils' comments, mainly in Japanese, indicate comprehension and enjoyment. However, it is possible that they do not attend to the language used, as the pictures alone, showing all the funny combinations of food, are sufficient to enable the pupils to comprehend the story. As a result the mental processing required to make sense of the story may not necessarily make use of English, the foreign language. Rather, the mental processing may be conducted in Japanese, the first language, or in a language-independent way, a process referred to as "mentalese" (Cameron 2001, p40). This can also be seen in *Pancake* (See Excerpt 11.2.2) in Lesson 5, a story in which several kinds of ingredients are introduced during the cooking process and illustrated with pictures. The pupils do not need to understand the new words to comprehend the story line or to listen at all. Just looking at the pictures is sufficient. As a consequence the pupils are not encouraged to associate sound with meaning. Greater thought on the part of the teacher to the integration of story, lexis, pictures and affordances stretching of pupil ability appears called for.

Excerpt 11.2.2 Whole Class Listening (B) *Pancake* (Lesson 5)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TT: you should listen. you should listen to the	T2.2 Framing	Pattern A
2	story ((uses a gesture for remembering))	T6 Hint (gesture)	
3	TS: listen and look at the pictures and	T2.2 Frame	Pattern C
4	remember...ok?		
5	Megumi: <i>I can't see</i>	P2.2 Give genuine info:	
6	TS: ok?... we are going to make pancakes...flat.	factual	
7	round. Pancakes ((gestures)).	T18 Reading	
8	P?: pancakes	P3.1 Repetition	
9	TS: flip. the pancakes..toss. the pancakes	T18 Reading	
10	((gestures))		

11	P?: toss	P3.1 Repetition	
12	TS: cook. the other. side. ((gesture)	T18 Reading	
13	P?: ahhhh	P2.3 Give genuine info:	
14	P?: ((unint))	feeling	
15	P?: <i>I don't understand</i>	P2.5 Give genuine info.	

In the storytelling of *The Enormous Turnip* in Chapter 10, the teachers elicited vocabulary and the use of phrases of focus. As a result, the pupils learned new language while attending the storytelling. However, in the regular storytelling of *Spaghetti* and *Pancake*, there is no such deliberate measure for learning new phrases, no apparent encouragement of the pupils to learn new language items. *Pancake* (See Excerpt 11.2.2) has a number of repetitive phrases and, as TS reads the story, he provides gestures to explain the key phrases “Flip the pancakes. Toss the pancakes. Cook the other side” (L 6, 9 &12). No other support is provided. Pupil learning might be inferred when a pupil repeats the word “toss” after TS (L11). However, pupil incomprehension is revealed later when a pupil says, “*I don't understand*” (L 15). The problem appears to be that the teachers do not focus specifically on the new words “toss” and “flip”, a problem compounded by the words having very similar meanings. Pupil confusion indicates that gesture alone may be insufficient for the pupils to fully comprehend the meaning of new words in a story. The extract raises questions as to whether gesture alone or pictures alone without specific attention on the part of the teacher to the teaching of lexis is sufficient for adequate comprehension and learning to occur.

As a consequence of the above omissions, affordances arising in whole class listening during regular storytelling are categorised as weak and planned, that is, they do not result in participation resulting from the learning of new language. The affordances identified in Excerpt 11.2.1 are presented in Table 11.2.1 below. This shows that the pupils are engaged in comprehension; do seek to understand the story (Dimension 2 Pupils' Intended Actions). However, effective elicitation of listening (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance) to support comprehension is minimal, the pupils appearing to understand the story from the pictures. Therefore the affordance here is categorised as weak and planned.

Table 11.2.1 Affordances in Excerpt 11.2.1 Whole Class Listening (A) *More Spaghetti I Say* (Lesson 3)

1. Activity	Whole class listening
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension • Understanding the story
3. Discourse Patterns	C
4. Primary Assistance	Eliciting listening
5. Secondary Assistance	
6. Eventual Success	Pupils are actively making sense of the story and participating in the activity, helped by pictures. –However, there is no language use and it is doubtful they learned any new language. Their understanding appears to be helped by the pictures.
7. Type of Affordances	Weak and planned

11.2.2 Peer Assistance “Large? a lot? more?”

Although not a frequent occurrence, it was observed that whole class listening is able to provide a contingent Strong Affordance in which pupils discover a learning opportunity by themselves and provide peer assistance. One example of such is given in Excerpt 11.2.3 detailing the beginning of the story *More Spaghetti I Say*. While the teacher (TS) reads the title of the book, the pupils attempt to understand the comparative structure “more” by themselves.

Excerpt 11.2.3 Whole Class Listening (C) *More Spaghetti I Say* (Lesson 3) “large? a lot? more?”

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: [ready?]	T2.1 Framing	Pattern D
2	TS: more, spaghetti I say ..ok, do you	T18 Reading, T16 Confirming	
3	understand?	understanding.	
4	Sachiko: ok	P2.5 Genuine info. Understanding	Pattern F
5	TS: more. spaghetti I say	T18 Reading	
6	P?: <i>large</i>	P4 Translation	
7	Megumi: <i>what? a lot</i>	P4 Translation	
8	Sachiko: <i>a lot... more and more spaghetti</i>	P4 Translation	

Immediately the storytelling starts, pupils are engaged in trying to understand the meaning of the word “more”. Nothing suggests the comparative meaning of “more and more”. A child says “large” (L 6). Then Megumi says “a lot” (L 7). Finally Sachiko says “more and more spaghetti” (L 8). Pupil understanding develops from the concept of size “large”, to amount “a lot”, to the comparative “more” in three quick turns. The pupils might have perceived the new language as simply another lexical item. However, grammar and lexis are closely tied together and, due to Sachiko’s contribution, the pupils come to understand the grammatical aspect of the new language by themselves. The picture certainly offers help but it is mutual help and joint construction among the pupils themselves that affords understanding of the new language use.

Analysis of the emergent affordances in the above extract is provided in Table 11.2.2. In Pattern D (Dimension 3: Discourse Patterns) the activity of whole class listening (Dimension 1 Activity) offers the pupils an opportunity for listening comprehension (Dimension 2 Pupils’ Intended Actions). Sachiko benefits from both types of assistance provided by Pattern D (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance, Dimension 5 Secondary Assistance). However, this is not the case for the other pupils (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). Thus Pattern D offers an immediate planned Strong Affordance for Sachiko but a delayed strong Planned Affordance for the other pupils, as their understanding is achieved in the next discourse Pattern F (Row 7 Types of Affordances). It is discourse Pattern D that creates an environment in which the pupils encounter new grammar (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance) and initiate translation and co-construction of learning in the next pattern (Pattern F). Eventually the pupils themselves achieve

new understanding enabling participation in understanding of the story (Dimension 6 Eventual Success).

Table 11.2.2 Affordances in Excerpt 11.2.3 Whole Class Listening (C) *More Spaghetti I Say* (Lesson 3) “*large? a lot? more?*”

1. Activity	Whole class listening	
2. Pupils’ Intended Actions	Listening comprehension • Understanding the title	Initiating agenda for learning grammar • Noticing the meaning
3. Discourse Patterns	D	F
4. Primary Assistance	Framing with a picture, Eliciting listening	New grammar. Gap in understanding
5. Secondary Assistance	Gestures	Translation
6. Eventual success	+Sachiko shows her understanding. -However, it is doubtful others understand T’s explanation as they raise the meaning of the title as an issue	+Pupils are co-constructing understanding and finally come up with the meaning
7. Type of Affordances	Delayed strong and planned	Contingent and strong

11.3 Post Listening Comprehension Quiz: Insufficient Focus on Learning in Design

11.3.1 Neglect of meaning in quizzes

Another weakness with the regular approach to Storytelling can be observed in post-listening comprehension quizzes. In the quizzes the teachers almost entirely focus on eliciting the sound of words, not the meaning. Although the pupils demonstrate their ability to pronounce the words, this appears to this researcher to be an inadequate level of participation, one insufficient for a classroom language learning community. Accordingly the resulting affordance is categorised as weak and planned.

Excerpt 11.3.1 below details a team competition in which TS asks each of two teams questions after listening to the whole story. TS elicits specific information on the story and pupils engage in remembering and supplying answers. If the answers required are limited to vocabulary items such as the names of food and characters in the story, the pupils appear to find the activity a fairly easy one. The questions asked by the teacher are recitation type questions and as long as the pupils can remember the vocabulary they can produce the required answer. Additionally, the pupils are already familiar with words used in the story such as the names of food. It is therefore easy for them to remember the words by looking at the pictures rather than listening. Undoubtedly, some pupils do learn new words by listening to the story and looking at the pictures in the book. However, in the excerpt Hirofumi has difficulty in remembering and

supplying the required word “mustard” and it is questionable how much if anything he is learning from the quiz.

Excerpt 11.3.1 Post Listening Comprehension Quiz (A) *Pancake* (Lesson 3)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	Hirofumi: [yes/yes/yes]	P12 Bidding	Pattern C
2	PP: [((raise their hands))]	P12 Bid	
3	TS: yes, ok	T20 Nominate	
4	Pp: <i>there's more there's more</i>	P2.2 Give genuine info: opinion.	
5	TS: yes this Group,	T20 Nominating	
6	Hirofumi: mas	P1.1 Giving info.	
7	TS: say it again?	T3.1 Elicit info.	
8	Hirofumi: <i>didn't it say mas?</i>	P1.1 Giving info.	
9	TT: mustard?	T11.1.4 Feedback	
10	Daisuke: <i>yes I knew the answer.</i>	P2.3 Give genuine info: opinion.	
11	TS: ok, mustard. mustard very good	T11.1.4 Feedback	
12	Daisuke: mustard	P3.1 Repetition	
13	TS: this group.	T20 Nominate	
14	Daisuke: mustard	P3.1 Repetition	

Hirofumi hears a new word “mustard” in the story but cannot remember the word completely when it is elicited. He tries to remember the word and provides as much of the word as he can remember “mas” (L 6), “*didn't it say mas?*” (L 8). Listening to Hirofumi, the teachers realize his difficulty and provide the correct word. Using this occasion of affordance, he may learn the sound of the new word. The activity also creates an opportunity for other pupils to learn the new word as they listen to him and the teacher (Daisuke in L 12 and 14 is practicing by himself). However, as the teachers do not provide the meaning of the word, it is not clear whether Hirofumi, or the other pupils, learn the meaning of the word or not. Without meaning it is unlikely the students will retain the word for long, it being simply a combination of sounds associated with food and a story. Thus, as the pupils were given the correct sound of the word without the meaning, their participation does not appear to fully achieved..

Analysis of affordance in the excerpt is provided in Table 11.3.1 In this activity (Dimension 1), a post listening comprehension quiz, the pupils are engaged in actions of understanding the teacher’s question, recalling the story and words used in the story in order to answer a quiz (Dimension 2 Pupils’ Intended Action). The discourse pattern (Dimension 3) is Pattern C in which no Secondary Assistance (Dimension 5) appears. The pupils, including the pupil who answer a question (Hirofumi), show no evidence that they understand the meaning of the words they produce. (Dimension 6 Eventual Success) There is a lack of the teacher effort to check meaning. Therefore, the affordance here is categorised as a weak and planned one (Dimension 7 Types of Affordance). This Weak Affordance appears to be due to insufficient focus by the teachers on new phrases and words (Dimension 2 Intended Action) and/or a failure to provide sufficient assistance to learn them (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance, Dimension 5 Secondary Assistance) in the elicitation of words during the quiz.

Table 11.3.1 Affordances in Excerpt 11.3.1 Post Listening Comprehension Quiz (A) Pancake (Lesson 3)

1. Activity	Post listening comprehension quiz
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding T's question • Recalling a story Learning words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling words
3. Discourse Patterns	C
4. Primary Assistance	Repetitive occurrence of words Eliciting specific information
5. Secondary Assistance	—
6. Eventual success	+ Pupils are learning the sound of a new word -However, it is doubtful they learned the meaning of the new word. Focus on words at a certain stage would have been beneficial
7. Type of Affordances	Weak and planned

11.3.2 Elicitation of unlearned words: “flip”

There is a danger with the post listening quizzes that pupils engage in guessing words they do not know or have had only minimal exposure to. This can be seen in the quiz following the story of *Pancake*. The teachers elicit the word “flip” which appears in the story but which was not focused upon during listening. When eliciting, TS uses phrases from the book containing all the verbs, “toss the pancake. cook the other side”, accompanied by gestures. Then TS gives a clue, saying that the first letter is F (L 4) and writing the letter on the board. Then pupils try to guess the word, trying any word they know beginning with F regardless of meaning, for example, “fast” (L 7) and “fun” (L 9-10) (See Excerpt 11.3.2). Despite the several types of assistance provided by the teacher, it is difficult for the pupils to come up with words they have not quite learned. That is, the use of quizzes in this manner is not an effective learning experience.

Excerpt 11.3.2 Post Listening Comprehension Quiz (B) Pancake :Elicitation of unlearned words “flip” (Lesson 5)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: do you remember D group?...it's a. it's	T9 Encouragement	Pattern D
2	difficult. I will give you a little hint	T6 Clue	
3	P?: little hint?	P10 Confirm info.	
4	TS: the first letter is ((writes F on the board))	T6 Give a clue	
5	TT: ahh	T8 Encourage	
6	TS: ok, I will give you-	T6 Clue	
7	Hirofumi: fast?	P1.1 Give specific info.	
8	TS: almost. not fast	T11.2 Feedback	
9	P?: fun	P1.1 Give info.	
10	P?: fun	P1.1 Give info.	
11	TS: do you remember? nobody?	T3.2 Elicit info.	

In Excerpt 11.3.3 following, Group A's turn comes and TS repeats the clue saying, “ef. begins with ef” (L 4). However, this affordance is still not adjusted to the pupils' level, is not sufficient

for them to use. Daisuke says “egg” (L 9), a word starting with an ‘E’ sound not an ‘F’ sound. Sachiko, who appears readier to make use of TS’s affordance and pays more attention to sound and meaning when she hears a new word, says she has got it (L 14). Perhaps she remembers the word and tells the rest of Group A as a group member says “*up and down*” (L 15), meaning the movement of pancakes when flipped. Then Group A answers “flep” (L 17), which is very close to the word “flip”. Considering the fact that the pupils were not explicitly taught the word and had to learn it by just listening, the pupils did very well to produce a word which is almost correct.

Excerpt 11.3.3 Post Listening Comprehension Quiz (C) *Pancake* Elicitation of unlearned words “flip” (Lesson 5)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TT: A group. it’s your turn. A group	T20 Nominating	Pattern D
2	Daisuke: <i>what is it</i>	P8.2 Elicit info.	
3	TS: cook.	T6 Give a clue	
4	TT: ef. begins with ef	T6 Give a clue	
5	TS: the first letter is ef	T6 Give a clue	
6	Daisuke: egg..egg	P1.1 Give info.	
7	TTTS: ((show a gesture for flip))	T6 Clue	
8	Tomoya: <i>I know</i>	P2.5 Give info: understand	
9	Daisuke: egg	P1.1 Give specific info.	
10	TS: not eggs. Toss the pancakes. Cook the other	T11.2 Feedback.	
11	side and?	T3.2 Elicit info.	
12	TT: (((gestures for toss)))	T6 Clue	
13	TSTT: ((gesture for flipping))	T6 Clue	
14	Sachiko: <i>I got it I got it</i>	P2.5 Give info: understand	
15	P?: <i>up and down</i>	P1.1 Give specific info.	
16	TS: A group?	T20 Nominate	
17	AG: flep	P1.1 Give specific info.	
18	Megumi: no	T11.2 Feedback	
19	TT: ahh	T11.2 Feedback	
20	TS: almost. Do you remember the word?	T11.2 Feedback. T3.1 Elicit specific info.	
21			

Group B’s turn comes and they answer “fry” which starts with F. This is an example of how actively the pupils are thinking, using the resources they have in search of a word that fits the condition. Finally Group C’s turn comes again and they win with help from Miho who gives the correct answer. In the whole class only Miho, a bilingual child, was able to provide the answer, despite the question being asked of every group and with teacher assistance provided. Perhaps the teacher could have assisted the pupils more by adjusting the assistance provided. By so doing, more use could have been made of the opportunity for learning. Once again it is doubtful whether the pupils have learned and can produce the word. Affordances observed in Excerpts 11.3.2 and 11.3.3 are presented below in Table 11.3.2 below.

Table 11.3.2 Affordances in Excerpts 11.3.2 & 11.3.3 Post Listening Comprehension Quiz *Pancake* (B) & (C) “flip” (Lesson 5)

Activity	Post listening comprehension quiz
Pupils’ Intended Actions	Listening comprehension

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Teacher's instructions, explanations. Learning words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticing the sound. • Noticing the meaning.
Discourse Patterns	D
Primary Assistance	Eliciting specific information
Secondary Assistance	Gestures, giving a clue, affective support, explanations. Listening to peer pupils' answers.
Eventual success	+Sachiko might have benefited from the assistance as she produced a close word.– However, other than the bilingual pupil, the pupils cannot provide the word. With the explanations, the meaning might have become clearer but they still do not produce the word.
Type of Affordances	Weak and planned

11.4 Discussion: The Role of Language Focus (Intended Action) and Design of Activity (Primary Assistance) in Storytelling

Examination of the two approaches to storytelling observed in Chapters 10 and 11 reveals that different approaches create different types of affordances (See Research Question 2.1 on types of affordances in Chapter 3). Activities accompanying the telling of the story *Enormous Turnip* in Chapter 10 create a larger number of Strong Affordances, both contingent and planned, whereas activities associated with *More Spaghetti I Say* and *Pancake* in Chapter 11 produce a greater number of Weak Affordances. Activities also create different levels and types of affordances for different pupils. Analysis of interaction across the six dimensions of affordances reveals that the differences in types of affordances observed derive mainly from features of dimensions, notably Dimension 2 *Pupils' Intended Actions*, and Dimension 3 *Primary Assistance*, and interaction across the dimensions (See Research Question 2.2 on the process of provision of affordances). Examination of Dimension 2 indicates the importance of a clear language focus and teaching goals. Analysis of Dimension 3 suggests teachers need to devise activities specifically focused upon enabling pupils to achieve intended learning goals that enable subsequent active participation in language learning activities. This would include the careful selection of stories and tasks associated with the telling of stories. As revealed in the analysis of activities associated with *Pancake* and *More Spaghetti I Say*, simply adopting and reading a story is not an effective approach to learning. Teacher preparation, notably of pre-reading tasks and involvement of pupils in the reading process, has the potential to exert a significant effect on listening comprehension, and also on language use.

Lack of a language focus and attention to the design of an activity is reflected in pupil performance (See Research Question 2.3 on how pupils' making use of affordances). Analysis of storytelling in the two chapters reveals that a number of pupils, possibly a majority, did not achieve new learning solely by listening to a story. Post-listening comprehension quizzes of *More Spaghetti I Say* indicate that pupils were able to understand the story without using

English in their comprehension process. It is very likely that they were able to comprehend the story using “mentalese” rather than English. On another occasion in the quiz, a lack of language focus and attention to the design of an activity frame is observed to lead to a lack of understanding of the meaning of words. Pupils may pay attention to English while attending to sounds. However, lack of teacher assistance means they hear the sound of words without understanding the meaning. In *Pancake* there is a specific language focus but there is no specifically devised assistance for learning new words via Primary assistance. Secondary assistance was provided but it was not usable. To benefit from Secondary assistance, the pupils need to be provided with opportunities to notice the meaning and sound through Primary assistance.

The fact that the pupils are not given an opportunity to use language in understanding a story has significant consequences for the quality of pupil participation (See Research Question 2.3 on how pupils’ making use of affordances). The pupils may understand the story with the help of pictures and mentalese and appear to achieve participation in the activity of storytelling. However, the main object of the classroom community is to learn the English language (See Widdowson 1998 in 2.8) and to participate in the discourse of language learning activity. In this sense the pupils fail to “truly” participate in the activity of the community, that is, learning language and participation based on language use.

Despite the weaknesses depicted in the analysis, storytelling in the two stories in Chapter 11 does have a number of positive aspects. Although the Framing stage of storytelling is difficult for some pupils, it has the potential to engage pupils in conversational interaction as it stirs pupil interest in what is coming next. This appears to be successful in meeting one of the primary goals of a pre-listening activity, that of getting pupils interested in and ready for a story. Additionally, as observed in *Pancake*, pre-listening activity creates opportunities for the active contribution of pupils in the form of peer assistance. Thus the Framing stage has an important role to play in the creation of Strong Affordances. However, teachers do need to be careful in Framing. They need to provide adjusted assistance to the majority of pupils as interaction in Framing appears to be contingent and involves conversational features. This can be difficult for weaker pupils to understand. Listening to interaction between stronger pupils and a teacher is an affordance itself for weaker peripheral pupils. However, lack of well-attuned assistance and incomprehension could demoralize weaker pupils.

From the analysis of Storytelling activities, it was revealed that productive affordances have the following features (See Research Question 2.1 on types of affordances). As revealed in the examination of the role of Dimension 2 *Pupils Intended Actions*, productive affordances are Strong Affordances that contain a well planned clear learning and teaching focus and goals and

well-planned devices to achieve the learning and teaching focus and goals. Well-planned preparation means that the goals and the activity framework devised are well tuned to the pupils' ZPD, otherwise positive learning outcomes would not arise from interaction between the pupils and the environment. (Research Question 2.2 on the process of provision of affordances) These well-Planned Affordances may not have an immediate effect on observable performance. However, a delayed effect on learning and performance was observed, that is, the dynamics of learner microgenetic development. Thus, Planned Affordances, when they are well prepared, mediate learning and provide for very strong positive learning outcomes and enable subsequent pupil participation (See Research Question 2.3 on how pupils' making use of affordances).

Analysis in this chapter also contributes to our understanding of learning perceived as participation. Whereas in the previous chapter examples of language use resulting in active student participation revealed the occurrence of learning and the usefulness of a participation perspective, this chapter illustrates a lack of language use resulting in a low level of participation and learning but also reaffirms the value of a participation metaphor perspective. Excerpt 11.2 details affordances not providing opportunities for the emergence of new language use, the result being pupil incomprehension of the story. Excerpts 11.3.1, 11.3.2 and 11.3.3 show pupil inability to provide answers in a quiz, that is, a failure to participate fully due to an absence of learning of the new words needed. These examples of incomprehension of the story and of failure to answer quiz questions reveal that pupil learning was not as effective as in the storytelling of the previous chapter. Participation depends on whether an appropriate ZPD exists or not in an activity. Analysis in this chapter reveals that the gradual shift of responsibility and attainment of performance did not occur. This suggests that the ZPD or the "gap" between current performance and one slightly beyond yet attainable was not appropriately created, indicating the importance of the ZPD and its recognition in enhancing performance.

Chapter 12 Qualitative Analysis 2 Games

Quantitative descriptions of lesson stages reveals that Stage 7 *Games* involves different types of discourse patterns to those observed in other lesson stages, Stage 7 containing a higher frequency of Patterns D, E and F. This chapter therefore seeks to determine in greater detail the nature of discourse patterns and affordances in Stage 7 *Games*, examining excerpts from Lesson 6, a touch game, and excerpts from Lesson 15, a guessing game. The analysis carried out focuses upon types of activities and how these engender affordances and the emergence of language use.

12.1 A touch game (Lesson 6): Light task demand

In Lesson 6 the class play a touch game. In the game TS says a sentence with one of the following three forms: 'I like soccer', 'I don't like basketball', or 'We need a basketball'. On hearing the sentence, two contestants representing competing teams have to touch an appropriate picture card of sports equipment on the blackboard. (See how to play games in 7.4)

12.1.1 Introduction of the game (A): Difficulty in adjusting to the pupils ZPD in Framing, preventing participation

Before the class starts the game the teachers explain how to play the game and also provide a demonstration. Then the class plays the game. In the excerpt below the game has not yet started and the teacher is framing the activity. However, as indicated previously in 11.1.2, there can be difficulty in the Framing stage in providing affordances adjusted to pupil ZPD.

Excerpt 12.1.1 Introduction of a touch game (A) (Lesson 6)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: ok. now. I will make three sentences for our	T2.2 Frame: agenda management.	Pattern G
2	listening test ((shows his three fingers))		
3	P?: <i>three</i>	P10 Confirm info	
4	TS: for sports part now. one. I like soccer. I don't	T2.2 Framing: agenda management	
5	like ice hockey. we need a basketball. we need a		
6	volley ball. ((points at each picture cards))		
7	P?: <i>ahh I don't understand</i>	P2.5 Give genuine info: understand	
8	TS: do you understand?	T15 Confirm understanding	
9	Daisuke: <i>what?</i>	P8.2 Elicit information	
10	TS: so listening test. sports. I will say [three	T2.2 Framing	
11	sentences. I like soccer.] I don't like ice hockey.		
12	we need ice skates. we need, ((points at picture		
13	cards))		
14	P?: [<i>I don't understand</i>]	P2.5 Give genuine info: understanding	
15			

First, the teacher explains what the pupils are going to do (L 1). A pupil manages to understand that there are three things to be done (L 3) although s/he does not know exactly what is required. TS perceives from the pupil's response (saying only "three" in Japanese) that he needs to explain more and uses an example, accompanied by the gesture of pointing at relevant picture cards (L10-13). However, the pupils still do not understand.

In this activity the language and support the teachers provide do not appear to be easily usable by the pupils, even though much of the support provided by TS derives from TS's responsiveness to the pupils' reaction. His support is still insufficient and needs further adjustment to the pupils' needs. In addition, TS dominates the discourse with the pupils who are given little opportunity to talk/use language other than to express that they do not understand. One conclusion that might be drawn here is that, as noted in 11.1.1 for a teacher to provide rich affordances, it is necessary to elicit more language use from the pupils. It is the use of language by pupils in this extract that reveals to the teacher that the affordances provided are insufficient for the pupils to use and that richer affordances are needed. It is through active pupil language use that the teacher is able to adjust the support provided and create an affordance appropriate to student ZPD.

Affordances emergent in the Excerpt 12.1.1 above are identified in Table 12.1.1 below. The affordance is weak and planned in this activity of *Introduction of a game*, as the pupils fail to make use of both Primary assistance (Dimension 4) and Secondary assistance (Dimension 5) and fail to achieve the intended action of listening comprehension (Dimension 2). The noticeable feature of the affordance here is the discourse pattern. Pattern G consists only of teacher framing actions with no elicitation of pupil language use or response. The result is an inactive interaction providing little opportunity for the teacher to be responsive to pupil need.

Table 12.1.1 Affordances in Excerpt 12.1.1 Introduction of a touch game (A) (Lesson 6)

1. Activity	Introduction of a game
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension • Understanding instructions and explanations
3. Discourse Patterns	G
4. Primary Assistance	Framing with pictures
5. Secondary Assistance	Framing with pictures
6. Eventual Success	– Pupils do not understand T's explanation
7. Types of Affordance	Weak and planned

12.1.2 Introduction of the game (B): Pupils' negotiation for focused assistance, advancing participation

Excerpt 12.1.2 occurs straight after Excerpt 12.1.1 and is more dynamic. A notable feature is that, although in Japanese, Daisuke contingently opens the discourse by initiating a clarifying question "what does we nee (need) mean?" (L 1), as the expression "we need" is a new one that

prevents the pupils from understanding teacher framing. Daisuke's question determines the pupils' engagement in this excerpt. As specified by Daisuke's question, they are engaged in the action of trying to comprehend the new phrase "we need". Daisuke is an adventurous and unreserved child and willing to take a chance to initiate a question.

Excerpt 12.1.2 Introduction of a touch game (B): negotiation for focused assistance (Lesson 6)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns	
1	Daisuke: <i>what does we nee mean?</i>	P2.2 Elicit info.	Pattern F1	
2	P?: <i>we need</i>	P3.1 Repeat		
3	TS: <i>we? two people. we need...so-((uses a</i>	T10.3 Explain: example		
4	<i>hand gesture to indicate "we"))</i>			
5	TT: <i>ok. do you understand? we need golf ball</i>	T15 Confirm understanding.		
6	<i>what does it mean. do you know? ((points at</i>	T3 Elicit translation		
7	<i>picture cards))</i>			
8	Megumi: <i>yes yes yes</i>	P12 Bid		
9	Daisuke: <i>you are loud</i>	P2.4 Give genuine info.		
10	TT: <i>we need?</i>	T3.5 Elicit translation		
12	TS: <i>sport. ice hockey. what do we need to play</i>	T10.3 Explain: examples T3.1 Elicit		
13	<i>((points at picture cards))</i>	specific info.		
14	Miki: <i>I got it. I got it</i>	P2.5 Give genuine info.		
15	P?: <i>yes yes</i>	P12 Bid		
16	TS: <i>ice skate ball. stick. net. ((points at the</i>	T10.3 Explain: examples.		
17	<i>cards))</i>			
18	Shota: <i>yes yes yes</i>	P12 Bid		
19	TT: <i>so. what does it mean. Daisuke-kun. listen</i>	T3.5 Elicit translation. T13		
20	<i>carefully. ok</i>	Contingency management.		
21	Sachiko: <i>ice skate. we need ice skate</i>	P1.2 Give specific info.		
22	TS: <i>right.</i>	T11.1 Feedback		
23			Pattern F2
24	Tomoya: <i>what we use for soccer. something we</i>	P 18 Summary		Pattern A
25	<i>need. we need. Hiroshi, does it means</i>	P10 Confirm understanding		
26	<i>something we need for soccer?</i>		Pattern F3	
27	TS: <i>we play for the game today. this side and</i>	T2.2 Frame: agenda management		
28	<i>this side. team one team two. ok?</i>			
29	Daisuke: <i>[if it is for baseball] does it mean</i>	P10 Confirm understanding		
30	<i>glove, bat and ball? are these three ok]</i>			

To Daisuke's question, the teachers provide several types of assistance. First TS explains the meaning of "we", rephrasing with a hand gesture, "we? two people. we need...so-((uses a hand gesture to indicate "we"))" (L 3-4) and then TT interjects. TT elicits directly, asking, "we need a golf ball. what does it mean?", and pointing at the picture cards (L 5-7). As a result of these different kinds of assistance, some of the pupils including Megumi raise their hands and bid for nomination, expressing that they understand.

TS further focuses on the new phrase by providing an example of the use of the phrase while pointing at picture cards, "sport. ice hockey. what do we need to play" (L 12-13). This prompts two more of the children to bid (L 14-15). TS then provides a further example, pointing at the picture cards (L 16) and this time one more pupil raises a hand (L 18). Eventually Sachiko is

nominated and she produces a sentence in English, using the phrase “we need” (L 21). This is followed by thinking and active participation further seen in Tomoya’s and Daisuke’s utterances. Tomoya talks to himself, summarising the meaning of the phrase. Then next he asks Hiroshi the meaning of the phrase as a way of confirmation (L24-26). Daisuke is also thinking about the meaning, substituting different words into the phrase (L29-30). The different personalities of the pupils and differing degrees of self-confidence affect their willingness to openly demonstrate understanding. Being quiet does not mean a pupil does not comprehend or is not participating.

By making use of the assistance of elicitation, rephrasing, examples, pictures and a clue, Sachiko is enabled to produce new language use. It is possible that Sachiko might have been exposed to the phrase previously outside of the school, as she takes private lessons. Nevertheless, Excerpt 12.1.2 reveals rich affordances consisting of several elicitations and teacher support in the form of rephrasing, explication with examples, the use of pictures and the giving of clues, these resulting from the teacher’s response to Daisuke’s initial question. Pupil initiation like that of Daisuke appears to be a vital element of classroom discourse if the teacher is to provide fine-tuned support, pupil contribution an essential ingredient in the mix of the classroom environment. That is, learning is engendered from the ensuing interaction between pupil and teacher following pupil-initiated discourse. From pupil utterances, the teacher obtains information concerning the help required and is then able to determine how best this might be provided.

The identified affordance in Excerpt 12.1.2 is presented in Table 12.1.2 below. The affordance here is strong and contingent (Dimension 7 Types of Affordances). Negotiating feedback arose from the pupil’s (Daisuke) own perception and motivation to understand the meaning of the new phrase the teacher used (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance). Following the pupil-initiated discourse Pattern F, the teacher’s assistance (Dimension 5 Secondary Assistance) is well attuned to the pupil’s need and ZPD. Bidding by many pupils and Sachiko’s successful answer suggests active participation (Dimension 6 Eventual Success).

Table 12.1.2 Affordances in Excerpt 12.1.2 Introduction of a touch game (B): Negotiation for focused assistance (Lesson 6)

1. Activity	Introduction of a game
2. Pupils’ Intended Actions	Negotiating feedback for learning new language • Noticing the meaning
3. Discourse Patterns	F1
4. Primary Assistance	New language use
5. Secondary Assistance	Explanation: Example, Rephrasing, Use of pictures and gestures.
6. Eventual Success	+After the teacher’s explanation is provided on request, many pupils bid.

	Sachiko is successful in using the new phrase, although T wanted a translation.
7. Type of Affordances	Strong and contingent

12.1.3 Playing a touch game: Insufficient task demand, not creating the space to develop

After the demonstration and rehearsal, the pupils play three rounds of the game. However, the elicitation of physical reaction in the game does not require language. The demand in the activity is one of simply listening to the names of sports equipment such as 'soccer ball'. Additionally, the pupils do not need to comprehend the core structure "we need", as the activity simply requires the pupils to touch the picture of the correct piece of equipment. This is not demanding for the pupils and does not create "space" to develop (Cameron, 2001). Excerpt 12.1.3 shows one round of the game.

Excerpt 12.1.3 Playing a touch game (Lesson 6)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: let's play one more time	T2.3Frame: agenda management	Pattern C
2	Miki: <i>I don't want to lose the game</i>	P2.3Give genuine info: feeling	
3	Pp?: <i>come on</i>	P 18 Encouragement	
4	Miki: <i>I'll do my best</i>	P2.4Give genuine info: opinion	
5	TS: we need a baseball.	T3.9Elicit physical reaction	
6	Miki: ((gets the card))	P7 Reaction	
7	Daisuke: [<i>there</i>]	P1.1Give specific info:	
8	TS: yes. we need a baseball	T11.1.2Feedback	

Miki shows herself to be active and positive in her participation, expressing her feelings (L 2) and cheering herself on (L 5). Miki has good English, having a very positive attitude and also taking private lessons. Daisuke encourages her. Daisuke gives her help, trying to inform her where the card is (L 8). Language use is limited to comprehension of very simple English. All they need to do is to understand a word in a sentence (the names of sports equipment) and then identify a matching picture card. It is not very challenging and they manage without the teachers' help. Such an activity does not appear to offer dynamic affordances for the emergence of language use. The children are excited and actively participating in the game. However, the challenging and exciting part of the game seems to be the physical aspect, as it is not easy to find the right card among the many cards on the board. The competitive element of the game creates excitement and absorption on the part of the pupils. They are enjoying being able to participate in the game and do so in English. It is questionable, however, whether the game is sufficiently challenging. Participation achieved lacks the important element of the classroom language learning community, language learning and language use. One possibility here is that, once the initial stages of understanding how the game is played have been accomplished, the

game could have been developed to require more challenging, diverse and active language-use requiring pupils to make use of new English expressions and phrases.

Affordances identified in Excerpt 12.1.3 are presented below in Table 12.1.3. The intended action here is one of recognising words (Dimension 2) in the form of a physical response following teacher elicitation (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance). The teachers may also have intended an action of recognising the new phrase as well. However, in order to carry out the game, the pupils do not have to attend to the meaning of the whole phrase. Thus, although the pupils manage to participate in the game actively, the participation is less than might rightly be expected in an EFL classroom community, the demand of the activity light and requiring little language use.

Table 12.1.3 Affordances in Excerpt 12.1.3 Playing a touch game (Lesson 6)

1. Activity	Playing of a game
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension • Recognising words
3. Discourse Patterns	C
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation of physical response
5. Secondary Assistance	
6. Eventual success	–Pupils are capable of participating in the game without using much language. The game is not challenging enough to stretch the pupils. There is no need to focus on the newly introduced phrase.
7. Type of Affordances	Weak (or none) and planned.

The teachers employed touch games several times during the observation period making use of a variety of vocabulary. However, as analysis of the above game reveals, it is a type of activity offering Weak Affordances. This is in sharp contrast to another game, a guessing game, also observed during the research period. In contrast to the touch game, analysis of the guessing game reveals that a very different type of learning experience is created, one with Strong Affordances for pupils. That is, not all games are equally beneficial to the learning process. Analysis of a guessing game is presented in the next section.

12.2 A Guessing game (Lesson 15): Pragmatic engagement and dynamic development

Whilst the touch game provides Weak Affordances, is less effective for the emergence of new language use and active participation, the guessing game offers more dynamic affordances and transformation as microgenetic development occurs according to individual pupil's ZPD. After the class review and practice expressions of feelings, asking and answering questions (e.g. 'Are you nervous?' 'Yes I am. I am nervous.') for a term-end test, the pupils play a guessing game using expressions practiced earlier in the lesson. One pupil comes to the front of the classroom and the rest of the class guess how s/he feels by asking questions such as 'Are you happy?' until

they get the right question. About twenty picture cards of adjectives for feelings are displayed on the board so the pupils can look at them when they ask questions.

12.2.1 First guessing

In Excerpt 12.2.1 the game is just beginning and this is the first guess of the game. Hiroshi comes to the front of the class and the class have to guess how Hiroshi feels. A number of pupils raise their hands quickly and quietly. Yuya is nominated to guess. Although the activity does not stretch Yuya's current ability much, the scaffolding provided results in the development of Hiroshi's performance.

Excerpt 12.2.1 First guessing (Lesson 15)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TT: ok now please ask Hiroshi-kun	T3.8 Elicit Q and A	Pattern D
2	Yuya: <i>yes</i>	P12 Bid	
3	Sachiko: <i>yes</i>	P12 Bid	
4	.....	.....
5	Daisuke Pp: <i>yes yes yes</i>	P12 Bid	
6	TT: <i>ok</i> Yuya-kun	T20 Nominate	
7	TSTT: are you?	T5.1 Model	
8	Yuya: [are you] hungry	P8.1 Elicit info	
9	Hiroshi: no I am	P1.1 Give info	
10	Shota: are you hungry?	P8.1 Elicit info	
11	TS: no I'm not. I'm not hungry	T5.2 Model	
12	Hiroshi: [no no no hungry]	P1.1 Give info	
13	TS: good	T11.1 Feedback	
14	TT: very good	T11.1 Feedback	
15	TT: <i>Hiroshi-kun is very good. he is trying to say</i>	T11.1 Feedback	
16	<i>very hard. very good.</i>		
17	TS: no I am not. I'm not hungry	T5.1 Model	

The excerpt starts with TT's elicitation to begin the game "ok now please ask Hiroshi-kun" (L 1). This elicitation resulting from the activity framework encourages the class to ask Hiroshi questions of their own choosing. Thereafter, the activity framework (context) provides an effective opportunity for encouraging pragmatic engagement in the activity. When Yuya is nominated, although Yuya shows no hesitation or indication of making a mistake before he starts his question, TS and TT provide modelling to lead his question, "are you?" (L 8). Such assistance appears to have been provided because Yuya is the first pupil to ask a question. Yuya asks the question almost simultaneously as the teachers provide the modelling (L 8). The teachers' action of modelling appears to function more as elicitation, support and encouragement rather than as modelling of a correct answer to be repeated by the pupil. Such an act on the part of the teachers is to be welcomed. However, it should be asked whether, in this instance, it might have been better for the teachers to delay their intervention, giving Yuya an opportunity to make use of his own abilities to achieve the task independent of teacher assistance and, as a result provide information for the teachers to use in determining what level of assistance they should provide. Yuya does not need much support and is able to participate in

the activity relatively easily without assistance. The activity framework leads to lot of language use and recycling but not to new language emergence. This is due to the fact that the activity is aimed as revision and preparation for the term-end test.

To Yuya's question, Hiroshi replies but incorrectly. Hiroshi finds it difficult to answer correctly saying, "no I am" (L 9) meaning, "no, I'm not". This appears to result from an opportunity available earlier in the lesson when pupils were reviewing expressions. Prior to the game the class practiced positive replies such as "Yes, I am, I am hungry" many times but they did little practise of negative replies. TS gives a complete model answer for Hiroshi to imitate (L 11). This assistance, modelling, is due to the teachers' responsiveness, as Hiroshi's answer needs support. Hiroshi answers Shota's question (L 10) by trying to imitate TS's model but cannot use and incorporate the modelling fully to form a correct answer (L 12). Reacting to Hiroshi's performance, TS and TT give Hiroshi encouragement (L13-16) and once again TS provides a complete modelling (L 17).

The affordances identified in Excerpt 12.2.1 are presented in Table 12.2.1 below. In this activity (Dimension 1), the pupils are engaged in learning to use words and phrases to have a conversational interaction (Dimension 2). The created discourse pattern is D (Dimension 3) in which Primary assistance (Dimension 4) is provided as teacher Elicitation and the use of picture cards and Secondary assistance (Dimension 5) as teacher modelling. The demand is light for Yuya thus the activity may not stretch his English much. However, for Hirofumi, it is challenging and although he does not succeed in answering fully here, he improves in the following two excerpts (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). Therefore, the affordance here for Yuya is weak and planned and for Hirofumi delayed strong and planned.

Table 12.2.1 Affordances in Excerpt 12.2.1 First guessing (Lesson 15)

Activity	Core activity: Guessing game
Pupils' Intended Actions	Learning words/phrase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling a word • Using a word/phrase Holding a conversational interaction
Discourse Patterns	D
Primary Assistance	Elicitation of Q and A, Display of picture cards.
Secondary Assistance	Modelling
Eventual Success	– The game is not challenging enough to stretch the pupil's (Yuya) current ability. +However, it is so for the child who answers (Hirofumi).
Type of Affordances	Weak and planned for Yuya, delayed strong and planned for Hiroshi

12.2.2 Second Guessing

In the following excerpt, Shota is nominated and gets the chance to ask a question. The same activity of guessing feelings creates a different type of affordance for Shota who has a different

perception and need from Yuya above, and he successfully uses the affordance to guess Hiroshi's feeling.

Excerpt 12.2.2 Second Guessing (Lesson 15)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	Pp: ((raise the hands))	P12 Bid	Pattern D
2	TT: now next. Shota-kun	T20 Nominate	
3	Shota: are you.... <i>what is it?</i> ((points at a	P8.1 Elicit info. P8.2	
4	card.))	Elicit info.	
5	TT: are you-	T5.1 Model	
6	Daisuke: hot?	P8.1 Elicit info.	
7	TS: sick?	T5.1 Model	
8	TT: sick?. are you well? ((points at the	T5.1 Model	
9	card))		
10	Shota: are you well?	P8.1 Elicit info.	
11	TT: <i>ok Shota-kun</i> one more time	T3.8 Elicit Q &A	
12	Shota: are you well	P8.1 Elicit info.	
13	TT: ok	T11.1 Feedback	
14	TS: good	T11.1 Feedback	
15	TT: ((points at the card))	T6 Give a clue	
16	TS: no I'm not. I'm not well ((whisper))	T5.2 Model	
17	Hiroshi: [no: I'm not. I'm not well]	P1.1 Give info.	
18	Shota: <i>but you said you were fine</i>	T11.1 Feedback	
19	TS: very good	T11.1 Feedback	
20	TT: very good Hiroshi-kun good.	T11.1 Feedback	

This excerpt shows that each pupil's degree of readiness and perception is different and they need different levels and kinds of support. It was accidental that Shota wanted to use the more difficult word "well" in his guess. Shota cannot complete his question because he does not know the adjective in English that he wants to use (L 3). The adjective "well" is less familiar to the pupils than "hungry" used by Yuya in Excerpt 12.2.1. As Shota realizes the kind of affordance that would enable him to attend to the game is not there, he asks for it, asking the teachers what the word is for "well" by saying "*what is it?*" and pointing at a picture card (L 3-4). Shota needs affordances more appropriate to his level and his need, something more than the display of picture cards adequate for more familiar adjectives. Then TS and TT provide Shota with help, modelling the language and pointing at the picture card as well (L 7-8). As Shota specifies the type of help he needs, the teachers' support is very focused. Using the model provided, Shota manages to complete his question (l 10). TT, feeling it necessary to reinforce the question and also Shota's understanding, gets Shota to repeat the question (L11-12). Hiroshi also manages to answer correctly (L 17) although TS shadows the answer, providing a complete modelling (L 16).

Affordances identified in the above excerpt are presented in Table 12.2.2 below. For Shota, this activity (Dimension 1) provides an opportunity for learning to use a word (Dimension 2). Shota is provided with Secondary assistance (Dimension 5) and is eventually successful in learning to use the word (Dimension 6). This indicates that eliciting language use which is challenging

enough to stretch slightly the pupils' current levels of ability results in rich affordances and the emergence of understanding (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). For Hiroshi, this is an opportunity to use the phrase to answer Shota's question. In the previous excerpt, he was not able to answer in the correct full form even with the teacher's modelling. However, in this excerpt, with the teacher's assistance (Dimension 5 Secondary Assistance), he is capable of doing so (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). Therefore the activity provides both pupils with immediate strong and Planned Affordance (Row 7 Type of Affordance).

Table 12.2.2 Affordances in Excerpt 12.2.2 Second Guessing (Lesson 15)

1. Activity	Core activity: Guessing game
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Learning words/phrases • Recalling a word • Using a word/phrase Holding a conversational interaction
3. Discourse Patterns	D
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation of Q and A, Display of picture cards.
5. Secondary Assistance	Modelling
6. Eventual Success	+ Emergence of the use of a word ("well") by Shota and the correct production of an answer ("No, I'm not. I am not well") by Hiroshi.
7. Type of Affordances	Immediate Strong Planned

12.2.3 Third guessing

In Excerpt 12.2.3 below Takumi is nominated by the teacher to ask a question. Takumi is one of the weakest in the class and the excerpt reveals the difficulty he has. The teachers provide another type of affordance adjusted for a much weaker pupil. Hiroshi also achieves more independent participation, showing dynamic transformation on the short timescale.

Excerpt 12.2.3 Third guessing (Lesson 15)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	Pp: ((raise the hands))	P12 Bid	Pattern D
2	TT: <i>yes. ok. Takumi-kun</i>	T20 Nominate	
3	Takumi: <i>uh</i>	P18 Hesitance	
4	TT: <i>are you</i>	T5.1 Model	
5	Takumi: <i>are you...</i>	P8.2 Elicit info.	
6	P?: <i>happy ((whisper))</i>	P19 Other (model)	
7	Takumi: <i>happy?</i>	P8.2 Elicit info.	
8	Hiroshi: <i>no I'm not</i>	P1.1 Give info.	
9	TT: ((holds and shows the card to Hiroshi))	T6 Give a clue	
11	TS: <i>I'm not</i>	T5.1 Model	
12	Hiroshi: <i>I'm not happy</i>	P1.1 Give info.	
13	TT: <i>ok good</i>	T11.1 Feedback	
14	TS: [<i>good</i>]	T11.1 Feedback	

Takumi cannot start the question immediately perhaps because he still has not quite learned the structure (L 3). This is different from Shota's situation (above) as Shota knew the structure but did not know the adjective. It is also possible that Takumi is taking time to select an adjective. TT provides a partial modelling to prompt Takumi's question (L 4), that is, TT provides an

assistance arising from teacher responsiveness. Takumi makes use of the help and imitates the model. However, the partial modelling provided is not enough for him to complete his question (L 5). Seeing this, a pupil gives support to Takumi by whispering an adjective, that is, assistance arising from a peer pupil's responsiveness (L 6). Then Takumi completes the question making use of the help received from the pupil (L 7). While the teacher earlier let Shota repeat the complete question, she does not require Takumi to do so. This may be the result of the teacher's consideration of Takumi's readiness. Or this may be the result of the teachers having lower expectations of Takumi. However, Takumi might have benefited here from extra demands being made. There is the danger that lower expectations will result in lower outcomes.

In the second half of the excerpt Hiroshi manages the first part of the answer but cannot complete it (L 8). Then TT shows Hiroshi the picture card for happy (L 9). TS also gives support by providing a partial model (L 11). Finally Hiroshi manages to finish the latter half of his answer (L 12). The amount of assistance is reduced from full modelling in Excerpt 11.2.1 to partial modelling and showing a picture in Excerpt 12.2.3. This appears to be a sign of the increased role and participation taken by Hiroshi.

Affordance identified in Excerpt 12.2.3 is provided in Table 12.2.3. As Takumi manages to ask a question with the teacher's assistance, although heavily scaffolded, the affordance for Takumi is immediate and strong, although it is not sure whether he can ask independently. Hiroshi shows more progress here as his Secondary assistance (Dimension 5) is reduced to the teacher's partial modelling.

Table 12.2.3 Affordances in Excerpt 12.2.3 Third guessing (Lesson 15)

1. Activity	Core activity: Guessing game
2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Learning words/phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling a word • Using a word/phrase 2. Holding a conversational interaction
3. Discourse Patterns	D
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation of Q and A, Display of picture cards.
5. Secondary Assistance	Modelling
6. Eventual Success	+Emergence of questioning ability by Takumi and more independent production of an answer by Hiroshi.
7. Type of Affordances	Immediate Strong Planned

12.3 Discussion: A comparison of the touch game and the guessing game

Both the touch game and the guessing game are exciting and motivating for the pupils and both contribute to pupil learning. In the touch game a lot of support is provided during the preparation stage involving the introduction of new language. In particular, pupil provision of

feedback emerges as an effective means by which the teachers can be informed of student need and assisted in their choice of directed help. This suggests that Pattern F, although it appears very infrequently (See Research Question 1 on discourse patterns in 3.1), provides a very strong Contingent Affordance arising from the pupils' initiation and resulting in new understanding (See Research Question 2.1 on types of affordances). When pupils initiate, teachers can provide well-tuned mediation for the pupils' ZPD. This well tuned mediation is extremely beneficial to and usable by pupils and accordingly dynamic development emerges (See Research Questions 2.2 the process of provision of affordances, 2.3 on how the pupils make use of affordances).

Although the Touch game contains some Strong Affordances, the overall nature of affordances provided in the game does not contribute to pupil language development and participation. In the main part of playing the Touch game, Pattern C was consistently observed throughout. There was no dynamic change from Pattern D to Pattern C, which was observed in Chapter 10. In Chapter 10, in the early stages of Storytelling, the pupils were provided with lots of assistance but observable learning and participation did not emerge. However, as Storytelling proceeded, the discourse pattern changed from Pattern D to Pattern C in which pupils were observed to be able to use the language and thus participating in the joint storytelling without assistance. This is a sign of a dynamic microgenetic transformation with the change of affordances from delayed Strong Affordance to immediate Strong Affordance (See Research Question 1 on discourse patterns).

Not only the discourse pattern but the other features of affordance in the Touch game suggest the affordance provided is weak and planned, not resulting in active language use or the emergence of new language use which enables participation required in the classroom language learning community (See Research Question 2.1 on types of affordances). This is due to the nature of the activity in the game attributed to Dimension 4 Primary assistance. The elicitation of physical response by the teachers does not require pupil active language use (See Research Question 2.2 the process of provision of affordances). Therefore, the pupils cannot use the activity to develop their language (See Research Question 2.3 on how the pupils make use of affordances) and subsequently, there is no emergence of new language use. The pupils are capable of enjoying and participating in the game. However, as mentioned in 11.4 Discussion, participation without learning language is not an ideal form of participation in the language learning community (See Research Question 2.3 on how the pupils make use of affordances).

When the two games are compared, the guessing game emerges as the one offering greater educational benefits for the language classroom. The Discourse pattern in the Guessing game remains Pattern D, an assisted pattern used throughout the game (See Research Question 1 on discourse patterns). However, quality of pupil performance improved throughout the game from

heavily assisted performance to less assisted performance. The guessing game provides more affordances for the emergence of language resulting in more productive use of language, language use that in turn requires more than simple comprehension on the part of the pupils (See Research Question 2.1 on types of affordances, Research Question 2.2 on the process of provision of affordances and Research Question 2.3 on how the pupils make use of affordances). Both games create real engagement for the pupils and attract pupil interest but it is the Guessing game that is more challenging for pupils. As a result, pupils use the opportunity to develop their language while enjoying the game (see Research Question 2.3 on how the pupils make use of affordances). There is also more evidence of pupil learning, of the emergence of new language use and indications of the pupils becoming more independent in their participation as they stretch their current levels of understanding (See Research Question 2.3). The Guessing game appears to provide mediation appropriate to pupil ZPD and interests. It was observed that the pupils benefited from the game, experiencing a dynamic transformation in the discourse. The game offers a Strong Affordance that prompts active participation in the EFL classroom community with pragmatic engagement and language development (See Widdowson in 2.8).

Analysis in this chapter, in particular the pupils' learning experience in Pattern F in Excerpt 12.1.2 also supports a perception of language learning as one of increased participation (See Research Question 3 on the applicability of the participation metaphor). In the Excerpt, the pupils were observed to be initiating an agenda and checking their understanding autonomously among themselves. This is an indication of the pupils assuming greater responsibility and autonomy in learning. Along with their active and independent actions, the emergence of new understanding is also revealed in this excerpt. First, the active learner Daisuke (L 1) seeks and makes use of an opportunity, which is fine-tuned for the pupils precise needs (understanding the new phrase "we need") contingently. Then, in the performances by Sachiko (L 12), Tomoya (L 24) and Daiku (L 29), development and understanding of the new phrase can be observed. This short excerpt illustrates the emergence of learning or the microgenetic development as a result of negotiation. The co-occurrence of the emergence of language use and active participation, whether the emergence of learning enabling active participation or active participation enabling the emergence of new understanding, suggests that learning can be associated with active participation. Additionally, Excerpts 12.2.1, 12.2.2, and 12.2.3 in the Guessing game also illustrate the emergence of learning. In particular, Hiroshi shows fast microgenetic development in the three excerpts, eventually capable of answering with significantly less assistance from the teachers, a clear example of learner development perceived as participation in a particular situation.

Finally, despite the perceived advantages of the guessing game over the touch game, there are nevertheless issues that arise relating to the use of the guessing game. In the lessons observed by this researcher, the purpose in using the guessing game was to rehearse and reinforce language use, in particular accuracy of language use. However it might be asked:

- (1) Whether there are greater benefits for language use to be derived from an environment fostering freer, flexible and more creative language use rather than the priority attached to correct form as in the lessons observed.
- (2) Whether the teachers can adjust better in their support if they elicit freer language use from the pupils contingently rather than focusing narrowly on planned and rehearsed language use.

Chapter 13 Qualitative Analysis 3 Language-focused Activity

In this chapter, the focus is upon Lesson Stage 5, Language-focused activity, as observed in Lessons 1 and 5. Language-focused activity is the lesson stage in which new language items are presented to pupils, a stage in which hopefully there exist opportunities for the emergence of new language use. However, as revealed in the quantitative analysis, Stage 5 in total has a particularly high occurrence of Pattern C, a pattern that does not involve teacher assistance, and a pattern more associated with recitation type activities. In part, the high occurrence of Pattern C in the research data may be accounted for by the fact that a significant amount of term-end test preparation was carried out during the period of this research and typically such test preparation involves recitation type exercises to review what the pupils have previously learned. Nevertheless, such a high occurrence of Pattern C as observed does raise questions concerning the role of recitation and how this is to be balanced with the need to provide opportunities for the emergence of language use.

13.1 Presentation of third person singular questions and answers (Lesson 1): Literacy demand constraining affordances 1

In this lesson the teachers introduce a new grammar item, the third person singular form for asking and answering questions. Earlier in the term, the class practised asking and answering questions related to personal information, using the second person question and first person answer forms such as “Where do you live?” “I live in Nakano.” in preparation for giving a speech. In Excerpt 13.1.1 from Lesson 1 below these expressions are developed into the third person singular question and answer forms, for example, “Where does she live?” and “She lives in Nakano.” The teachers first review the previously taught first and second person forms and then present the new third person form.

13.1.1 Lost opportunity

Excerpt 13.1.1 is concerned with transition from a singing activity to the introduction of a language-focused activity. Throughout the transition Daisuke repeatedly requests to ask a question but the teacher ignores his request.

Excerpt 13.1.1 Lost opportunity (Lesson 1)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TTTSPp: ((sing))	T17 P5 Singing	Pattern C
2	TT: ok good	T11.1 Feedback	
3	TS: ok very good	T11.1 Feedback	
4	Daisuke: <i>I've forgotten after the holiday</i>	P2.2 Give info: genuine	
5	TT: wow. very good	T11.1 Feedback	

6	Yuya: <i>I've forgotten completely</i>	P2.2 Give info: genuine	
7	Shota: <i>well done</i>	T11.1 Feedback	
8	TS: ok ((unint. whisper))	T11.1 Feedback	
9	Daisuke: <i>teacher. question</i>	P9 Request	(Pattern F)
10	TT: later	T21 Rejection	
11	Daisuke: <i>question</i>	P9 Request	(Pattern F)
12	TT: you did a great job. you are good at	T11.1 Feedback	
13	singing very good. now everybody, please look	T2.1 Frame: organise	Pattern A
14	Daisuke: <i>question please</i>	P9 Request	(Pattern F)
15	TT: later	T21 Reject	
16	Daisuke: <i>question</i>	P9 Request	
17	TT: now I think it's a little bit difficult for you.	T2.2 Frame: agenda	
18	who can read this.	T3.2 Elicit specific info.	Pattern C

Although the presentation of the new grammatical form (L 13) starts with the boundary marked by TT's introduction of a new topic, Daisuke and TT's interaction (L 9-16) continues over the boundary. On four occasions Daisuke bids/makes a request saying, "*Teacher, (I have a question)*" (L 9, 11, 14, 16). Despite his persistence, TT first rejects and then later ignores him. It is not known what Daisuke wanted to ask. It could have been something significant to contribute to his learning and that of the other pupils. As noted earlier, when a pupil initiates a question this may present a valuable learning opportunity for the pupils. Therefore, too rigid a control of the classroom dynamic by a teacher may lead to the neglect of interactions that have the potential to develop into significant learning opportunities. It is possible that the failure of the teacher to respond in a positive way to Daisuke is an incidence of such neglect. No table of affordances is presented for Excerpt 13.1.1 as no affordances were created.

13.1.2 Revising a previously taught structure with the written form: Constraints created by literacy demand

In Excerpt 13.1.2 as TT elicits reading aloud, holding up an expression card, the pupils are engaged in the activity of reading aloud and reviewing the previously taught structures, "Where do you live?" and "I live in Nakano." The purpose of the review is to prepare pupils for presentation of the third person singular questions (Excerpt 13.1.3). This approach to review, making use of the written form, was frequently used by the teachers in a number of an approach creating a high demand on pupils whose literacy skills are underdeveloped, creating unusable affordances.

Excerpt 13.1.2 Reading aloud the second person question form (Lesson 1)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	((TT shows a flash card, "Where do		Pattern C
2	you live?"))		
3	TT: now I think it's a little bit	T2.2 Framing.	
4	difficult for you. who can read this.	T3.7 Elicit reading aloud	
5	TS: please raise your hands. Let's try	T3.7 Elicit reading aloud. T8	
6	Pp: ((raise their hands))	Encouragement. P12 Bid	
7	Daisuke: <i>what's this</i>	P8.2 Elicit genuine info.	
8	TT: who can read this	T3.7 Elicit reading aloud	
9	P?: [what do. your,	P6 Reading aloud	

10	P?: what do your ((laugh))	P6 Reading aloud	
11	TT: ok. Miki-san	T20 Nominate	
12	Miki: <i>where do you live</i>	P6 Reading aloud	
13	TT: wow very good	T11.1 Feedback	
14	TS: good	T11.1 Feedback	

The first pupils (L 9 & 10) read the card incorrectly as “what do your.” Then Miki raises her hand and is nominated. She reads the expression on the card correctly, “Where do you live?” (L12). Miki’s model answer provides feedback to the other pupils. A concern here is that the activity of reading aloud using cards requires literacy. For those who cannot read, the intended assistance is inaccessible. They are therefore required to make use of any other affordances available in the classroom environment, in this instance Miki’s model, in order to recall the previously taught structure. Additionally, in such circumstances, it is vital that the teacher provides clear guidance and prompting so that pupils know what it is they are expected to recall. This is something the teacher fails to do in the above excerpt. The written assistance provided therefore emerges as an insufficient and inappropriate means of support for the purpose of prompting pupil recall.

Affordances in Excerpt 13.1.2 above are presented in Table 13.1.2. The activity of Reviewing the previously taught structure (Dimension 1) requires two types of actions: reading aloud and remembering the structure (Dimension 2). The Discourse pattern (Dimension 3) is C, involving only *Primary assistance: Eliciting reading aloud* from an expression card (Dimension 4) that some pupils find difficult. For the nominated child who can successfully read aloud, the written assistance is usable. However, for others who cannot read, the literacy demand in this affordance is too high and prevents them from participating in the activity. The affordance does not help them know what they are supposed to focus upon (Dimension 6 Eventual Success).

Table 13.1.2 Affordances in Excerpt 13.1.2 Reading aloud the second person question form (Lesson 1)

1. Activity	Reviewing the previously taught structure
2. Pupils’ Intended Actions	Reading aloud Learning a structure • Recalling the structure
3. Discourse Patterns	C
4. Primary Assistance	Eliciting reading aloud with expression cards (Literacy demand)
5. Secondary Assistance	Peer modelling
6. Eventual Success	+A nominated P manages to read.–However, others struggle. – Literacy demand distracts Pp from focusing on remembering the structure
7. Type of Affordances	Strong and planned Weak and planned

After Miki successfully reads aloud, TT also asks her to answer the question, “Where do you live?” that she has just read. Miki and the four pupils following her asked the same question and answer correctly “Where do you live?”. Review of the previously learned second person form

occurs throughout the lesson (and across lessons in Language-focused activities) and prepares pupils for the next stage of the activity in which the third person question form is introduced. It also serves to allow the teachers to check pupil readiness or space for taking up new language the teachers are going to introduce. Unless the pupils understand the second person question form it will be difficult to present the third person question form. As some pupils demonstrate understanding of the previously learned expression “Where do you live?”, needing only a little assistance from TT, the pupils appear ready to proceed to the new language item. However, for those who cannot read well, the written assistance provided is an insufficient and inappropriate means of support, the students having to rely on memory and any other assistance available within the classroom environment.

13.1.3 Oral presentation of the third person form

As revealed in the following extract, when presentation is conducted orally along with careful support, in this case, of comparison, gestures and modelling, it affords the pupils an opportunity for new understanding and participation in an activity. Following confirmation of pupil readiness, TT orally introduces a third person singular question “Where does he live?” The teachers use personal information to introduce the new grammar.

Excerpt 13.1.3 Presentation of the third person form (Lesson 1)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TT: now everybody. please ask Mr	T 3.8 Elicit Q and A	Pattern C1
2	Southwell. one two three		
3	TTPP: where do you live	P8.1 Elicit info.	Pattern G1
4	TS: I live in Nakano	T21 Give specific info.	
5	P?: ((unint.))		
6	TT: ok. ((claps)) now. new question.	T2.2 Frame: agenda management	
7	listen carefully. where does he live.	T5.2 Complete model	
8	where does he live		
9	((points at TS and TS points at himself))	T6 Clue	
10	TS: ((points at himself.))	T6 Clue	
11	Pp?: ahhhh	P2.3 Give genuine info: feelings	
12	P?: <i>I see</i>	P2.5 Give info: understanding	
13	TS: he lives-	T5.2 Complete model	Pattern D
14	TT: do you understand.	T15 Confirm understanding.	
15	TT: I live in Nakano,	T5.2 Complete model	
16	TS: he lives in Nakano	T5.2 Complete model	
17	TT: [lives in Nakano]	T5.2 Complete model	
18	TT: ok. do you understand?	T15 Confirm understanding	
19	TT: let's say it together	T3.4 Elicit repetition	
20	P?: <i>I don't understand</i>	P2.5 Give genuine info:	
21	TTPp: he lives in Nakano	P3.2 Repetition. T5.2 Modelling	
22	TT: very good	T11.1 Feedback	
23	TS: ok	T11.1 Feedback	Pattern G2
24	Yuya: he lives in ((unint.))	P3.2 Repetition	
25	.....	.....
26	TT: good do you understand?	T11.1 Feedback T 15 confirm	
27	Sachiko: <i>yes</i>	understanding. P2.5 Give	
28	TT: he lives in Nakano ((points at TS)	genuine info. T5.2 Model	
29	TS: she lives in Nakano ((points at TT))	T5.2 Model	
30	Pp: [she lives in Nakano]	P1.2 Give specific info	
31	P?: ((unint.))		

First, TT and the class ask TS the question “Where do you live?” and TS answers, “I live in Nakano” (L 3-4). In this way context is established and the pupils are given information supporting their use of the new structure (“TS lives in Nakano”). Then TT presents the new third person singular structure (L 6-16) using the gesture of pointing at TS. TS pointing at himself provides assistance. Some pupils understand immediately saying “ahhh”. The teachers continue to model new language items, although TS’s modelling “He lives” (L 13) may not be appropriate as he is referring to himself, possibly confusing some of the pupils. Then TT and TS try to contrast the two structures. While TT says “I live in Nakano” (L 14-15) TS says “He lives in Nakano” (L 16) referring to himself, which again might be confusing for some pupils as he is using the third person “he” to describe himself. Immediately after this, a pupil says that he does not understand but TT ignores the pupil and proceeds to elicit choral repetition. Although the teachers might not have given clear-cut examples of the new grammar item, the third person singular, they attempt to establish the difference in meaning between previously taught items and the new item, using personal information. As most of the pupils appear to understand, this can be viewed as an instance of Strong Affordance, the teachers seeking to provide an opportunity for the students to understand the concept of the new grammatical item. Finally, TT and TS provide more modelling accompanied by gestures (L 28-29). In this way the teachers carefully introduce the new item. They do not just present the new item. They provide a lot of careful support and create affordances for pupil comprehension. The procedure of contrasting the old and new items accompanied by gestures in the concrete context of the classroom provides a situation of affordance for the pupils to understand the new grammatical item.

The affordances identified in Excerpt 13.1.3 are presented in Table 13.1.3. There are three discourse patterns in this excerpt and each has different types of affordances. Pattern C creates a delayed strong Planned Affordance (Row 7 Types of Affordances). Although it might appear pupils are not learning anything new, actions in this pattern establish a context for the next stage of the activity. Therefore, affordance in Pattern C has a delayed effect on new learning emergent in the next discourse patterns G and D. In Pattern G the teachers present the new grammatical item. For some the discourse creates an immediate affordance (Row 7 Types of Affordances) in which the pupils understand instantly, benefiting from the teacher’s explanation (Dimension 4 Primary Assistance). For others the same discourse offers a delayed affordance as their understanding emerges in the next pattern, Pattern D, in which most pupils manage to use the new language with the aid of the teacher’s assistance of modelling. In this way, the affordances are interconnected on the time-scale, the initial affordance having effect on subsequent affordances.

Table 13.1.3 Affordances in Excerpt 13.1.3 Presentation of the third person form (Lesson 1)

1. Activity	Presentation of a new grammar
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2. Pupils' Intended Actions	Learning a structure • Recalling • Using	Learning a new grammar item • Noticing the form • Learning the concept	Learning a new grammar item • Noticing & producing the form
3. Discourse Patterns	C1	G1	D
4. Primary Assistance	Elicitation	(Previous discourse to link and contrast reviewing the previously taught items with the new item.) Presentation	Elicitation of repetition
5. Secondary Assistance	—	—	Modelling
6. Eventual Success	+successfully use the structure and ask a question.	+Mixed response. Some show understanding and some do not	+Pp manages to use the new language with T.
7. Type of Affordances	Delayed Strong and planned. (it is not new learning for them but they needed it as contextual info. for the next stage)	Both Immediate /Delayed Strong Affordances Weak Planned Affordance	Strong and planned

13.1.4 Summary discussion

The difficulty experienced by a number of pupils in reading the expression cards raises serious questions with regard to how pupils are taught to read and the expectations made of pupils by teachers. This is important given the heavy reliance of the teachers on expression cards to both practice previously learned items and also to introduce new language items. It is not clear whether teacher modelling is sufficient, either as an introduction or in providing practice, if the pupils are to develop their reading skills (word and letter recognition) as the teachers do not explicitly focus on and give more detailed assistance to let pupils recognize what letters and words they are reading. The teachers are forced to rely heavily on the more advanced pupils, which may be motivating for such pupils who are able to participate frequently and with a high degree of success. However, it is possibly de-motivating and demoralizing for the less advanced. At such an early stage of language learning, there is a danger of some pupils already beginning to feel that language learning is difficult and that they cannot do it. Indeed, in one lesson a pupil was heard to ask a more advanced pupil, 'How can you read that?' If teachers are to rely so heavily on reading, it is necessary that all pupils should have been taught and developed appropriate reading skills if they are to cope with the demands made of them and participate equally. Otherwise, pupils without sufficient reading skills are denied the opportunity to participate equally or initiate interactions with the teacher that might result in rich feedback and affordance.

13.2 Test Preparation (feelings) (Lesson 5): Literacy demand constraining affordances 2

In Lesson 5, the class review a number of expressions for asking and answering questions about feelings in the third person. The teachers begin by eliciting the reading aloud of previously learned expressions in the second person (“How do you feel?” “I feel bored.”). Then they elicit reading aloud of the recently learned expressions in the third person (“How does s/he feel?” “S/he feels excited.”). The class also review vocabulary necessary for asking and answering questions about feelings. Finally the pupils engage in the main part of the activity, asking and answering questions in the third person. However, as was observed in 13.1, the literacy demand in the activity makes affordances less available to the pupils.

13.2.1 “How do you feel?”: Difficulty in reading and negotiation for specific assistance

In the following excerpt the class begins with elicitation by the teachers of reading aloud the second person structure, “How do you feel?” (L 1). Without the teachers’ help, a nominated pupil reads the question (L 9). However, for Shota it is problematic and he brings his own agenda to the class (L 16-18).

Excerpt 13.2.1 How do you feel? (Lesson 5)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	((TS puts a card “How do you feel?” on the whiteboard))		Pattern C
2			
3	TS: ok everybody, please look at this	T2.2Frame: organization	
4	question. raise your hand if you can read	T3.7Elicit reading aloud	
5	this question. what does this say		
6	P?: fee?	P6Read aloud	
7	Sachiko: yes	P12Bid	
8	TS: please raise your hand. ok. yes	T3.10Elicit volunteers	
9	P?: how do you feel	P6Read aloud	
10	TS: very good.	T11.1Feedback	
11	TT: very good	T11.1Feedback	
12	TS: how do you feel. everybody	T3.7Elicit repetition	
13	Pp: how do you feel	P3Repetition	
14	TS: good. next question.	T11.1Feedback	
15	Megumi: [(raise the hand)]	P12Bid	
16	Shota: <i>it says</i> how do you feel (fi:)	P2.4Give info: opinion	Pattern F
17	<i>because the last letter is I.</i> how do you		
18	feel (fi:)		
19	TT: not I (aye). l (ell) ((writes the letters	T7Marking critical features	
20	on the board.))		
21	Shota: <i>what?</i>	P5.2Elicit info.	
22	TS: this is l (ell)	T7Mark critical features	
23	TT: this is I (aye)	T7Mark critical features	
24	Shota: <i>I thought it was I (aye). I wasn't</i>	P2.4Give info: opinion	
25	<i>sure. so it was not a capital I (aye)</i>		

Shota expresses his opinion regarding the pronunciation of the word “feel”. He insists that the word “feel” should be pronounced as [fi:], the reason being he cannot differentiate the shape of the small letter ‘l’ from the shape of the capital letter ‘I’. Because he gives his own

interpretation, “*because the last letter is I. how do you feel [fi:]*” (L 16-18), TT gives focused feedback, marking critical features between the two letters confusing him, writing two alphabet letters on the board (L 19-23). This explanation helps Shota realize the mistake he has made which is reflected in his remark “*I thought it was i*” (L 24-25). The teachers’ initial intention was probably to review the previously taught grammatical items quickly and to establish the context to be used for the next stage of the activity of practicing the third person singular questions. However, Shota presents his own agenda, redefining the activity. For Shota, eliciting reading aloud was not a sufficient affordance for improving the reading skill. However, as he redefines the direction of the activity, the activity now affords an opportunity to engage in reading at an appropriate level, the most basic level, that of letter/word recognition. Affordance has become available to Shota as a result of interaction initiated by himself in which he negotiates with teachers and redefines the nature of the activity. This is in contrast to Excerpt 13.3.1 in which a pupil had a similar problem in reading. As there was no active negotiation by Kumiko(L5) and Hirofumi (L 18) to establish her own agenda as Shota did, the teachers simply provided modelling for them. The difference between the two cases lies in the richer assistance provided for Shota and the resulting quality of the learning experience afforded. Interestingly, this problem of reading skill is not specific to Shota. Many other pupils have a similar problem in recognizing the capital letter ‘I’.

Table 13.2.1 Affordances in Excerpt 13.2.1 How do you feel? (Lesson 5)

1.Activity	Reviewing the previously taught structure	
2.Pupils’ Intended Actions	Reading • Reading aloud	Reading • Word recognition
3.Discourse Patterns	C	F
4.Primary Assistance	Eliciting reading aloud with expression cards	Difference in understanding between P and T
5.Secondary Assistance		Marking critical features
6.Eventual success	+Most pupils successfully reads aloud	New understanding is observed in Shota’s remarks
7.Type of Affordances	Strong and planned for most of pupils but a weak and planned for Shota.	Strong and contingent

13.2.2 Reviewing vocabulary: Subversion and changing activity

Before engaging in the core activity of asking and answering questions involving feelings in the third person, the class review adjectives necessary for the activity.

Excerpt 13.2.2 Reviewing vocabulary (Lesson 5)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: ok good. now. we are going to review. our	T2.2 Framing	Pattern C
2	feelings. ok? please repeat after me.	T3.4 Elicit repetition	
3	Sachiko: [feel feel] ((tells Daisuke)	?	

4	TS: surprised	T3.4 Elicit repetition	Pattern C
5	Daisuke: [surprised]	P3.1 Repetition	
6	Tomoya: (((gesture)))	P12 Bid	
7	Pp: surprised	T3.4 Elicit repetition	
8	TS: shy	P3.1 Repetition	Pattern C
9	Pp: shy	P3.1 Repetition	
10	TS: very good	T11.1 Feedback	
11	TS: sorry	T3.4 Elicit repetition	Pattern C
12	Pp: sorry	P3.1 Repetition	
13	TS: embarrassed	T3.4 Elicit repetition	
14	Pp: embarrassed ((Mutuski, Daisuke	P3.1 Repetition	Pattern F
15	and Tomoya use a gesture for embarrassed))		
16	((Daisuke, Tomoya and Mutuski continue to		
17	use gestures.))		

To review the required vocabulary, TS exhibits picture cards and the pupils repeat chorally after TS. The impression is that the activity is a mechanical one with little happening. However, Mutuski, Daisuke and Tomoya start to use gestures when they say adjectives (L 14-15), creating an opportunity to enjoy language use. They have a different perception of the activity to teachers who might just want a quick review of the vocabulary items. The pupils find acting out the words together with the quick rhythm of drilling enjoyable. This excerpt shows that a prepared activity can change in unexpected ways owing to a difference of perception between the pupils and the teacher, the result an enjoyable and meaningful activity. This suggests the possibility of teachers turning mechanical drills into more enjoyable activities by making use of devices such as accompanying gestures.

The affordances identified in Excerpt 13.2.2 are presented in Table 13.2.2 below. In Discourse Pattern C the activity provides pupils with an opportunity to engage in recalling words (Dimension 2 Pupils' Intended Actions), the action intended by the teachers. The teachers elicit and the pupils repeat after the teachers. This may have a low impact on pupil recall (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). In Pattern F, however, in the same activity, the pupils are engaged in different type of actions. They are subverting the teacher's intention of simple repetition and initiate their own actions of acting out (Dimension 2 Pupils' Intended Action). In this way the pupils are more actively engaged in the activity, intensifying the learning opportunity and participation (Dimension 6 Eventual Success) and accordingly this is categorised as a strong and Contingent Affordance.

Table 13.2.2 Affordances in Excerpt 13.2.2 Reviewing vocabulary (Lesson 5)

1 Activity	Reviewing the previously taught vocabulary	
2 Pupils' Intended Actions	Learning words • Remembering	Subverting • Changing an activity from drilling to acting out
3 Discourse Patterns	C	F
4 Primary Assistance	Eliciting repetition with picture cards	Eliciting repetition with picture cards

5 Secondary Assistance	—	—
6 Success (New learning which enables participation)	Pupils manage to repeat after the teacher. -However, this does not appear to be beneficial for new learning.	+By acting out the meaning of words, the learning experience appears to become intensified.
7 Type of Affordances	Weak and planned	Strong and contingent

13.2.3 Asking and answering questions in the third person: Different types of affordances

The teachers begin the main part of the activity, asking and answering questions about feelings. TS asks the class, “How do you feel?” and the pupils have to express their own feelings, choosing a feeling from the feeling cards displayed on the white board. TS nominates Tomoya as the first pupil to answer. In the following excerpt, using Tomoya’s information, the class are engaged in using the third person question and answer form.

Excerpt 13.2.3 Asking and answering questions in the third person: Different types of affordance (Lesson 5)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: what what question. do we ask about our	T3.1Elicit specific info.	Pattern C
2	feelings ((points at the cards and Tomoya))		
3	P?: <i>yes</i>	P12Bid	
4	Pp: ((raise their hands))	P12Bid	Pattern D
5	TT: Miki-san	T20Nominate	
6	TS: ((points at ‘How does he feel’ card))		
7	Miki: how does he feel	P1.1Give info.	
8	TS: very good	T11.1Feedback	
9	TT: very good	T11.1Feedback	
10	TS: how does he feel. who knows the answer.	T3.1Elicit specific info.	
11	how does he feel..uhh. Takumi	T20Nominate	
12	Takumi: I feel	P1.1Give specific info.	
13	TS: [op]. how does. how does he feel ((points	T3.1licit specific info.	
14	at Tomoya but not the card))		
15	TT: Tomoya-kun. Tomoya-kun. do you	T.7Marking critical	
16	remember? he,	features. T5.1Modelling	
17	TS: [he],	T5.1Modelling	
18	Takumi: he	P1.1Give specific info.	
19	TS: feels,	T5.1Model	
20	Takumi: sleepy	P1.1Give specific info.	
21	TS: good. he feels sleepy. very good	T11.1Feedback	
22	TT: shall we say together	T3.3.4Elicit repetition	
23	TTSpp: he feels sleepy	P3.2Repetition	
24	TT: Takumi-kun good	T11.1Feedback	

Using the information supplied by Tomoya, TS now elicits how to ask a question in the third person singular form by pointing at an expression card and also at Tomoya (L 1-3). The teachers nominate one of the strongest pupils, Miki, and she forms a third person singular question correctly “How does he feel?” or simply reads the question form on the card (L 8). Takumi, one of the weakest pupils, is nominated to answer the question. Takumi starts his answer with “I feel” (L 13), an appropriate answer to the question “How do you feel?”. Then TS elicits again, giving a clue, pointing at Tomoya, marking a critical discrepancy between what he has said and

what he should say, emphasizing that it is the third person question “op. how does. how does he feel?” (L 13-14). TT also gives a clue, reminding Takumi that the question asks how he (Tomoya) feels, not Takumi himself (“Tomoya-kun, Tomoya-kun” L 15). TT also provides modelling “he” (L 16). Then TS provides modelling “he” (L 17) and “feels” (L 19) and Takumi manages to answer, making use of the modelling provided. However, Takumi only produces the adjective “sleepy” (L 20) and omits the verb “feels” despite the teacher’s modelling. The answer is constructed vertically but Takumi has not managed to produce a whole sentence on his own. The teachers do not let Takumi repeat the complete sentence on his own. Instead, the class repeats the answer together “he feels sleepy” (L 23). Considering Takumi’s apparent low level of readiness, the teachers do not force him to produce the complete sentence and instead provide an opportunity to listen to peer pupil repetition of the sentence. In this excerpt it is observed that the teachers provide different pupils with differentiated types of affordances, although they are engaged in the same types of language use. For Miki, looking at the written form is assistance and contributes to the emergence of affordance. However, Takumi needs far more assistance than the written form provides, if he is to understand the concept of the third person. The teacher attempts to do this by pointing at Tomoya and providing an opportunity to listen to more modelling.

Affordances identified in Excerpt 13.2.3 are presented in Table 13.2.3 showing how different affordances emerge in two types of discourse. In Discourse Pattern C there is only Primary assistance (Dimension 4) provided. This is sufficient for Miki to learn to use a new piece of language (Dimension 6 Eventual Success) resulting in an immediate strong and Planned Affordance. However, in Discourse Pattern D, the Primary assistance is not usable by Takumi (Dimension 4). Thus, a variety of Secondary assistance is provided (Dimension 5). Although Takumi’s performance (L 12-20) is not as good as Miki (L8), his performance shows he has benefited from the affordance in a short time (Dimension 6 Eventual Success). Therefore, the discourse D also creates an immediate strong and Planned Affordance.

Table 13.2.3 Affordances in Excerpt 13.2.3 Asking and answering questions in the third person : Different types of affordance (Lesson 5)

1. Activity	Controlled practice	
2. Pupils’ Intended Actions	Learning a structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling the structure • Using the structure • (Reading aloud) 	Learning a structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling the structure • Breaking down the structure and recombining
3. Discourse Patterns	C	D
4. Primary Assistance	Eliciting specific info with the expression card	Eliciting specific info.
5. Secondary Assistance	—	Marking critical features Modelling. Listening to peer modelling.

6. Eventual Success	+Miki successfully asks a question	+Takumi struggles but a new language use for him emerges
7Type of Affordances	Immediate strong and planned	Immediate strong and planned

Later in the lesson several pupils are nominated to use the third person singular and have difficulty doing so. Then the teachers immediately interrupt. They point at the phrase cards for “How does he feel?” and “S/he feels happy” and provide modelling. This failure by these pupils seems to indicate that use of the written form and modelling alone, particularly where new items are being or have recently been introduced, may be insufficient for all pupils to grasp a concept and the form of an item being taught and may eventually inhibit some pupils’ ability to participate in activities and practice of an item. This may be even more so where pupils are expected to use skills that they have insufficiently developed, for example, reading in the cases above. The need appears to be for teachers to be both aware of and to take into account the differing levels of ability within the classroom and realize the need for differentiated opportunities of affordance.

13.2.4 Summary

It was observed that Pattern F creates Contingent Affordances for pupil dynamic development and active participation. In 13.2.1 the pupil initiation of seeking specific feedback created an affordance for developing a reading skill (word recognition), lack of which caused problems on many occasions in the data analysed. In 13.2.2 the pupils themselves found a way to achieve a meaningful and purposeful engagement as well as making learning more efficient and enjoyable by acting out the drilling exercise. It was also observed that heavy reliance on written assistance prevented pupil participation throughout the lesson analysed in Section 13.2. Some pupils manage to recall and use the third person question and answer forms relatively easily, others experience difficulty but progress with assistance in discourse Pattern D indicating the existence of multiple forms of affordances. However, not all the pupils benefit from these affordances. One reason for this is the high demand placed on weaker pupils by the use of expression cards. These students have insufficiently developed reading skills to make use of the written assistance and were thus prevented from full participation. That is, there is a mismatch between the choice of assistance provided, the learning intended, and the students level of ability. The indication here is that, as well giving consideration to the pupils’ level and ZPD, an understanding of how tasks and activities work to achieve the objectives of learning is a key factor in the selection of means of Primary assistance and teacher preparation.

13.3 Test Practice “What do you wear in summer?”: High demand created by the task

In the following extract the teachers introduce the new expressions, “What do you wear in winter?” and “I wear a sweater.” These are a development from the previously learned expressions, “What are you wearing?” and I’m wearing a dress.” After a short presentation of the new question expressions in written form, TS asks the whole class the question “What do you wear in summer?” Expression cards for both the question and answer are displayed so that the pupils can look at them when they answer. In the excerpt the pupils attempt to answer the question but all exhibit a need for more assistance. The demands of the task are too high, notably the demand for literacy.

Excerpt 13.3.1 Inaccessibility of written affordances (Lesson 13)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TS: what do you wear in summer.	T3.1Eliciting specific	Pattern D
2	P?: <i>yes</i>	P12Bidding	
3	Megumi: <i>yes</i>	P12Bidding	
4	TS: Kumiko...in,	T20Nominate. 5.1Model:	
5	Kumiko: [I]	partial P1.1Give specific info	
6	Kumiko: in summer I wearing shorts	P1.1Give specific	
7	TS: I wear, I wear	T5.1Model: partial	
8	Kumiko: wear shorts	P1.1Give information	
9	TS: [shorts]	T5.1Model: partial	
10	TS: oh very good. ok everybody let’s try	T11.1Feedback:T3.4 Eliciting	Pattern C
11	to say together. ready?	choral repetition	
12	TSPp: in summer I wear shorts	T3.4Choral repetition	
13	TS: very good	T11.1Feedback:	
14	Kenaro: <i>these look too hot to wear</i>	P2.4Give specific info:	
15	TS: ok what about this. what do you wear	T3.1Eliciting specific info	Pattern D
16	in summer. Hirofumi? let’s start	T20Nominating	
17	TS: in,	T5.1Modelling: partial	
18	Hirofumi: in summer in I wear...sneaker	P 1.1Giving specific info	
19	TS: [summer] [I] [wear]	T5.1[Modelling: partial]	
20	Pp: [sneaker]	P2.4 Give specific info	
21	TS: very good. sneakers yes. ok I’ll have	T11.1Feedback: positive	Pattern D
22	one of the girls for this one	T3.1Elicit specific info.	
23	Sachiko: <i>yes</i>	P12Bid	
24	TS: ok...ok Miki. what do you wear in	T20Nominate.T3.1 Elicit	
25	summer.	specific info.	
26	Miki: in summer wear skirt.	P1.1Give specific info.	
27	TS: I wear,	T5.1Model	
28	Miki: I wear. skirt	P1.1Give specific info.	
29	TS: a	T5.1Model	
30	Miki: I wear a skirt	P1.1Give specific info.	
31	TS: oh very good. I wear a skirt	T11.1Feedback	

Kumiko starts with “I” (L 5) but she is supposed to start with “In summer”. The written form of the expression to use is on display on the whiteboard but it does not appear to assist her. If she were able to read the card she would have started with “In summer” instead of “I”. With TS’s support of modelling “in” (L 4) she almost manages but says, “in summer I wearing shorts” (L 6), which reflects the previously learned structure “I’m wearing”. TS models, repeating “I wear I wear” (L 7). This indicates that the pupil needs an affordance to differentiate between both the

forms and meanings of “I am wearing” and “I wear” together with drilling for consolidation. Hirofumi says, “in summer in wear sneakers” (L 18), possibly reflecting a letter recognition problem. TS provides modelling (L 19). Miki also fails to provide a correct answer saying, “in summer wear skirt” (L 26), dropping the subject “I” and the article “a”.

The excerpt reveals that the pupils have not completely appropriated the new grammatical items. In fact, considerable demands are being made on the pupils. They are expected to learn the main structures, recognizing the difference between the present progressive and the present simple tense. They are also expected to recognize the difference between and make use of singular and plural nouns, and also use a wide range of vocabulary. For all of these demands, support is provided in written form at the presentation stage, support not accessible unless pupil literacy skill has already been established. Once the presentation stage is finished, teacher assistance takes the form of providing opportunities to use the language and providing correction where required. However, the pupils need more support to consolidate the form. In addition, the activity contains too many demands—not only do the pupils need to learn the new structure but they also have to consider other grammatical elements in using the language. Language learning is not a linear process and pupils do not first learn one grammatical item fully before proceeding to learn a second. Rather, it is more akin to an organic process, pupils building their understanding over time and not in a linear fashion. Thus, it would appear unreasonable to expect the pupils to master one grammatical item immediately after another as presented in the extract above. Teachers need to be aware of this and provide multiple opportunities in a variety of contexts for learning to occur. In other words, the teachers themselves need to escape the constraints of the linear approach.

Table 13.3.1 Affordances in Excerpt 13.3.1 Inaccessibility of written affordances (Lesson 13)

1.Activity	Controlled practice
2.Pupils' Intended Actions	Learning a structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning the form • Recalling the structure • Using the structure
3.Discourse Patterns	D
4.Primary Assistance	Eliciting specific info. with the expression card
5.Secondary Assistance	Model
6. Eventual success	-Pupils have difficulty in producing the correct language use. They are pushing their limit but appear to need more affordances
7.Type of Affordances	Weak and planned?

13.4 Discussion.

From the above analysis three major points emerge. The first is the importance of teacher choice and the affordances that emerge as a result. The second is the existence of multiple affordances emergent within the one task. The third is the importance of a supportive classroom ecology, the

reliance of pupils (and teachers) on affordances made available by fellow pupils, the reciprocity of the learning process.

Teacher choice of activity and materials at the lesson preparation stage emerges as having a significant role to play in the creation of affordances. The choices made can constrain and narrow the range of possible affordances. It might be argued that it is the nature of language-focused activity to create a more formal and less dynamic type of learning experience. However, the above analysis indicates that this may also be attributed to teacher choices rather than to activity type. In all the Language-focused activities in the data collected in this research, the teachers without exception adopt the same particular way of conducting the activity, presentation of new language in a written form using personal information about the pupils. This places multiple demands upon the pupils, requiring them to read and activate previous knowledge, as well as take notice of new language use. This creates a high demand on literacy skills that constrain the possible affordance of activating previous knowledge and noticing new language use. It also risks failing to create meaningful discourse where pupils can pragmatically engage in activities, notably where the type of language use or knowledge elicited is background information that the class already share.

The danger of over reliance on the written form is clearly highlighted in the above. The level of pupils' interest and involvement in storytelling contrasts sharply with their involvement and demonstrated difficulty in the more formal grammar focused lessons in which grammar items are presented by expression cards and use is made of personal information. Such information may have been personal and real to the pupils, but the activity itself, unlike storytelling, results in less commitment to the learning process (See Rogoff, 1990 in 2.6). A more dynamic approach, involving the use of puppets and/or other realia, may well have appealed to pupil imagination more and engaged them pragmatically (See Widdowson, 1998 in 2.8). The use of the written form consistently in the Language-focused activities observed during this research and the documented difficulties experienced by the pupils is evidence that teacher choice can be a constraint on the type of affordances to be found and emergent in the classroom environment. Even in language-focused activity, use of the written form can be avoided and with a little imagination a meaningful context created. Teacher choice, pupil involvement, and the richness of emergent affordances go hand in hand.

Widdowson (1998) calls attention to the EFL community and the need for authentic and meaningful language use in the classroom (See 2.8). The above analysis indicates that it is pupil perceptions of 'authentic' and 'meaningful' that are paramount, perceptions that may subvert a teacher's original intentions but which are more likely to result in participation and language use meaningful and authentic in that particular EFL community. Pupil involvement in the activity of

Storytelling also calls attention to Rogoff's notion that it is engagement in a sociocultural activity that develops participation (See 2.6.2). The higher level of pupil engagement and language use in Storytelling above when compared to the Language-focused activity supports this view, indicating that Storytelling is the more likely activity to contribute to pupil participation and the development of "guided participation". Once again, it is in the choices that a teacher makes that opportunities exist and are constrained; affordances created or denied, participation and language use realised.

The second major feature to emerge from the analysis is the existence of multiple affordances within the same task. In the classroom, all pupils experience the tasks prepared by the teacher. However, the data analysis reveals that the same task provides different pupils with different types of affordances. According to the concept of legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger 1991) learning is perceived as co-participation in social practice (See 2.7). Thus learning occurs in interaction and the learner and activity are mutually constitutive. However, the above analysis suggests that each learner perceives affordance differently, experiences different perceptions with different levels of readiness. That is, learners are situated at different participatory roles. It follows therefore that levels of co-participation will vary according to the individual, as will the affordances derived and the learning that occurs. Consequently it is more appropriate to talk of multiple and various kinds of affordances rather than single all class encompassing opportunities for affordance. The same task may offer different pupils very different affordances for learning. Additionally, it should be pointed out that the affordances listed in the tables of analysis in this study are only those identified as central to the focus of a classroom activity where the teachers and pupils perceive jointly the main stage of a lesson. At the same time multiple and various additional affordances exist which are equally part of the ecology of the classroom and utilised by individual pupils, for example, peer scaffolding.

The third major feature in the analysis is the reliance of teachers and pupils on affordances derived from the more able pupils. The teachers provide different types of affordances to different pupils intentionally. They tend to nominate stronger pupils in most tasks for the first attempts at contribution and also for more demanding and challenging tasks. This provides the stronger pupils with affordances for intended action. At the same time their performance provides the rest of the class an affordance of listening to a model performance. This can be seen in the following examples. In Excerpt 13.1.2 the teacher asks the nominated pupil Miki where she lives. For Miki, who is closer to full participation in the classroom community, it is an affordance for recalling and orally using the structure meeting the task demand. At the same time different kinds of affordances exist in the same task for other pupils. While Miki is answering, if the pupils are as competent as Miki, the environment provides some of the pupils with an affordance for mentally answering and using the structure. For less-engaged pupils there

is an affordance for recalling the structure by listening to Miki's model answer and the affordance of holding an information exchange interaction silently, mentally constructing a response with her/his own choice of adjectives. For even more peripheral participant pupils, this opportunity provides an affordance for re-learning the structure by listening to Miki.

When less competent pupils are nominated and are the focus of the whole class, there is a different kind of ecology in the classroom. It is likely that the environment gives pupils at the centre an affordance of receiving focused adjustment from peer pupils and teachers. In Excerpt 13.2.4, the teacher asks Takumi, "How does he feel?" When Takumi pauses and hesitates to continue his utterance, the teachers provides assistance to him. For Takumi, the teachers' help is an affordance for completing his utterance and for the teachers it is an opportunity for giving help. Takumi manages to construct an appropriate structure with the help of the teachers. Here a reciprocal relationship can be observed between Takumi and the teacher. Their behaviours afford each other's behaviour. However, his answer is vertically constructed but the teacher does not let Takumi repeat the expression himself again. Takumi is not ready to manage to say the sentence by himself. Instead, the teacher lets the whole class repeat the expression. This does not mean that Takumi has been deprived of an opportunity to practice. Instead the teacher distributes the task to the whole class and different affordances are provided to Takumi and to the rest of the class. For the class it is an affordance to reinforce the expression. For Takumi it is an opportunity to listen to the model sentence following an opportunity of noticing and using the structure. Both Takumi and the rest of the class are participating in the activity of learning the expression to describe feelings. However, they have different affordances within the same activity and Takumi has a more peripheral role than some of the other pupils in the class.

When the teachers do not intentionally differentiate affordances, the different pupils still perceive different affordances. Sachiko, who has the strongest English in the class, appears to perceive different types of affordances than weaker pupils. For example, in Lesson 1 after the meta-linguistic explanations of the third person singular are given by three pupils, the teacher gives a summary himself, using a gesture. TS says "just watch me. very easy. I. she. he." pointing at himself, a girl and a boy. Sachiko immediately joins him, giving a gesture of pointing at different people for different pronouns whereas other pupils are still listening to and watching the teacher. The stronger pupils are able to make use of primary affordances given at the earlier stage of the task, which are usually Planned Affordances by the teachers. For the weaker pupils, however, the primary affordances are not prominent and easily accessible. Thus they need more affordances, secondary affordances, which require contingent adjustment by the teachers. This implies that the teachers initially set the tasks with the stronger pupils in mind. This may be a legitimate approach to classroom based language acquisition, utilising the resources that exist, that is, the stronger more able pupils. However, it can also be argued that

teachers should set goals and tasks with the majority of pupils in mind and then subsequently make contingent adjustments for *both* the stronger and weaker pupils.

In concluding the discussion in this chapter it is necessary to consider the relationship between the findings outlined above and the research questions established at the start of this study. Analysis has revealed that *Language-focused activity* contained Contingent Affordances emerging in Pattern F (Excerpts 13.1.2 and 13.2.2) (See Research Question 2.1 on types of affordances). In such affordances, the pupils accidentally found and made use of learning activities (See Research Question 2.2 on the process of provision of affordances). The result was that the pupils received appropriately attuned assistance that contributed to the emergence of learning and active participation (See Research Question 2.3 on how pupils use affordances).

The majority of affordances revealed in the analysis above are Planned Affordances, both strong and weak (See Research Question 2.1). When Strong and Planned Affordances emerge, the activity is adjusted for stronger pupils, who require less assistance, particularly Secondary assistance. The weaker pupils also benefit from Strong Planned Affordances when contingent assistance or Secondary assistance is provided (See Research Question 2.2). However, although weaker pupils experience a dynamic process of learning, their achieved level of participation is less than that of the stronger pupils (See Research Question 2.3). This indicates that there are multiple affordances available even when pupils are engaged in the same task. This is due to the tasks being initially designed by teachers with the stronger pupils in mind. When Primary assistance and secondary assistance do not help, Weak and Planned Affordances emerge, due to the high demand created by the tasks (See how literacy demand constraining pupils performance in 13.1.2, 13.2.1, 13.2.3, 13.3.1).

Finally, the result of the data analysis in this chapter once again supports the value and usefulness of the participation metaphor (Research Question 3 on the applicability of the participation metaphor). Pattern F in 13.2.1 and 13.2.2 are further examples of pupils being active, suggesting their own agenda and initiating a change of activity. In 13.2.1 a pupil brings in his own question to the class and as a result he and possibly the rest of the class benefit from new understanding. In Excerpt 13.2.2 the pupils act out their feelings. This is an indication of a more advanced form of participation than simple repetition of a teacher model. The actions of the pupils are evidence of initiative and independence. Excerpts 13.1.2 and 13.3.1 reveal that the literacy demand in the activity is too high and thus the task is not within the ZPD of some children. As a result some are incapable of reading, preventing them from participation. This exemplifies the co-relationship between the ZPD, language use and participation. If the pupils cannot make use of language required, participation is restricted. Excerpt 13.1.3 reveals the emergence of language use and the change of participatory roles. As pupils learn the new

grammar, they are able to participate in using the language together with the teachers. Finally, the multiple forms of participation identified in Excerpt 13.2.3 are compatible with Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of participation (See 2.7) in which fuller and more peripheral forms of participation exist in a community. A weak pupil, Takumi, is a peripheral participant. However, he receives assistance from both teachers and manages to complete answering, moving towards fuller participation with more responsibility in his role in the classroom community. Together these excerpts once again illuminate pupil performance and serve to confirm the value and applicability of the participation metaphor.

Analysis of the Year 3 data has revealed the nature of affordances. In the following chapter, the Year 5 data will be analysed to determine which affordances emerge and how the concept of affordances helps to understand the classroom dynamics of a difficult class.

Chapter 14 Qualitative Analysis of Year 5 Data

It was initially intended (See 3.2 Research design) to conduct a cross sectional study of Year 3 and Year 5 classes, assuming, by means of observing transformation in participation from Year 3 to Year 5, it would be possible to identify the emergence of ontogenetic development. However, it became obvious that the original intention to compare growth was not possible owing to a different type of data resulting from discipline problems and the focus of classroom activities in the Year 5 classroom.

Two major differences between the Year 5 and Year 3 classes emerged, problems of discipline and differences of focus. The Year 5 class had two teachers, a Japanese teacher and native-speaker teacher. The two teachers did not team-teach as the Year 3 teachers did. The Japanese teacher appeared to lack confidence not only in her ability to teach and maintain discipline, but also in her English language ability. Thus she made extensive use of Japanese in the classroom and devoted much time to classroom management and to the maintenance of discipline. The American teacher also devoted considerable time to the maintenance of discipline, possibly even more time. There appeared to be little evidence of a positive relationship between teacher and pupil in either teacher's classroom. In addition, a major difference from the Year 3 class was that the Year 5 pupils had school events to prepare for. During the first observation period this involved preparing for a visit to an American school. In the second data collection period a follow-up performance on school open day was performed based on their experiences at the American school. Thus a considerable amount of time in the lessons observed was spent preparing for these events and the class had few normal lessons.

As a result of the difficult nature of the Year 5 class and the different nature of the data obtained, it was decided not to compare the two year groups and to change the aim of analysis to one of attempting to identify why the Year 5 class was difficult and different. To accomplish this task separate research questions were established as follows:

1. What types of affordances occur in the Year 5 class?
 - Are affordances as rich and frequent as those in the Year 3 class?
2. How do the pupils make use of the given learning environment?
3. How do affordances affect pupil participation?
 - Are there affordances that yield negative outcomes for learning and prevent pupils from participating in a lesson actively and constructively?

The method of analysis for identifying affordances established for analysis of the Year 3 data is used to answer the Year 5 research questions. This serves the dual purpose of providing a means of interpretation of the Year 5 data, but also of assessing whether the method of analysis as developed for the Year 3 data is transferable and more widely applicable. Two lessons from the Year 5 data are analysed: one lesson representative of preparation for the visit to the American school, one representative of lessons after the visit. First, a description of the lesson stages observed is provided. Second, a qualitative analysis is provided. Finally, a profile of affordances is created. However, as the quality and quantity of the data was very different from that of Year 3, the system of coding for discourse actions employed in analysis of the Year 3 data was not developed and applied to the Year 5 data. This difference can be seen in the most frequently observed discourse pattern in the Year 5 data, this being teacher elicitation of language use followed by pupil resistance/refusal/ignoring of language use.

In the following an analysis is presented, using two Year 5 lessons, one before a visit to the American school and other after the visit. Both cases examined are taught by the native-speaker teacher, as his lessons exhibited more problems than the Japanese teacher's lessons. However, it should be stressed that the issues emergent from the analysis are common to lessons taught by the Japanese teacher.

14.1 Lesson Stages

The data from two lessons is segmented into lesson stages the following analysis. Six lesson stages were observed.

Stage 1 Greeting

- a) The teacher organizes the class to get ready for the lesson.
- b) The class greets the teacher.

Stage 2 Singing a song

The pupils practice singing a song they will sing at the American school and a Beatle's song *Yellow Submarine* following the visit to the American school.

- a) Framing: introducing the song
- b) Read aloud the lyrics together
- c) Sing the song

Stage 3 Reviewing a phrase book

As a part of the preparation for the visit to the American school, the class practice a number of phrases, using a phrase book compiled by the school. The phrase book consists of a list of

phrases in pairs comprising a question and answer that are assumed to be useful for the forthcoming visit.

- a) The teacher shows a flash card with a picture and elicits a phrase from the pupils. No further activity ensues. For example, the teacher does not check pupil comprehension of words and phrases.
- b) The teacher models pronunciation and the pupils repeat after the teacher.
- c) The teacher repeats the same procedure, but only those phrases the pupils have difficulty with.

Stage 4 Pronunciation quiz

This is a regular activity throughout the period of observation conducted by the researcher. The term-end listening test is also a pronunciation quiz. The teacher prepares sets of two words that have similar pronunciation.

- a) Whole class practice: the teacher first writes all the words on the board and pronounces the words. The pupils repeat after the teacher. No attempt is made to determine whether the pupils comprehend the meaning of the words.
- b) Quiz: The teacher says aloud only one word from a pair and the pupils write down the word they hear. This is sometimes done as a pair activity.
- c) The whole class checks their answers together. Nominated pupils read answers aloud.

Stage 5 Watching a video

Pupils watch a video entitled *Pocahontas* (the original version).

- a) The teacher reviews the previous episode
- b) Pupils watch
- c) The teacher summarises that day's episode.

Stage 6 Reading a book

The class read a reader.

- a) Individual silent reading
- b) Choral reading

14.2 Analysis of affordances

The above lesson stages are analysed below using data taken from the two lessons with the intent to identify and clarify the nature of interaction and affordances within the Year 5 classroom, in particular the reasons why the learning experience observed is a different one from that of the Year 3 classroom.

14.2.1 Lesson Stage 2 Singing a Song (Lesson 1) Insufficient activity design and subversion

In Excerpt 14.2.1 below the class sing a song about friendship written by the teachers. They will sing the song during their visit to the American school. The excerpt is one of framing with the teacher trying to engage the pupils in singing.

Excerpt 14.2.1 Lesson Stage 2 Singing a Song (Lesson 1)

1	TM: just fine thanks. uh. would you please take out Your. Your eyes song paper,
2	Pp?: <i>I don't have to look at it</i>
3	P?: <i>I can sing without looking at it</i>
4	P?: I like gi...you like gi... you have gi ((gi means haemorrhoid in Japanese. Phrases for health
5	they learned previously appear on page G in the pupils' files.))
6	TM: boys and girls. would you please take out Your. Your eyes song paper.
7	P?: no. <i>I don't need it</i>
8	P?: no
9	TM: no:
10	P?: <i>we can sing without it.</i>
11	P?: no paper <i>is ok.</i>
12	TM: no paper?
13	P?: <i>I have memorized.</i>
14	TM: you remember the words?
15	Pp: ((unint.))
16	TM: ok. let's. let's say the words together...not sing..say the word so. you're ready?
17	Pp?: yes
18	TM: in a,
19	Pp: ((unint.))
20	TM: on,
21	Pp: ((unint.))
22	TM: uh: <i>not quite correct</i>
23	Pp: ((loud. unint. but sounds like disagreement))

First the teacher tells the pupils to take out the song paper (L 1). However, he encounters strong resistance from the pupils who refuse to take out the paper (L 2-15). The pupils insist that they have remembered the song and do not want to take out the file (L 13). The teacher checks to see whether they have memorized the lyrics or not and it turns out that they have not. When the teacher says “uhh *not quite correct*” (L 22) the pupils become very loud, showing disagreement (L 23). Throughout the pupils are being noisy, with one group of boys in particular misbehaving, chatting all the time.

The above excerpt provides evidence of the pupils both rejecting and ignoring possible learning affordances. The result is a negative outcome in which no learning occurs, the pupils objecting to the teacher's instructions and objecting to engaging in the suggested activity. The teacher tries to provide the pupils with an opportunity to practice the lyrics and sing the song but the pupils refuse to take the opportunity. Undoubtedly the pupils are not ready to sing without the lyrics and do need to look at the lyrics. Nevertheless, they do not see that the opportunity is relevant to them. Or, although they perceive it as necessary, they are reluctant to use the opportunity. It may

be that the song itself is an uninteresting one. It may also be possible that an apparent lack of mutual trust and respect in the teacher-pupil relationship is a factor

The excerpt reveals that affordances exist in the activity for reading aloud and for singing a song. However, the activity is very plain, simply eliciting reading aloud twice and singing the song once with no further development and little evidence that the teacher has given much thought and planning to the activity. Reading aloud the lyrics does not appear to be meaningful to the pupils. In addition, the demands of the activity are light and unlikely to stretch pupil ability. Elicitation of reading aloud which the pupils are already able to do without assistance is not challenging. Thus, during the activity there is limited interaction between teacher and pupil, no contingent scaffolding that might normally be expected to occur during interaction where co-construction of learning occurs. Notably, neither is there any evidence of peer assistance.

If the pupils have to memorize the song, the teacher could have arranged the activity differently, perhaps in a way challenging the pupils to recite without looking at the lyrics. For example, the teacher could have put the lyrics on the board at the beginning of the activity and gradually erased them to give the pupils more responsibility. Or the teacher might have planned additional activities to do in the classroom. However, due to resistance at the framing stage, the teacher might have felt discouraged and consequently abandoned his original plan.

An instance of Contingent Affordance can be observed in the above excerpt. In the framing step, a pupil makes creative use of language. The pupil finds an opportunity to express his/her perception in the environment available using a phrase learned previously, “I have a sore throat,” and associating the English words “page G” with the Japanese word “gi” meaning haemorrhoid (L 4-5). Although the pupil is using English for the purpose of subverting the lesson, it is an instance of a pupil making use of English in an active way.

Table 14.2.1 Affordances in Excerpt 14.2.1 Lesson Stage 2 Singing a Song (Lesson 1)

1 Activity	Framing	Practicing a song
2 Pupils' Intended Actions	Creating use of language • Subverting	Reading aloud the lyrics (demand is low and not meaningful)
3 Discourse Patterns	—	—
4 Primary Assistance	Similarity in the sounds of “page G” and the Japanese word “gi” (haemorrhoid)	Elicitation
5 Secondary assistance	—	—
6 Success	+Emergence of creative language use	-Pupils reject an opportunity to read aloud
7 Type of affordances	Strong and contingent	Weak or none and Planned Affordance

In another lesson the teacher introduces a Beatles' song *Yellow Submarine*. As the teacher introduces the activity it is greeted with a less than enthusiastic response, for example, "boo." Following a brief introduction the teacher immediately elicits singing, even though this is the pupils' first encounter with the song. The result is inactive participation with only a few of the pupils taking part and only the teacher singing aloud. A number of pupils chat among themselves and one pupil even starts to play a recorder.

From the above observations it is clear that the learning opportunities provided in the activity are limited. The first point of note is that even though it is a new song, the only preparatory activity is that of listening once to a tape recording of the song. There is no introduction of new words and no interpretation of the lyrics is provided. The children simply listen to the song once and then sing. There is then little to indicate thought given by the teacher to Intended Actions (Dimension 2), little thought to specific intended learning. Certainly the activity provides an opportunity for singing. However, in order to sing the pupils have to read and process visual and semantic information from the lyrics (Stanovich 1980, 1988; Oakhill and Garnham 1988, cited in Cameron 2001), singing being a form of reading aloud of the lyrics. Thus there is an affordance for the processing of visual and phonological information. It is doubtful, however, whether all are able to read the lyrics or do so at the tempo of the recording. Additionally, there is no review of the semantic content of the song. Thus, even the affordance for visual and phonological information is not significantly usable for the pupils as the teacher does not explicitly focus on any part the class cannot sing (or do not want to sing?). A second point is that the lack of Intended Actions (Dimension 2) already noted indicates that attention given to Primary Assistance (Dimension 4) was insufficient, the lesson planning and design inadequate. There appears to be a mismatch between teacher expectations and the assistance provided (a typed script of the lyrics for each child) and the pupils' ability to make use of the assistance. A third point of note is that the above observations reveal an absence of Secondary Assistance (Dimension 5). Few children were observed to be capable of singing, others reluctant to do so. Singing a song in tune is different from simply reading aloud, especially if it is a new song as in this lesson. However, there was no assistance from the teacher to help the pupils sing better either during singing or afterwards. Therefore, active participation in singing did not take place resulting in a low level of success (Dimension 6). It can then be concluded that overall affordance in this singing activity was Weak or non-existent and Planned (Dimension 7: Types of affordances). In an interview subsequent to the lesson some of the pupils said that singing was difficult, as they did not know how to put the words into rhythm and tune. What emerges clearly from the above is the value of planning, prior thought given to intended actions and pupil need, recognition of pupils' ZPD. It is desirable to provide careful assistance at the beginning of the activity appropriate to the current level of student learning and to proceed with a gradual handover of responsibility to the pupils, providing appropriate assistance as required

so that eventually they might sing more confidently (assume greater independence). As the activity framework and the song above are not meaningful and accessible to the pupils, they do not participate actively. As they do not participate actively, the teacher is not encouraged to provide assistance. The effect is one of mutual reinforcement, a reciprocal effect discouraging both teacher and pupil from active participation.

14.2.2 Lesson Stage 3 Reviewing a Phrase Book (Lesson 1): Light task demand

At this stage of the lesson, the class review a phrasebook in preparation for their visit to the American school. The teacher shows a picture card and elicits a matching phrase. Then he provides a model and the pupils' repeat after him. All the phrases are in sets of two consisting of a question and an answer such as "How old are you?" and "I'm sixteen". During the review the pupils become very noisy, chatting to each other.

Excerpt 14.2.2 Lesson Stage 3 Reviewing a Phrase Book (Lesson 1)

1	TM: ok. close your files please. who can tell me this picture
2	P?: do you like sushi?
3	TM: yes
4	Pp: ((unint.))
5	TM: ok...yes I do
6	Pp: yes I do
7	P?: <i>what is it?</i>
8	TM: how about you
9	Pp: how about you
10	...
11	Pp: how old are you
12	TM: how old are you
13	Pp: I'm sixteen
14	TM: I'm sixteen

The above excerpt reveals a number of concerns, namely an apparent lack of a learning opportunity, a failure to check pupil comprehension and a failure to develop the material used in the activity. A first concern is that the teacher does not check pupil comprehension of meaning, perhaps because it is thought the picture cards used in the activity may be sufficient. Perhaps also because the teacher assumes the pupils already know the words and their meaning from previous lessons. Nevertheless, attention to comprehension would have provided useful reinforcement, variety, and also useful feedback to the teacher concerning pupil comprehension.

Secondly, there is no development of the material. Reviewing the phrasebook is a required task in preparation for the visit to the American school. Thus, the teacher has to use the phrasebook and review the phrases. However, the pupils are already familiar with the phrases, as the activity proceeds quickly. Undoubtedly the task demand is a more challenging one than reading aloud and, as the activity proceeds, the quick rhythm of drilling absorbs the pupils' attention. At best, rather than an affordance for the learning of new phrases, the activity serves to provide an affordance for recalling and practicing phrases already known. However, there is no opportunity

for the pupils to use the phrases pragmatically, little or no rich interaction between teacher and pupil and, consequently, no transformation of the pupils' learning and participation is observed. Once again the planning appears to have been rather plain. The teacher could have developed his plan further, for example, having the pupils act out the dialogues.

Table 14.2.2 Affordances in Excerpt 14.2.2 Lesson Stage 3 Reviewing a Phrase Book (Lesson 1)

1 Activity	Practicing
2 Pupils' Intended Actions	Recalling phrases (demand is low and not meaningful) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recalling and producing the phrases • Recalling the meaning?
3 Discourse Patterns	
4 Primary Assistance	Elicitation
5 Secondary Assistance	Modelling
6 Eventual success	-The pupils are already familiar with the phrases. As the teacher does not check meaning, it is not sure whether they understand the meaning
7 Type of Affordances	Weak or none and Planned Affordance.

14.2.3 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz (Lesson 2): Light demand

The class is engaged in a pronunciation quiz, a regular activity during the observation period. The teacher first displays pairs of words with similar sounds on the board, one of the paired words on the far right of the board and the other on the far left. Then the teacher reads aloud each word and the pupils repeat after him. The class then drill pronunciation before starting the quiz.

Excerpt 14.2.3 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz: Excerpt 14.2.3 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz: Drilling (Lesson 2)

1	TM: so today we will practice for the test. our test is about, ship and,
2	Pp: sheep
3	TM: sheep
4	.....
5	TM: pl pl
6	Pp: play
7	TM: play. pr:
8	TMPp: pray
9	P?: <i>sound the same</i>
10	....
11	TM: vote
12	Pp: vote
13	TM: do you know the word vote?
14	Pp: <i>I don't know/ don't know</i>
15	TM: <i>in an election. you all do vote</i>
16	P?: <i>vote?</i>
17	TM: uh ha. vote
18	P?: vote
19	P?: <i>what is vote?</i>
20	P?: <i>vote? go and vote in an election</i>

In Excerpt 14.2.3 the teacher carefully demonstrates pronunciation, especially words with confusing sounds such as “play” and “pray”, “vote” and “boat”. The activity here provides the class with affordance for recognizing pronunciation. The teacher also explains the meaning of a

new word, “vote” by giving a translation. This provides an opportunity for the pupils to learn the new word, although the translation may offer too much support, as the pupils are not required to use English to understand the meaning. It is noticeable here that the pupils’ cognitive level is much higher than the Year 3 pupils, as they demonstrate understanding of the conceptual difference between “vote and “election”, suggesting they are ready for cognitively more mature activities.

Two concerns arise from this extract. First, it is possible that the pupils do not know how to use the words as they are presented separately from actual use. Thus, it is open to conjecture just how much learning is actually taking place. In learning words it is important to focus on the micro-level such as pronunciation. However, practice in the above excerpt is detached from actual use of words in context. Secondly, if this has been the main listening activity for the whole semester and it is the only listening test item for the end of the semester test, the pupils’ learning experience would be a very narrow and limited one, lacking exposure to dynamic use of language. In comparison to the Year 3 pupils it is then arguable that the Year 5 pupils appear to receive fewer affordances both in terms of quality and of quantity.

Table 14.2.3 Affordances in Excerpt 14.2.3 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz: Drilling (Lesson 2)

1 Activity	Drilling
2 Pupils’ Intended Actions	Learning words • Pronunciation • Meaning
3 Discourse Patterns	
4 Primary Assistance	Elicitation of repetition
5 Secondary Assistance	Explanation (translation)
6 Eventual Success	+Pupils learn to distinguish similar sounds. They also learn the meaning of a new word “vote”. - However, learning pronunciation is a narrow and limited experience. Learning the meaning of a word by translation does not make them work hard and use language. Too much support.
7 Type of Affordances	Planned and Weak Affordance

14.2.4 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz Demonstration (Lesson 2): Inaccessibility of affordances

After practicing pronunciation, the teacher explains how the quiz is to be done. However, it is a rather complicated procedure and it takes a long time for the pupils to understand.

Excerpt 14.2.4 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz: Demonstration (Lesson 2)

1	TM: ok boys and girls every one look at the paper. here is your paper. you should write one two
2	three four five six seven eight nine ten. on your paper.
3	P?: <i>I don't understand</i>
4	TM: for this test..ok listen. right now you should be listening. ok. very important.
5	P?: <i>it's too much trouble</i>
6	.....

7	TM: <i>later please</i> . right now you will write. one word. from each number, so number one you can
8	write sheep..or ship. you can write sheep or ship. either will do. either one is ok.....
9	TM: ok? <i>please choose yourself</i>
10	P? <i>teacher, do we draw a cross or a circle? no?</i>
11	TM: <i>no</i> . just write. please just write...do you understand?
12	P?: no
13	.....
14	((Pupils' clarifying questions and Teacher's explanation continue for three pages of transcription))
15	.....
16	TM: ok what are we doing
17	Naoko: <i>the teacher will say words and-</i>
18	TM: no

The teacher's intent is to get the pupils to write down on a piece of paper their own choice of words from 10 pairs with similar pronunciation. The teacher then collects the papers from the pupils and re-distributes them. As a result each pupil has someone else's paper. Then, working in pairs, they dictate words to each other.

The explanation and instructions for this activity appear to be easy and clear (L 1-2 & L 7-8). The teacher also uses Japanese. However, the pupils still do not understand as his explanation is not sufficiently adjusted to the pupils. Although the pupils may understand the literal meaning of each explanation, they may not be able to understand the overall purpose and therefore find it difficult to take an action without connecting it to the purpose for doing so. As a result the activity may not make sense to them. There is a long negotiation between the teacher and the pupils to clarify what they have to do. Collection and re-distribution of the pupils' papers subsequent to the above excerpt is also a complicated procedure requiring the teacher to give a demonstration using a pupil with good English.

The above excerpt is another example of how a negative outcome can emerge. The potential affordance for learning is one for listening comprehension in understanding the teacher's instruction and identifying different sounds by engaging in a quiz. However, this is not easily accessible as the procedure is complicated and the instructions, despite their apparent simplicity, are not very clear. As a result, negotiation to enable the pupils to understand takes a long time and the class loses time in which they could be more profitably engaged in the actual learning activity. If practicing recognition of sounds is the main purpose of the activity and this itself is not easily accessible, it leaves the pupils with little time to engage in the task. Both the quality and quantity of the learning experience do not appear to be rich.

Table 14.2.4 Affordances in Excerpt 14.2.4 Lesson Stage 3Pronunciation Quiz: Demonstration (Lesson 2)

1 Activity	Framing
2 Pupils' intended actions	Listening comprehension • Understanding the teacher's instructions
3 Discourse patterns	
4 Primary assistance	Framing

5 Secondary assistance	Explanation (explication, translation)
6 Eventual success	It took a long time for the pupils to understand.
7 Type of affordances	Weak and Planned Affordance

14.2.5 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz, the Quiz (Lesson 2): Peer assistance

Once the pair work stage of the quiz begins, some of the pupils help each other, explaining what to do for those who do not understand.

Excerpt 14.2.5 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz: The Quiz (Lesson 2)

1	P?: pl:ay. play
2	P?: <i>you know. you have to look at these and read.</i>
3	P?: <i>I can't read</i>
4	P?: <i>she or see</i>
5	P?: <i>see is s. e. e. and she is s. h. e.</i>
6	P?: <i>first one of you has to read these and. why did you circle these?</i>
7	P?: <i>I don't know</i>

The more capable pupils are providing peer help, explaining the relationship between sound and spelling, “see is s-e-e and she is s-h-e” (L 5). This appears to be more dynamic than the whole class activity. The pupils are more responsible for their activity and participate more. The task framework (pair work) engenders an affordance providing pupils with an opportunity to engage in a sound-identifying activity (recognising the difference in sound between ten pairs of similar sounding words) with increased independence and rich assistance from each other. The pair activity provides more capable pupils an affordance to provide assistance and less capable pupils to receive focused assistance.

The excerpt also shows (L 6-7) that a pupil did not understand the teacher’s instruction in the activity framing stage and could not participate in the activity, as circling words on the distributed sheets was not a required task. (The pupils are supposed to use the distributed sheets to read aloud to their partners the words on the sheets so that their partners can then write down the dictated words.) The excerpt also reveals another problem. After five (or seven) years of learning English some of the weaker pupils still cannot read some very basic words such as “see” and “she”. This is a serious problem if these pupils are to participate in classroom activities and have a positive learning experience, one encouraging further engagement with the language.

Table 14.2.5 Affordances in Excerpt 14.2.5 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz: The Quiz (Lesson 2)

1 Activity	Core activity: pronunciation quiz in pairs
2 Pupils' Intended Actions	Listening comprehension • Pronunciation
3 Discourse Patterns	
4 Primary Assistance	Elicitation
5 Secondary Assistance	Peer explanation (explication) Modelling
6 Eventual Success	+Pair activity provides pupils with more independent roles. A more capable pupil actively assists a weaker pupil. His/her

	assistance appears to be beneficial.
7 Type of Affordances	Strong and planned

14.2.6 Lesson Stage 5 Watching a Video (Lesson 1): Lack of contingent assistance

During the final stage of the lesson the class watches a Disney video entitled *Pocahontas*. In the past they have watched parts of the video. The teacher first gives a quick review of the previous episode and elicits the storyline from the pupils.

Excerpt 14.2.6 Lesson Stage 5 Watching a Video (Lesson 1)

1	TM: stop it...boys and girls please look this way
2	Pp: ((takes a while to become quiet))
3	TM: boys and girls over here. over here.....last time we watched Pocahontas. ((unint.)) attacked
4	John Smith.
5	P?: <i>oh yes</i>
6	TM: what happened. do you remember?
7	P?: he die
8	TM: he dies? who?
9	P?: [<i>ouch</i>]
10	P?: ((unint.))
11	TM: ((unint.)) dies. and then.
12	P?: ((unint.))die
13	TM: John Smith was captured by the Indians. and. Pocahontas went to visit John Smith. and,
14	P?: rub ((meaning love))
15	TM: pardon?
16	P?: rub
17	TM: pardon?
18	P?: rub
19	P?: rub
20	P?: <i>what?</i>
21	P?: ((laugh))
22	P?: <i>because you don't say clearly</i>

In the above excerpt, the pupils and the teacher contribute to the interaction. When the teacher elicits details and a pupil gives a response in simple English, “he die”. Another pupil also tries to contribute by adding information. The pupils want to say that the main characters, Pocahontas and John Smith, are in love, saying “rub” (meaning *love*) but this is not clear to the teacher and he appears not to understand what the pupils mean. Although the interaction looks like an IRF exchange, the interaction prompts active use of English. The pupils use very simple English “he die” and “rub”, but they are selecting words and re-combining by themselves. This appears to be a more motivated and actively engaged form of interaction than a simple review of phrases.

The interaction above reveals positive affordance for recalling a story and for giving a summary of the storyline in very simple English (Dimension 2). Additionally, it is affordance that is accessible to the pupils requiring no negotiation for clarification. The task framework of eliciting information and providing information (Dimension 4) is clear, easily accessible, perceived as relevant, and is taken up by the pupils. Importantly, the pupils demonstrate their interest by their willingness to talk. In contrast to the demands of reading aloud observed earlier, the task demand here, that of responding in English, is far more challenging. However, there is

no contingent assistance to help the pupils to say exactly what they want to say (Dimension 5). Opportunities appear contingently and are ones a teacher might seek to exploit, using the opportunity to permit the individual pupil to engage in freer creative talk making full use of his or her own linguistic resources. Quality learning experiences can arise as a result of Contingent Affordances, opportunities equally as beneficial to pupil learning as those arising from Planned Affordances and adherence to a syllabus and timetable. The need is for teacher flexibility, for responsiveness to the needs and motivations of pupils.

Next the class watch a video which provides an affordance for listening comprehension. At the beginning the pupils are noisy but once the video starts they are soon absorbed. Finally the teacher summarises the video and this is followed by a worksheet. However, perhaps due to lack of time, the class does not use it. The activity of watching the video certainly provides pupils with an opportunity to hear English. However, there seems to be little if any aid provided to help pupil listening comprehension.

Table 14.2.6 Affordances in Excerpt 14.2.6 Lesson Stage 5 Watching a Video (Lesson 1)

1 Activity	Framing	Watching a video
2 Pupils' Intended Actions	Interacting Activating schema • Recalling the story and for giving a summary of the storyline	Listening comprehension • Understanding a story
3 Discourse Patterns	—	—
4 Primary Assistance	Elicitation of specific information	Elicitation of listening/ watching
5 Secondary Assistance	Summarising, Recasting	—
6 Eventual Success	+Pupils manage to provide information using very simply English. - However, they fail to do so in the second part.	It is hard to tell as the class just watched the video.
7 Type of Affordances	Strong and weak and Planned Affordance	Weak and planned?

14.2.7 Lesson Stage 4 Reading a Story (Lesson 2): Cognitively inappropriate material

The pupils who finish the quiz first are expected to read books silently while waiting for the others to finish. However, as the transcription shows, it is difficult for the teacher to get the pupils to read as they prefer to talk instead. When all the pupils finish the quiz, the whole class read together, repeating after the teacher.

Excerpt 14.2.7 Lesson Stage 4 Reading a Story (Lesson 2)

1	TM: boys you should be not be playing. you should be reading the book....girls, please read the
2	book..girls, please read. where's your book... please read... any questions?
3	P?: yes
4	TM: yes
5	P?: <i>how do you pronounce this?</i>

6	TM: buzzing. buzzing. <i>busy</i>
7	.....
8	TM: ok. time out. boys and girls stand up...ok. Saya. are you ready? hey. time out stop talking
9	please. let's read this story all together...animals love that fair.
10	Pp: ((noisy))
11	TM: sh:: animals love that fair
12	Naoto: <i>you see, it's broken now</i>
13	TM: Nao-kun
14	Naoto: <i>yes</i> ((becomes quiet))
15	TM: right here. <i>everybody is reading</i>
16	Naoto: <i>I'm listening</i>
17	TM: page two..dogs go under the roller coaster.
18	Pp: dogs go under the roller coaster.

There is not much time available for the class to engage in the reading. The pupils have a chance to read silently if they finish early. For those who do not finish early there is no such opportunity. It is not clear whether the reading activity has a specific goal or not. Reflecting the lack of learning goals, the activity framework does not have a specific device to enhance learning. It appears that the teacher intends to use silent reading to occupy the pupils who have finished the pronunciation quiz rather than as a specific task with the intent to improve pupil reading skill.

An explanation for the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the pupils for the reading activity is that the book itself is an inappropriate one for the class. The book is one read by pupils in the first year of the school's immersion programme by pupils aged six or seven. The content of the book reflects the age of the pupils it is intended for, being about how animals love a fair. This seems an inappropriate choice of material for the older pupils in the Year 5 class considering their cognitive maturity (See 14.2.3 Lesson Stage 3 Pronunciation Quiz, distinguishing "vote"/"election") and unlikely to motivate them to engage in the reading

Later in the lesson the class has an opportunity for reading aloud together. Reading aloud has an important role to play for beginners, as, when they encounter new words, they appear to need to pronounce the words aloud. During the silent reading, one of the pupils asks the teacher how to pronounce the word, "buzzing". It is very likely that s/he does not know the meaning. However, although s/he asks only about the pronunciation and does not ask about the meaning, the teacher explains the meaning as well. Pupils appear to need to understand sound before meaning in learning new words. Therefore it is important to read aloud in the class. However, the class does need to understand the meaning of new words as well. At the individual level, as in the case of "buzzing", there is an affordance for learning a new word. At the whole class level, however, there is no such an affordance. There is not much interaction for fine-tuning of learning in whole class activity.

Table 14.2.7 Affordances in Excerpt 14.2.7 Lesson Stage 4 Reading a Story (Lesson 2)

1 Activity	Silent reading	Whole class reading
------------	----------------	---------------------

2 Pupils' Intended Actions	Reading comprehension? Learning words • Pronunciation and meaning	Reading aloud
3 Discourse Patterns		
4 Primary Assistance	Selection of the book, Elicitation of silent reading (not effective and meaningful)	Elicitation of whole class reading (not effective and meaningful)
5 Secondary Assistance	Modelling, Explanation (translation)	Modelling
6 Eventual Success	+For some pupils it is an opportunity to learn words. - However, it is not known whether they understand the story or not. Some of them do not participate in reading aloud.	-Some of them do not participate in reading aloud.
7 Type of Affordances	Weak (or no) and (un)Planned Affordance	Weak (or no) and (un)Planned Affordance

14.3 Summary

Analysis of affordances revealed in the above excerpts from Lessons 1 & 2 reveals features of affordances in the Year 5 class markedly different from those observed in the Year 3 class. Notably, *Contingent and Strong Affordances*, together with *Planned and Strong Affordances*, occur infrequently, being observed only once in each of the two lessons. The remaining affordances observed are predominantly weak and planned. Affordances permitting positive outcomes are rare. Using the six dimensions of affordances used in analysis of the Year 3 data, features of affordances in the Year 5 classroom are discussed below.

14.3.1 Dimension 1 Activities

The variety of activities is limited in the Year 5 class. The activities observed include:

- a) Singing a song
- b) Reviewing a phrase book
- c) Pronunciation quiz
- d) Watching a video
- e) Reading a book

In Lesson 1, a lesson conducted prior to a visit to the American school, singing a song and reviewing the phrase book were obligatory activities imposed by the school. The pupils had to practice the song in order to sing at the American school. They also had to use the phrasebook compiled by the teachers before the visit. Other than these the range of activities is limited with no language games or presentation of new grammar.

14.3.2 Dimension 2 Intended actions

In the activities identified above, it was observed that there were no specific goals or objectives set for the activities other than to prepare for the visit to the American school. Because of the impending visit and the time available it might have been difficult for the teacher to set specific

language learning goals. Nevertheless, in the activities of watching a video, reading a book, and the pronunciation quiz, the purpose appears to be one of occupying pupils rather than having a specific language learning outcome in mind as no specific language learning goals were identified. There is however one clearly set learning goal persistently appearing throughout the observation period, that is, learning pronunciation. However, this appears to be a very narrow and particular goal. The activities adopted aim at learning a phonological aspect of language but not semantic, syntactic and pragmatic aspects of language.

14.3.3 Primary assistance: Design and planning of activities

As there is no specific language focus, there are few specifically devised activity frames to achieve learning. A lack of consideration in the selection and design of types of activity results in a failure to achieve learning and a failure to create discourse in which pupils can engage pragmatically. This insufficiency of design and planning was observed in four forms: too light an activity demand, cognitively inappropriate activity and materials, use of activities failing to encourage meaningful engagement, and inaccessible task demand. However, the pair work in the quiz in Lesson 1 Stage 4 as an activity design is successful, requiring more responsibility and independence on the part of the pupils. Finally, it is difficult to generalize from only two lessons but there appears to be an extreme shortage in the presentation of new language items.

14.3.4 Secondary assistance: lack of contingent assistance

Less contingent assistance is observed in the Year 5 class in terms of both quality and quantity. Peer assistance appeared very infrequently. Contingent assistances observed are limited to Translation and Modelling. Even feedback is sparse, which leads to a shortage of exposure. Some of the contingent assistance that does occur is not sufficiently adjusted to pupil level, for example, explanation of the quiz procedure in Lesson 2, preventing pupils from participating in activities.

14.3.5 Eventual success

Not surprisingly, learning outcomes are not very positive. Sometimes pupils may reject or ignore potential opportunities, for example, Lesson 1 Stage 2 Singing, as the activity is not meaningful to the pupils. New language use rarely emerges as the activities do not stretch pupil levels of current ability and are not challenging enough for the pupils to elaborate their language use. Learning is unlikely to occur when affordances are inaccessible, for example, insufficient assistance in the framing of a quiz. The pupils cannot join in an activity therefore opportunity is denied. Lack of mutual trust may be another reason for unsuccessful learning. Contingent Affordances for creative language occurred once but the purpose was one of subversion reflecting a discipline problem.

14.3.6 Types of affordances

As a result of the above examination of interaction across the five dimensions of affordances, affordances in the Year 5 classes are identified to be mainly Weak and planned. The learning experience of the Year 5 pupils has a low frequency of both contingent and Strong Affordances (2 cases). According to Gibson (1979), affordances are complementary in nature. In the case of the Year 5 class, the complementary relationship is negative in nature. For example, in Lesson 2 Singing, a negative reciprocal effect was observed. As the activity framework and the song itself are not meaningful and are inaccessible for many pupils, they do not participate actively. As they do not participate actively, the teacher is not encouraged to provide assistance. Generally, due to a lack of pragmatic engagement and a lack of design to encourage active pupil language use, there is little or no rich interaction in the Year 5 class, the result being negative learning outcomes.

From a participation metaphor perspective, the Year 5 class reveals a case of extremely negative participation. Analysis of the elements of affordances shows that a lack of affordances, or the weakness of affordances available, results in an absence of the emergence of language use resulting in an unsuccessful learning experience; the pupils failing to achieve active participation. An example of this is to be seen in Excerpt 14.2.6 in which wrong pronunciation and a failure by the teacher to provide appropriate assistance results in passive participation, preventing a pupil from participation in talk with the teacher. Such weak affordances not appropriately tuned to the pupils' ZPD are restrictive, inhibiting the emergence of learning and participation. Other excerpts reveal that negative participation by students may actually be destructive of the classroom learning environment. Accordingly, not only did passive participation in which a positive handover of responsibility and greater autonomy in the students' roles not occur, but lack of affordances with the ZPD also gave rise to destructive participation highly disruptive of classroom learning. This can be seen in Excerpt 14.2.1.

The analysis in this chapter has revealed a language-learning environment in the Year 5 classroom creating Weak Affordances that appear to prevent or inhibit pupils from positive and active engagement in classroom activities. In seeking to explain this situation, to obtain a richer understanding of the classroom dynamic, interviews were conducted with the participants, the intention being to develop a greater awareness of

- The relationship between teacher and pupil
- The teacher's personality and beliefs concerning teaching
- The pupils' perception of and attitudes towards English and the teacher

Thus, after a comparison of the Year 3 and Year 5 groups in the next chapter (Chapter 15), interview data from both the teachers and the pupils is then examined in Chapter 16 to

illuminate participant expectations and how these affect the emergence and types of affordances.

Chapter 15 A Comparison of the Year 3 and Year 5 Classes

In this chapter three activities are examined and used to compare the Year 3 and Year 5 classes. The first of these, singing, involves a comparison of the practice of songs. The two additional activities involve comparisons of creative language use, and interaction involving contingent assistance. It is hoped that a comparison of activities common to both groups will serve to illuminate the different classroom realities, enabling a better understanding of the different types and levels of affordances observed.

15.1 Singing: Practice of a song

In this first comparison, the focus of attention is upon the presentation of new songs. As a full description of song presentation in the Year 5 classroom together with an analysis of affordances has already been made in Excerpt 14.2.1 there follows an analysis of song practice in the Year 3 classroom. A comparison is then made of the differing experiences of the two groups.

15.1.1 Practice of a Song (Year 3) Green Grass Grows: use of gestures and pictures

In Lesson 1, the pupils sing a song called *Green Grass Grows*. They are already familiar with the song about plants and animals living in a forest. As in many good children's stories, the song has a series of repetitive and predictable phrases and events in the lyrics. As the song goes on, the phrases accumulate and become longer and more challenging for the pupils to remember and sing. Additionally, as they sing, the pupils perform a number of gestures associated with each word. The first verse is short and simple as follows:

Verse 1

((TT puts a picture of a hole on the board)) ((TTTSPP use a gesture for each "hole"))

There was a hole in the middle of the ground.

The prettiest hole that you ever did see.

And the green grass grows all around all around green grass grows all around. ((gesture for green grass growing all around))

Verse 2

And in this hole there was a tree ((TTTSPP gesture for "tree"))

The prettiest tree that you ever did see ((TTTSPP gesture for "tree"))

And tree in the hole and the hole in the ground. ((TTTSPP use a gesture for "hole" and "tree"))

And the green grass grows all around all around the green grass grows all around ((TTTSPP gesture))

The song continues, adding additional phrases until the final verse in which all the phrases are included.

Final Verse

And in this nest there was a bird ((Gesture))

The prettiest bird that you ever did see ((Gesture))

The bird in the egg and the egg in the nest and the nest on the branch and the branch on the tree and the tree in the hole and the hole in ground ((Gesture))

And the green grass grows all around all around the green grass grows all around ((Gesture))

The elicitation of singing in this activity requires the pupils to remember the song and to sing it. In particular they are engaged in: (1) remembering and using the words and phrases in long verses (2) remembering the meaning (3) remembering the grammar such as the use of prepositions (2 Intended actions). To meet the demands of this task, the teachers provide various forms of assistance (4 Primary assistance). First, the selection of the song itself is a form of assistance, the repetitive appearance of the words and phrases providing the pupils with plenty of opportunities to listen to and practice the sounds and words in a similar way to drilling but in a natural and enjoyable manner. Secondly, the teachers do not show the lyrics. Instead, for each verse they put a cut out picture on the whiteboard to remind the pupils of the lyrics as each verse contains something new. For example, in the first verse, the teacher puts a picture of a hole on the whiteboard. Then in subsequent verses she adds a picture of a tree onto the picture of the hole and eventually a picture of a bird to form a complete picture of the lyrics. Additionally, the use of gestures by the pupils for each verse while singing assists their memory as well.

The accompanying gestures together with looking at the pictures displayed on the whiteboard assist the pupils' memory. It is important, however, that the song and the associated activities are enjoyable and age appropriate for the young learners. The discourse structure of the song itself is also attractive to the pupils. The pupils enjoy the predictability and continuity created by the repetition of events coupled with the small incremental changes. Additionally, the increasing length of each verse as the song develops provides the opportunity for an age-appropriate challenge, increased participation and achievement, an opportunity above all for a fun learning experience. The whole activity is challenging for the pupils, one in which the affordances are meaningful, valuable and usable. As a result, although some of them, particularly boys, say they do not like English and singing, the video data appears to indicate a different picture. The pupils are observed to be singing and moving their bodies to the rhythm. This appears to be a clear indication not only of enjoyment, but also of participation, accomplishment, and the successful use of the affordances available (6 Eventual Success). There is a very Strong Affordance for learning words and phrases, accompanied by an enjoyable quality experience of singing in English (Row 7 Types of Affordances). A table of the affordances available is given below.

Table 15.1.1 Affordances in 15.1.1 Practice of a New Song (Year 3) Green Grass Grows Use of gestures and pictures

1 Activity	Singing		
2 Pupils' Intended Actions	Learning words and phrases: remembering and using them	Learning words and phrases: noticing (re-learning) the meaning	Learning structure and grammar: noticing (re-learning) the structure and grammar
3 Discourse Patterns	Pattern C		
4 Primary Assistance	Selection of the song.(Age-appropriate material, Repetitive appearance of words and phrases) Elicitation of singing and gestures by showing pictures. Providing gestures and pictures.		
5 Secondary Assistance	—	—	—
6 Success	+Pupils sing successfully using gestures and are observed to enjoy the activity	+It is reasonable to assume that the pictures reinforce pupil understanding of meaning	+It is not known whether the pupils developed their grammatical understanding from the singing. However, when the researcher outside the classroom tested some they understood the usage of the prepositions used in the song.
7.Type of Affordances	Strong and planned	Strong and planned	Strong and planned

15.1.2 Practice of a New Song: the two groups compared

There is a noticeable difference between the Year 3 and Year 5 classes at the singing stage in the quality of the linguistic environment found in the two classrooms. Analysis of the Year 3 class above reveals teacher assistance is varied, enriched by the choice of materials made and the use of gestures and pictures. However, in the Year 5 lesson (See 14.2.1) the singing activity appears very plain, the linguistic environment merely one of reading aloud the lyrics and singing. The result is a clear difference in the quality and quantity of affordances observable in the two classrooms as shown in Table 15.1.2 below.

Table 15.1.2 A Comparison of Affordances in Year 3 and Year 5 Singing Practice

Year Group	Intended Actions	Primary Assistance	Outcomes and Types of Affordances
Year 3 Green Grass Grows	1. Learning words and phrases. Remembering and using them. 2. Learning words and phrases. Noticing (re-learning) the meaning. 3. Learning structure and grammar. Noticing (re-learning) the structure and grammar.	(Common for all the intended actions) 1. Elicitation of singing and gestures by showing pictures. 2. Providing gestures and pictures 3. Repetitive appearance of words and phrases	The pupils are enjoying and participating in the singing activity. Strong and Planned Affordances.
Year 5 Your Eyes	1. Reading aloud lyrics. 2. Word recognition, noticing the relationship between	1. Elicitation of reading aloud. 2. Modelling	Pupils reject or ignore the elicitation. Not very enthusiastic singing.

	sound and spelling?	3.Elicitation of singing	Weak and Planned Affordance
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It is the richness of the linguistic environment provided in the Year 3 class, particularly *Intended actions and assistance* that makes affordances more accessible and stronger than those in the Year 5 class. The result can be seen in the different student response to the activity, the very differing levels of participation. The teacher of the Year 3 class receives mainly positive responses and participation throughout the activity. With the exception of a small number of boys, the Year 3 pupils were singing and moving their bodies (15.1.1). On the other hand, the Year 5 teacher receives mainly negative responses throughout. A majority of the pupils, boys and girls, were either very passive, possibly deliberately refusing to sing, not singing actively, or doing something else instead (14.2.1). Although affordances exist in both classes, the Year 5 pupils are unlikely to benefit to the same degree. The teacher's preparation in the Year 3 class, the clear learning objectives, the selection of age appropriate materials and tasks, and the resulting balancing of demand and support serve to provide a very different learning experience to the pupils from that experienced in the Year 5 class. This appears again to raise the importance of teacher choice on the achievement of intended actions, the importance of planning and the selection of assistance provided.

An issue here is whether singing is an activity appropriate, meaningful and motivating to both of the age groups observed. It may be argued that it is more difficult and challenging for teachers to prepare an activity for older children, satisfying their interest at an appropriate cognitive level using their limited English ability. However, the issue here may be not the difficulty in preparing materials but that the preparation that did occur in the Year 5 class was less thorough and less thoughtful. It might also be argued that singing may not be a suitable activity for older pupils who are more likely to find the activity an embarrassing one. Such a view would appear to be supported by the interviews conducted with the Year 5 pupils who stated that they found singing a difficult activity and as a consequence did not like it. Undoubtedly singing can be an embarrassing activity for older pupils. It may also be possible that the pupils' stated dislike of singing reflects the fact that the teacher spends less time on the activity than the Year 3 teachers, possibly because the teacher perceives the students to be less interested in the activity.

The level of teacher preparation and choice of 'inappropriate' activities (singing) for the Year 5 class are not however the only possible explanations for the difficulties observed in the Year 5 classroom. In part they may also be a reflection of the failure of the school itself and of the curriculum laid down and followed by the teachers. Not only at this school, but also throughout primary education in Japan, literacy development is not part of the primary English syllabus.

The skills of speaking and listening together with vocabulary building are emphasised. However, this lack of literacy development may help us understand some of the problems observed in the Year 5 classroom and also why many teachers in Japan find it difficult to teach English to older children. Reading and writing, not singing, are activities more likely to be in tune with the higher cognitive interests of older pupils, more in tune with their expectations and experiences in other subject classrooms. The fact that the Year 5 pupils show the conceptual understanding of the difference “election” and “vote” indicates their cognitive maturity and need for activities suitable for older pupils (14.2.3). Thus, by introducing reading and writing at an earlier age it may be possible to prepare more age-appropriate activities in the primary classroom, activities, for instance, based around singing such as developing the theme of a song into a writing activity, or students themselves writing the lyrics to a tune, something of interest to many young teenagers in today’s world. If teachers continue to use the same activities and hold the same expectations throughout the six years of primary schooling, a decline of student interest in English appears inevitable.

A further issue that may also help to explain the differing classroom experiences revealed in the data is that of gender. Observation and interview data reveal a gender difference both in attitudes to and ability in English at the primary level. Boys both in the Year 3 and Year 5 classes already seem to have developed a stereotyped image of masculinity. Their favourite subjects tend to be sport and technical subjects such as computing. On the other hand, the girls’ favourite subject tends to be English in both age groups. If English lessons only involve singing and stories, boys may associate English with softness and femininity, a subject not for ‘boys’. Undoubtedly social influences outside of school develop and reinforce stereotyped gender images in both sexes. However, by including more materials and activities with boys in mind, such as using computers in the English class, it may be possible to lessen the gender difference in attitudes. Undoubtedly there is a need to encourage more active and dynamic participation by older pupils. Their reluctance to participate in similar activities used for the younger pupils suggests that the type of participation required is not the same as that for younger pupils. Their community is a more cognitively mature one, requiring activities reflecting this maturity in terms of the degree of conceptual difficulty.

15.2 Creative Language Use at the Lesson Framing Stage

Contingent interaction in which pupils use language creatively occurs in both the Year 3 and Year 5 classes. In this section a comparison is made of such interaction for creative language use, the intention being to see whether there exist differences in the quality and quantity of affordances for contingent creative language use.

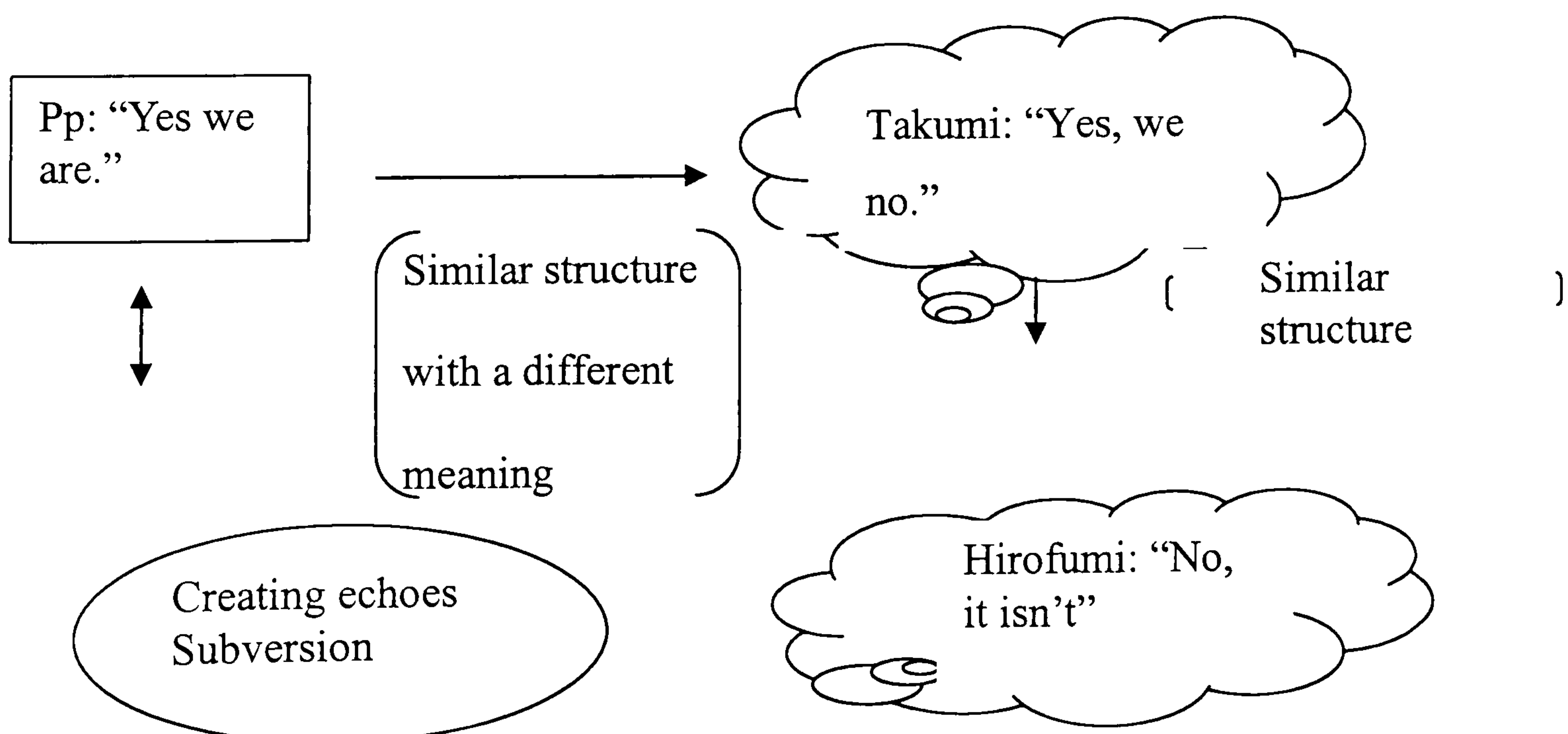
15.2.1 Creative Language Use (Year 3)

Creative language use by the Year 3 pupils was evident in many of the classes observed during the course of this study. In the excerpt below, the teacher is framing a singing activity. Takumi and Tsugufmi are boys sitting next to each other. In their interviews both say that they do not like English. In part this is because they feel a need to demonstrate their identity as boys. In the class English is regarded as a girls' subject. Takumi is one of the weakest pupils and often makes negative comments about English in his underground talk. Hirofumi's English is at the middle level.

Excerpt 15.2.1 Creative Language Use (Year 3) (Lesson 1)

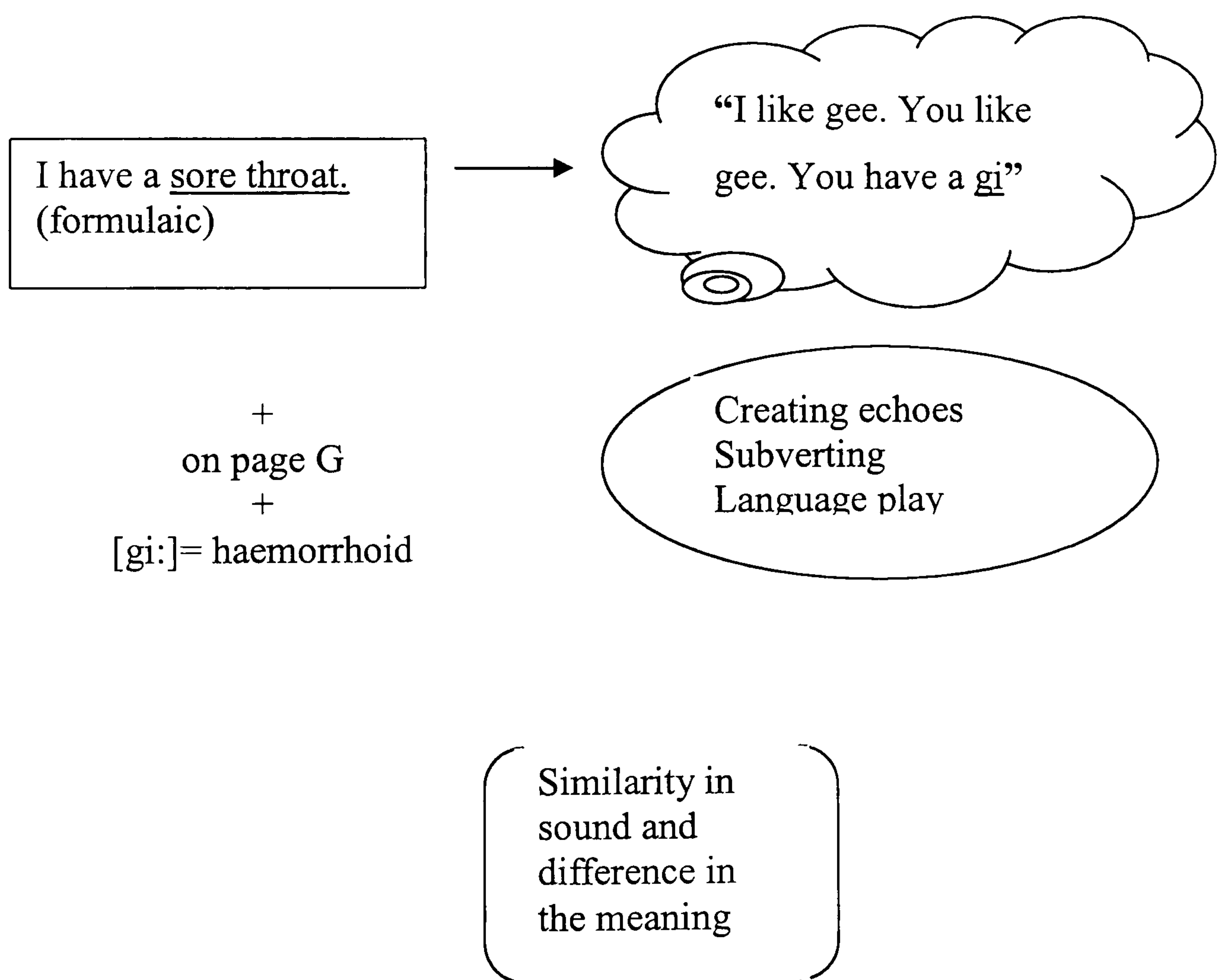
	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TT: let's sing Doe Ray Me. ok?	T3.6Elicit singing	Pattern A
2	Daisuke: <i>really. do we have to do</i>	P2.4Provide genuine info: opinion	
3	<i>it every time</i>		
4	Miki?: wow	P2.3Provide genuine info: feelings	Pattern C
5	P?: Doe Ray Me ((unint.))	?	
6	TT: are you ready?	T2.1Agenda management.	Pattern F
7	Pp: yes we are ((loud))	P2.6Provide info.	
8	Takumi: yes we no	P2.4Provide genuine info: feelings	
9	Hirofumi: no it isn't	P2.4Provide genuine info: feelings	
10	TS: good	T11.1.1Feedback	

The above extract shows the pupils using English creatively to express their own opinions, the boys making use of differences and similarities. They know that they can use a similar structure to express their disagreement (L 8-9) to that used by the other pupils to express agreement (L 7) but need to change it slightly. Takumi uses the structure for agreement, "yes we are" but expresses a negative meaning by constructing his own expression, inserting "no" to the chunk and creating, "yes we no". Hearing Takumi's utterance, Hirofumi produces the chunk, "no it isn't". What the boys should have said is "No, we are not." but they are not capable of doing so yet. Nevertheless, they still manage to express their disagreement (subversion) by creating echoes.



15.2.2 Creative Language Use (Year 5)

Similar creative usage to that observed in the Year 3 class above is also evident in the Year 5 classroom. In the Year 5 class in Lesson 1 Stage 2 (See Excerpt 14.4.1), the teacher is framing a singing activity, telling the pupils to take out their files, files that have previously been used to learn health phrases such as “I have a sore throat”. The pupils notice that the phrase “I have a sore throat” appears on page G in their files. The English letter G has a similar sound to the Japanese word for haemorrhoid, “gi”. A pupil says, “I like gi. You like gi. You have a gi”. They see a similarity in the sounds and also notice the difference in meaning. They apply the sound of the letter to the phrase “I have a sore throat” to create their own expression, “You have a gi”.



15.2.3 Creative Language Use: the two groups compared

There are a number of similarities between Year 3 and Year 5 in terms of the affordances available. First, the pupils in both classes by themselves discover their own meanings, demonstrate a strong urge to express them, and seek opportunities to do so in the context, all of which are conditions for Contingent Affordances to emerge (see Chapter 9.4.2). The Year 3 pupils perceive the need to express their strong feelings against the teacher’s intention (15.3.1). The Year 5 pupils discover something funny about the language and feel the need to express themselves in a slightly subverting way (15.3.2). Usually the Year 5 classroom environment does not present the pupils with many Strong Affordances, so in this instance they appear to

eagerly make use of the opportunity. These examples reveal that contingent opportunities exist in both classes and that the pupils in both year groups recognise these opportunities and make use of them. They also suggest that opportunities for creative language use depend on contingency rather than planning, upon the moment and recognition of the moment rather than a teacher's preparation of tasks, materials and materials selection, though such preparation does provide for more opportunities to emerge

A second similarity is that the pupils in both year groups possess resources, knowledge and skills to make use of emergent opportunities. Creativity is not entirely accidental. To be able to produce contingent creative use of language, pupils have to have resources, knowledge and skills to use. That the Year 5 pupils do have such resources is revealed in 15.3.2 in which a pupil uses a recently learned structure as a basis for creative language use. The Year 3 pupil in 15.3.1 uses chunks learned in the past as a resource and constructs his own sentence using the knowledge he has.

A third similarity is that pupils in both classes use creative language for the purpose of subversion, implying that both classes have problems of class management. This however may simply be something that all primary classrooms have in common. Children are naturally playful and willing to test the limits of behaviour. Undoubtedly the Year 5 pupils are not very disciplined and do take advantage of their less authoritative teachers. Neither are they constrained from expressing themselves in negative ways. However, the year 3 pupils' example of subversive use implies that it may be a reaction to tight control executed by the teacher. "I have a gi" (haemorrhoid) is creative and funny usage but many teachers may perceive it as less than respectful. In the Year 3 class there are many instances in which the pupils are observed to use English creatively in a positive way.

Contingent use of English appears to be a valuable exercise, something to be encouraged and welcomed in the classroom. Certainly it allows pupils to be creative, to assume a degree of ownership of the language. It can also be disruptive of planned activities and require teachers to loosen their control of the classroom. Nevertheless, for contingent creative use of English to occur, teachers have a significant role to play. Firstly, in the development of pupil resources, skills and knowledge so that when opportunities arise the pupils are able to make use of them. Secondly, by being flexible, taking note of opportunities that arise and permitting pupils make use of such opportunities. Teachers need to be firm but flexible in the control they exert, giving pupils the freedom to express their own meanings. Furthermore, they need to demonstrate to pupils that creative language use is not only acceptable but is also welcomed.

15.3 Contingent Assistance at the Framing Stage

When interactions at the Framing Stage in the Year 3 and Year 5 classes are compared, a striking difference between the two classes can be observed. The teachers from both age groups try to elicit information from the pupils. However, whereas the Year 3 teacher is responsive to the pupils and provides appropriate contingent assistance to enable them to participate in interaction, the Year 5 teacher is less responsive and provides little contingent assistance resulting in unsuccessful provision of information.

15.3.1 Contingent Assistance at the Framing Stage: Jingle Bells (Year 3)

The following is a transcript from the Year 3 class. As the Year 3 class is going to sing a recently learned song *Jingle Bells*, the teacher first conducts a warm-up talk with the pupils, eliciting at what time of the year Christmas happens. As the pupils have difficulty in providing a date, the teacher contingently provides assistance, teaching how to say an ordinal number.

Excerpt 15.3.1 Contingent Assistance at the Framing Stage: Jingle Bells (Year 3)

	Utterances	Discourse Actions	Discourse Patterns
1	TT: now, I have a question. who knows the answer. please	Pattern D
2	raise your hand quietly.. when is Christmas?..when is	T3.2Elicit.	
3	Christmas ((singing))	P12Bid	
4	Sachiko: <i>yes yes</i> ((raise the hands))	P1.1Provide info.	
5	Daisuke: Jingle bell ((shouts))	P2.5Provide info.	
6	P?: <i>I don't know</i>	T6Give a clue.	
7	TT: when. when is your birthday. when is Christmas	T3.2Elicit.	
8	((singing))		
9	Sachiko: December twenty-	P1.1Provide info.	Pattern C
10	Daisuke: [ahh stop]	P14Interject	
11	Sachiko: -fifth	P1.1Provide info.	
12	Daisuke: [five]	P1.1Provide info.	
13	TS: wow. very good....good	T11.1.4Feedback	
14	TT: [twenty fifth. that's right very good.]	T11.1.4Feedback	
15	TS: very good. December twenty fifth	T11.1.1Feedback	
16	TT: that's right. shall we say it together	T3.4Elicit	
17	TTS: December twenty fifth	repetition	

The teacher elicits information that she herself already knows, “When is Christmas?” (L 2). Sachiko answers correctly (L 9 & 11) but Daisuke, who interrupts Sachiko, says “twenty five” (L 10 & 12), unable to use the ordinal number, “twenty fifth”. In response the teachers give feedback, showing a model (L 13-14) and eliciting repetition to practice saying the date correctly (L 15-16). In this way the teachers contingently see an opportunity to reinforce an ordinal number. Such assistance provides a rich learning experience for the pupils, embedded in context and contingently adjusted to pupil need. The result is that Daisuke manages to learn new language use and it subsequently enables him to participate in the classroom interaction.

15.3.2 Contingent Assistance at the Framing Stage: Pocahontas (Year 5)

A similar type of interaction to that observed above in the Year 3 class occurs while the Year 5 class watch the video *Pocahontas*. Before the pupils watch the video, the teacher elicits what happened when the pupils viewed a section of the video in a previous lesson (Excerpt 14.2.6). An appropriate but demanding answer would be, “John Smith went to help Pocahontas but he was captured. He is badly injured and he may die.” However, a pupil manages to say, “he die” (L 7). Another pupil says, “rub” (*love*) (L 14), perhaps meaning “John Smith and Pocahontas are in love” and possibly “so it is very sad because he is injured.” The pupil is not embarrassed to speak and is enthusiastic as he repeats the word “rub” three times. However, he requires assistance to convey his meaning fully, assistance the teachers and peer pupils fail to provide. The teacher does not seem to hear or ignores what the child is saying (L 13-22) and as a consequence little or no positive constructive teaching and learning emerges from the interaction. This is an instance in which an opportunity for contingent learning was not seized upon. It is a contrasting experience to that of the Year 3 pupils described in 15.3.1. As the Year 5 pupil is not provided with teacher assistance, s/he does not learn language use to express what s/he wants to say. Therefore, the pupil’s attempt to participate in the interaction with the teacher to talk about the story line was not achieved. The examples of the two age groups highlight the value of contingent assistance to assist pupils to learn and participate while engaged in an activity.

15.3.3 Contingent Assistance at the Framing Stage: Contrasting Experiences

The teachers in the Year 3 and Year 5 classes perceive interaction, discover potential learning opportunities, and make use of them to create very different learning experiences for the two classes. In the Year 3 class the information the pupil provides is correct, the form is wrong, “December twenty five” (L 11 Excerpt 15.3.1). Thus the teacher provides language feedback, “Twenty fifth” (L 13-14) and the opportunity to practice the correct form (L 15-16). In the Year 5 class, the first child provides correct information but uses the wrong form, “he die” (L 7 Excerpt 14.2.6). However the teacher, other than modelling, does not provide an explicit learning opportunity such as the elicitation of repetition of the correct form. A second pupil pronounces a word wrongly and his utterance lacks structure, “rub” (L 14). What the pupil meant was, “they are in love” or “they love each other”. Again, the teacher does not provide linguistic feedback to help the pupil express his meaning.

The difference between the two classes in the learning opportunities available to the pupils derives from each teacher’s responsiveness. It might however be argued that in the Year 3 classroom conditions are more supportive of contingent assistance. The information expected by the teachers from the Year 3 pupils is much simpler than that expected from the Year 5 pupils. As a result, the teachers are able to give greater focus to pupil language use and provide

appropriate scaffolding. On the other hand, the Year 5 pupils are expected to supply more complex information, the description of a plot in which fluency rather than accuracy is required. This could in part explain why the Year 5 teacher does not provide assistance. Additionally, the teacher may not have comprehended the pupil's utterance as the Japanese have difficulty with the L and V sounds and the pupil pronounced the word "love" as "rub". However, a teacher of long experience in Japan and with fluent Japanese should have noticed such a mistake. As the teacher provides no assistance, other types of affordances do not emerge in this excerpt, even though there is a Weak Affordance for the use of language for description. With a little more prompting the pupils might have been able to improve their utterances. Despite the opportunity to do so, the teacher provides no language-focused teaching, nor other forms of assistance. To what extent this lack of affordances is a feature of the Year 5 classroom throughout the year is impossible to say from the short period of this observer's presence in the school. However, a lack of affordances can be expected to be influential in determining both the level of English ability and level of participation in a class. The excerpt from the Year 5 class also reminds us how difficult and time-consuming it is for pupils to develop their abilities in a foreign language. Certainly, the phrase "he die" is a very simple one, just two words put together. However, after five years of learning English, seven years for those who went to an attached Kindergarten, their language use appears to be very limited.

What the excerpts from the Year 3 and Year 5 classes reveal is that differences in the quality of affordances observed reflect the nature of teacher assistance, both pre-planned (lesson planning), and contingent assistance resulting from responsiveness to the pupil need.

15.4 Summary

In this chapter three activities were examined and used to compare the Year 3 and Year 5 age groups: singing, creative language use at the lesson framing stage, and interaction involving contingent assistance in the framing stage. In creative language use, both year groups had similar contexts and affordances (strong and contingent). However, in the singing activity, the two classes reveal very different types of learning environment and affordances. Comparison making use of the system for identification of affordances reveals that a clear focus on language learning goals (Intended actions) and lesson design (Primary assistance) can have a noticeable affect on learning outcomes and the types of affordances arising in the classroom environment. It is clear that the Year 5 class, which exhibits weak or no affordances, does lack in these factors.

The comparison of secondary/contingent assistance at the framing stage in 15.3 confirms another factor influential in the creation of affordances, the importance of contingent assistance resulting from a teacher's responsiveness to pupil needs and initiatives. Whereas the excerpt

from the Year 3 class (Excerpt 15.3.1) shows active constructive interaction and participation as a result of teacher contingent assistance, the excerpt from the Year 5 class (Excerpt 14.2.6) shows interaction lacking in dynamic and contributing little to language development and participation. This reflects the lack of teacher contingent assistance.

A particular issue raised in the analysis of singing is the importance of age-appropriate lesson planning and design. The Year 3 class engaged in age appropriate singing activities appealing to their interests and sense of fun. However, this was not the case with the Year 5 class. As a result very different pupil participation was observed. While the Year 3 pupils were enjoying participation, happily singing and moving their bodies, the Year 5 pupils were either singing reluctantly or not singing at all. As noted above, the Year 5 pupils would probably benefit from more age and cognitively appropriate activities.

With regard to what makes a difficult class, the result of comparing the Year 3 and Year 5 learning experiences appears to match the findings from Chapter 14. In the Year 3 class where more and stronger affordances are observed, the quality of learning opportunities and outcomes is higher, the problems of classroom management fewer. However, in the Year 5 class, a very different classroom environment exists, one lacking in Strong Affordances. The result is a problematic class with fewer and a lower quality of learning opportunities. Three dimensions of affordances, *Intended action*, *Primary assistance* and *Secondary assistance* all emerge as important in creating a favourable learning environment. However, the key factor here in the creation of Strong Affordances may well be *Primary assistance*: whether such assistance creates interest and engagement among pupils. Although *Primary assistance* (the teacher's preparation and execution of planned activities) is the key in creating Strong Affordances, strict adherence to the plan and too tight a control could work in a negative way as well. As is seen in Excerpt 13.1.1, a teacher's reaction to a few naughty boys could close down Contingent Affordances.

It is felt that the analysis conducted in this chapter, as in previous chapters, again illustrates the value and applicability of the participation perspective and a view of learning as a transformation of participation. The comparison in this chapter makes clear how contrasting the participation forms and learning experiences of the two classes are as a result of the differing types of affordances available. Generally, the Year 3 pupils learn to use language, enabling them to be active participants enjoying the learning experience. In contrast, the Year 5 pupils refuse to participate in an activity where affordance is perceived not to be beneficial (Excerpt 14.2.1). The difference in participation observed in the two classes demonstrates clearly the very different learning experiences of the pupils.

Chapter 16 The Sociocultural Context and Participation (Year 5)

This chapter examines the influence of the wider sociocultural context, the world beyond the immediate classroom, on the Year 5 pupils, the aim being to develop a deeper understanding of this problematic class. Analysis of affordances and participation so far has revealed clear differences between the Year 3 and Year 5 classes. In particular the Year 5 class is a difficult one, the classroom atmosphere tense and at times unfriendly, affordances for learning weak, levels of participation low and disruptive. Reflecting the importance noted earlier of features of context beyond the classroom (See 2.12.4), this chapter seeks to identify external influences that may help account for this situation, features of background, context and perception influencing participation and learning. As Rogoff (See 2.6.1) argues, learning is embedded in the sociocultural context. A pupil's performance and participation therefore need to be understood as a totality in the light of the individual, interpersonal and community planes. Thus the following analysis seeks to illuminate the sociocultural context of the Year 5 class making use of the teacher and pupil interview data in order to further understand the nature of the Year five pupils' negative participation. The constructs comprising the sociocultural context of the Year 5 class are identified as: a) the teacher, b) the pupils, c) the English department, d) the homeroom, e) the school and f) the parents and society. For each construct, a number of themes are raised, and details of these are provided below.

16.1 The Teacher's account of the sociocultural context

In this section an attempt is made to obtain insight of the Year 5 native-speaker teacher's view of the sociocultural context. Summaries of his views are provided for each construct.

16.1.1 Teacher Profile

In Chapter 4 Context of the Study, a brief profile of the teachers was provided. The following is a more detailed profile of the Year 5 native-speaker teacher. He is a long term resident of Japan, has a Japanese wife, and has been teaching at the school part-time for eleven years. He can therefore be expected to have a more developed understanding of Japanese culture than someone recently arrived in the country. Additionally, he speaks Japanese well and makes frequent use of the language in his lessons. He does not have a teaching qualification. His only training in TESOL is attendance on a one-weekend course. He gives the appearance of having a calm, relaxed and friendly personality, frequently smiling in class. However, he shows little enthusiasm for teaching and in his comments to the observer and by his actions in the classroom

appears to be tired of teaching. The pupils also perceive this apparent tiredness and lack of involvement. Therefore it may be a factor in the problematic classroom relationship observed during the study.

16.1.2 Communication problems and the teacher-pupil relationship

The teacher is aware of difficulties in communication with the pupils and in his comments indicates a need to get to know the pupils better and an assumption this would be beneficial for the classroom relationship. The teacher says that he does not know much about the children and he has never spoken to them individually. "I am embarrassed. I don't know much about the students...No time to talk to them individually... Once a week to teach." Undoubtedly infrequency of contact inhibits the teacher's ability to build a good relationship with his pupils. Thus he wonders whether he should use more Japanese to create a bond between him and the pupils. The teacher's comments and difficulties indicate that, in addition to effective lesson planning and contingent assistance, simply creating a closer bond with pupils, relating to learners on a personal level, showing genuine understanding towards them, obtaining their trust and creating a favourable classroom atmosphere, may also be preconditions for the creation of a rich and effective learning experience. In accomplishing this, it is possible that cultural differences make the situation more difficult, increase the problems of finding common ground, common cultural reference points about which to talk and upon which to build a relationship.

16.1.3 Beliefs and Pedagogy

Actions taken by the native-speaker teacher reflect the beliefs he has concerning education and pedagogy, influence the approach he takes in the classroom. He states that he "... should be concentrating to try to get them to hear sounds. Anyone can teach vocabulary. That is my real advantage. I know the sounds." In part this explains why he adopts lots of pronunciation quizzes. When the researcher asked him about the aims of teaching English to children, he answered that the aim was for the children to "Be able to hear the sounds. Understand me. Improve vocabulary. Sounds. Get them speaking a little bit. Listening first and speaking. Reading. Not concentrating much."

The above comments provide insight into the teacher's views concerning his role and the needs of young learners. The teacher gives much emphasis to his strengths as a native-speaker of English. One explanation for this is that it reflects the role assigned by the school. In Japan native-speaker teachers are employed to provide students with a model of pronunciation Japanese teachers feel themselves unable to provide. Another concern, perhaps arising as a result of placing so heavy an emphasis on pronunciation, is the failure in the interview to acknowledge the natural desire of young learners to seek and share meaning, to connect with people. This lack of recognition is reflected in the classroom in a lack of opportunities for

teaching meaning and meaningful communication in many activities. It also supports the assumption that a lack of opportunities for *meaningful* interaction could be one of the reasons why the Year 5 pupils do not actively engage in classroom activities, why the class has discipline problems. Additionally, it provides insight into the teacher's lack of enthusiasm. If he has been teaching in the school for eleven years and for most of that time has concentrated on instructing pupils in the sounds of English, it is natural to assume his own enthusiasm has declined.

A further concern in the teacher's comments is a lack of reference to a developmental view of language learning, a path to be followed by children throughout their years of primary education. As pupils grow older, increasing attention needs to be given to developing speaking skills and, in the context of formal education, to the development of literacy skills. This would also satisfy pupils' developing cognitive abilities and demands. A concentration mainly on pronunciation exercises with older pupils seems likely to be lacking in challenge and interest, limiting the pupils' opportunities for overall language development.

The following comment is revealing about pedagogy. During one of the observed lessons the teacher tried a pronunciation quiz involving pair work. After the lesson, he stated this was the first time he had used pair work for listening practice. He stated he had been afraid of trying pair work and was surprised that it had worked so well. This comment indicates a teacher trying to improve his classroom practice. Or he may have felt a need to change his usual teaching to impress the observer from outside. It also appears to indicate a conservative teacher, someone accustomed to conducting his lessons in a routine way, someone who after eleven years of teaching might have been expected to make use of both pair work and video in his teaching.

The teacher's comments on what makes a successful lesson are also revealing. He states that what makes a good lesson is keeping the pupils on task doing as he had intended and proceeding according to plan. The teacher's emphasis on keeping pupils on task and focus on attention may also indicate failure to appreciate the advantages of responding to pupil initiatives. Particularly in the primary classroom, teachers need to take notice of contingently appearing opportunities for potential learning, not be afraid to deviate from lesson plans, to react to and develop pupil interests in a flexible manner, keep in mind the importance of active pupil engagement in classroom activities.

16.1.4 Perceptions of the pupils: Undisciplined with behaviour problems

In the interview with the native-speaker teacher, discipline emerged as the overwhelming issue of concern. The seriousness of the problem is revealed by an incident that occurred early in the school year before the researcher's arrival at the school. In one lesson during the first term, a

serious confrontation between the teacher and the Year 5 pupils occurred. As a result the lesson had to be stopped and the homeroom teacher took the pupils back to their homeroom.

The teacher's comments show concern for how the pupils behave in his classroom. They also indicate a teacher confused about how to deal with the problem, how to cope with disruptive and uncooperative pupils. He complains that the pupils are rude, calling him by his surname without making use of an honorific or title. He also states that Japanese children are spoilt and makes a comparison with America where he feels parents are stricter with young children. These are comments reflecting the teacher's own experience and the personal relationship he has with his pupils. They are also reflective of more widespread trends in Japan where there is a general feeling that children today are spoilt, both at home and at school. It would be unrealistic for any school or classroom to be totally free from such influences. Thus behaviour observed in the Year 5 classroom may be reflective of a broader school-wide and nation-wide concern.

One possible influence on the Year 5 pupil-teacher relationship may be a divide between the regular and immersion streams. As noted by the Head of English, within the immersion stream the pupils show respect for the teacher in their classes. On the other hand, observations by this researcher indicate a number of pupils on the regular programme do not show such respect. That is, their behaviour is not limited to the native-speaker teacher's classroom. Thus it is possible to interpret the problems of the Year 5 teacher as partially a reflection of a broader nationwide decline in discipline standards and also of a divide within the school, the different expectations made of pupils in the two different streams.

16.1.5 The English Department: Curricula issues and the teacher-school relationship

Another factor influencing the Year 5 teacher-pupil relationship is the nature of the English programme itself, the curriculum laid down by the school and the relationship between the teacher and his full-time Japanese colleagues. The native-speaker teacher criticizes the English programme, mentioning that it should be more organized and that the older children are difficult to teach as the curriculum is game oriented. He says, "The older pupils are tired of games and not enthusiastic any more. We don't have a real curriculum. But I am only here part time. I talked about it but they (full-time teachers) didn't seem to be interested." When planning his lessons, he says that he himself selects which materials to adopt with the exception of the set text and preparation materials for the visit to the American school. He does not appear to be happy with these materials made by the Japanese teachers.

With specific reference to the teacher's own discipline problems, it is possible he has a legitimate point concerning the use of games. It is a generally held view in Japan that English

should be fun at the primary level. Additionally, it is felt that teaching should seek to avoid the development among pupils of a negative attitude towards English that might affect their future study at the secondary level. This is a view held by the American teacher who therefore faces a dilemma: he needs to discipline the pupils when they are misbehaving but discipline is against the nature of the programme and may demoralize the pupils.

The status of the teacher as a part-time employee and his relationship with his Japanese colleagues also emerges from the above as a factor of influence. He indicates that his full-time Japanese counterparts do not welcome his views and perceptions, that he feels excluded from debate and decisions affecting the direction and management of the programme. This is of considerable concern, something that affects the self-esteem and the participation the teacher makes to a programme and the working relationships he maintains with colleagues. Thus it would appear that a further element determining teacher actions in the classroom is the extent to which he perceives himself to be, and is perceived by others to be a valued member of the school community to enable active participation. Cultural issues may make the situation more difficult. The native-speaker teacher is from a different culture and may have difficulty adjusting to or being accepted into Japanese school culture despite his long-term residence in Japan and command of the language.

16.1.6 School and Status: School policy and the part-time teacher

The part-time status of the native-speaker teacher presents a further dilemma associated with discipline. He says that he should be stricter with the pupils. However, as he is a part-time teacher, he also feels he should refrain from intervening in the school's discipline policy. This is also a view held by the native-speaker teacher of the Year 3 class. They both perceive the school as having a problem with discipline, not something specific to their own classrooms. It is a problem they have to cope with, but overall policy in the school is something they have little power to influence. In adopting such an attitude, the teachers may also be reflecting the expectations of the school, that is to say, they have formed the impression that such involvement might not be welcomed. In part then, the discipline problems experienced by the teachers reflect a school wide issue, one to be dealt with at the school level. It may also be that despite the apparent support of the Japanese teachers for their native-speaker colleagues, there is in fact a failure on the part of the school to understand the particular experiences and problems of part-time native-speaker teachers lacking the cultural awareness, sensitivity and authority of full-time Japanese teachers.

16.2 The Pupils' View of the Sociocultural Context

Six pupils from the Year 5 class were interviewed in three pairs. These consisted of two conscientious girls with strong English, two 'rebellious' girls with a middle level of English, and two boys also with a middle level of English. The school was reluctant to allow pupils with weak English or particularly problematic pupils to be interviewed. By interviewing the pupils in pairs it is believed they felt more relaxed and comfortable expressing themselves. However, it should be appreciated that comments made by individual pupils may as a result reflect the influence of their interview partners. Nevertheless, the interview data collected does reveal much about the pupils' views of the environment and helps to explain their classroom behaviour.

16.2.1 Pupil Perception: English is Fun

Despite the disruptive and apparently negative behaviour observed in the Year 5 classroom, in their interviews the pupils show relatively positive attitudes to English. The four girls say that English is one of their favourite subjects. They state they would like to speak English fluently. However, the two boys do not have positive attitudes. One says he does not like English very much and the other says it is OK. Three out of six say that English is not very important, saying the most important subjects are mathematics, Japanese and science, reflecting views expressed by their parents. All the pupils say that they enjoy the classroom games, especially bingo. However, they say that they do not like singing. Two of them say that matching words and rhythm is difficult and too fast and understanding the whole meaning of songs is difficult. One of the boys, Takuya, says that he is not keen on English perhaps because the other boy says that he does not like English. However, in one lesson Takuya was observed to be participating actively and he is known to take private lessons. His comments then should be taken with caution, perhaps reflecting those of his partner and also a need to fit the image that English is not a boys' subject.

16.2.2 Cognitive maturity: The need for challenge

A further issue is that of challenge, whether or not the materials and activities used in the Year 5 classroom are sufficiently demanding for the pupils. The boys think English is difficult. However, the two bright and conscientious girls say that the current English programme is not challenging enough. Naoko asks and answers her own question, "Is this (textbook) really for the Yr 5?..... Too easy (for me)" and Iroi states, "It's a dubious textbook." There is no homework, tests are easy, and therefore they do not have to be serious about English. Thus Haruka points out, "English is fun. Not serious."

The girls feel that they need something more serious and challenging in their English lessons. Naoko and Haruka both say that the Japanese English teacher and the native-speaker teachers use Japanese in the class and that this is not good for their learning of English. The pupils also state they would like an opportunity to exercise more initiative and responsibility, indicating they are tired of games that they regard as undemanding. Haruka says that games like bingo or gesturing are interesting only when they themselves give gestures and answers, not when the teacher controls the activity. These comments indicate the pupils, certainly the better pupils, do not feel challenged and the lessons are lacking in interest. Naoko also notes that to improve their English there should be a time available everyday when only English is used, a surprising observation for a child of her age but one perhaps reflecting dissatisfaction with the amount of Japanese used in the classroom. Revealingly, when the pupils state what they would like, seriousness is equated with tests such as the STEP tests, the English proficiency tests administered by the Ministry of Education. These remarks clearly reveal that the pupils consider themselves ready for and are interested in more cognitively demanding academic activities. This is possibly one area in which, by meeting pupils' demand, the school might improve both the English ability of its students and find it has fewer discipline problems.

One point emerging from the interviews is the different perceptions the pupils have of English and their other subjects. Naoko notes that the homeroom teacher's lessons are easier to understand, indicating that he activates the pupils' everyday knowledge first before teaching more academic knowledge, making a connection between the two. Naoko compares this with English lessons, saying that the English lessons simply have greetings, singing, reading a textbook, and watching a video. This is a further example indicating a need for more age appropriate activities giving recognition to the maturing cognitive abilities and interests of the pupils.

The pupils also express a preference for more individual teaching approaches rather than the class and group activities used in the English classroom. Again the maturity of the Year 5 pupils is evident here, the pupils demonstrating awareness of differences of ability within the class, expressing their frustration that these are affecting the quality of the learning experience available to them, and a wish for more opportunities for individual effort and responsibility.

16.2.3 Homeroom: Tight control and discipline in the homeroom

There is a paradox evident in the responses made by the Year 5 pupils. Although the pupils say that they like English, they do not participate positively in lessons. A boy says that he does not like the native-speaker teacher as the teacher scolds him without reason or because of a misunderstanding owing to the teacher's weak Japanese ability. However, the problem is not one due solely to a language barrier. In the class when the researcher was present, the pupils

were chatting loudly and ignoring the teacher. It is easy to see why the teacher would become annoyed. The pupils are fully aware of the behaviour expected from their experience of other classrooms and the fact they have been at the school for several years already. The reasons given by the students are not very convincing.

A more convincing interpretation for the pupils' behaviour is one of over-reaction to the freedom provided in the English classroom when compared to the strictness of their homeroom. Their homeroom teacher is very strict and controls the pupils' behaviour tightly. On the other hand, the English teachers are not as strict and the pupils do not feel the same pressure to be obedient. As a result of the strict control by the homeroom teacher, the pupils have developed a particular view of what is an appropriate teacher-pupil classroom relationship. The relationship between the pupils and their homeroom teacher is based on power rather than mutual respect. If they see that a teacher is more powerful than they are themselves, they become quiet and obedient but if they see that a teacher is not strict, they behave freely. As Nanami puts it, "Homeroom teacher is bad, but English teachers are not scary. They are not strict enough/too permissive...English teachers are very kind...the homeroom teacher just scolds us. Everybody is frightened". Naoko echoes this, saying, "English is playtime"... "we are too frisky but the English teachers do not scold us while the homeroom teacher does." In the English classroom with its wide use of games and an emphasis on "fun", free of the tight control and scolding of their homeroom teacher, it is understandable that the pupils might perceive classroom activities as being not 'serious'. It is a situation in which the pupils take advantage, test the limits permitted, an instance in which the group dynamics work in a negative way, resulting in negative whole class participation.

16.3 Using the interview data to interpret observed participation

The teacher and pupils' interview data provides a number of valuable insights into the disruptive and negative pupil participation in the Year 5 classroom. Firstly, there is the influence of interpersonal dynamics. The interview data depicts a picture of pupils maturing cognitively. Although they enjoy English, they perceive it as not being a serious subject. Some are bored by 'easy' activities; others simply want to have an easy time. The teacher is revealed to lack strictness, perhaps tired and unmotivated with perhaps a view of teaching and learning, someone failing to recognise the pupils' maturity and the need for meaningful and interactive activities. Thus, the pupils regard the undemanding lessons negatively, an opportunity to relax. From the perspective of the teacher, the pupils are undisciplined and spoiled, taking advantage of the 'fun' classroom activities. In such a community, the pupils are easily influenced by each other, possibly resulting in further undesirable forms of participation.

Secondly, there is the influence of factors beyond the classroom. As in their normal lessons the pupils are under the tight control of the homeroom teacher, they over-react to the freedom provided in the EFL classroom and take advantage. This however may also reflect the influence of parents and society, the pupils sensing that English is not a subject of 'serious' study. Despite the lip service paid in Japan, English is still not regarded by parents (and the school?) as being as important as Japanese, science and mathematics. The pupils can be expected to reflect such perceptions and mirror the values of the wider society. The teacher is also influenced by factors beyond the classroom. He struggles to understand how to manage Japanese pupils but is handicapped by cultural difference and the fact that he is in the school only once a week. The school programme itself is disadvantageous; its emphasis on fun and games perhaps inappropriate to the interests and cognitive needs of the pupils. These reflect expectations for primary English within Japan itself. His lack of enthusiasm may also reflect perceptions of low status accorded to part-time staff, the feeling that his commitment and contributions are not welcomed.

All of the factors above exert an influence, affecting the teacher and pupils, their expectations and actions in the classroom and the nature of participation observed. In part this is a result of interpersonal features within the classroom itself, but in part it is also a reflection of wider societal and institutional values and norms. The interplay of the sociocultural contextual factors revealed provides additional and valuable insight into the complex and ecological nature of the educational process that qualitative analysis seeks to illuminate. Attention has been drawn to a variety of sociocultural contextual factors influential in the creation of the negative and destructive participation observed in the Year 5 classroom. For this researcher this has provided a more holistic and interpretive understanding of the totality of the classroom ecology, the learning environment, than might otherwise have been possible.

Analysis of the interview data indicates that in order to fully understand the nature of affordances and participation (See Research Question 1 on types of affordances, Research Question 2 on how pupils make use of affordances, Research Question 3 on how affordances affect pupil participation in Chapter 14), examination of external influences outside of classroom interaction is beneficial in obtaining a deeper understanding. Analysis of interaction in previous chapters showed that inadequate affordances led to passive and destructive participation. However, as revealed in this chapter, the classroom interaction may not be solely responsible for the creation of affordances. It is beyond the scope of this research to seek understanding of exactly how external factors influence classroom life. Nevertheless, the analysis above is insightful, drawing attention to:

- the lighter social and parental expectation to primary English.
- the mismatch between pupil cognitive maturity and the nature of the English language programme
- the different expectations between the pupils' homeroom and their English classroom
- cultural differences between the Native English teacher and the pupils
- the teacher's lower commitment and engagement resulting from communication difficulties and possibly cultural misunderstanding
- nationwide concern with classroom breakdown (See 4. 1 Socio-historical context)

As a result of the interviews an issue deserving of further investigation is that of pupil interest. What are the pupils really interested in, both at school and outside of school? The interview data makes clear that the pupils do not find current classroom activities of interest. Some pupils expressed a wish for more serious types of lesson. However, it is not clear from the interviews if these views are representative of a majority of the pupils, or if the views are the pupils' true opinions. The pupils may have wanted to impress the researcher and said what they thought the researcher wanted to hear. It may be that current classroom activities do not match the pupils' idea of fun and it is this rather than the level of English itself causing the lack of motivation to engage in classroom activities. In seeking to gain a better understanding of what the pupils do find interesting and 'fun' Chapter 17 explores pupils' "imagined communities" and pupil-centred ideas of fun.

Chapter 17 Imagined Communities and Participation

Analysis of the Year 5 data revealed that the role of interests/“fun” has the potential to influence pupil motivation, creating Strong Affordances and promoting active participation. The Year 5 class did not appear to have incorporated pupil ideas of “fun” into the design of activities and tasks. This is revealed in the data as being a possible cause of a failure to create Strong Affordances and a cooperative learning environment in the Year 5 classroom. It is therefore felt necessary to identify what child-centred “fun” means to the younger learner.

17.1 Pupil “Imagined Community”

It is possible to examine the construct of “fun” using the theoretical concept of “imagined communities” (Norton 2000, 2001, Kanto and Norton, 2003). Learner participation occurs not only in the tangible concrete community of the real world, it also occurs in the “imagined community” (Anderson 1991, Norton 2001). This part of the chapter therefore attempts to identify the nature of pupil “imagined communities” and to investigate how understanding of “imagined communities” has the potential to incorporate “fun” in classroom activities, enhance affordances, and increase the level of pupil participation. In so doing, identification of imagined communities is conducted based on interview data and observations made by the researcher. Two types of “imagined communities” are identified, realistic or serious communities, and “fun” communities.

17.1.1 Realistic and serious “imagined communities”

In the interview data, although the Year 5 pupils revealed their views more clearly than the Year 3 pupils, there does appear to be a degree of conformity in views across the two age groups. Most pupils in both Year 3 and Year 5 say they would like to use English when they travel abroad. A Year 5 boy states his wish to be able to translate for his parents while travelling. Two Year 5 pupils mention that English is necessary for the entrance examinations for prestigious universities and for getting a good job. One bright Year 5 girl dissents, saying that it is not too late to start English at secondary school and that she is too busy with private lessons in mathematics and other subjects to study English seriously. Although she likes English, her favourite subject is mathematics. One of the Year 3 pupils has a mother who used to be a secondary school teacher of English. The mother is particularly keen that her daughter does well academically, the girl taking private lessons in mathematics, science and Japanese but not English. During long holidays the girl attends a special cram school, travelling by bullet train.

When asked whether she was also taking private English lessons, she replied that mathematics was far more difficult than English.

Although it is generally assumed that young learners do not have practical needs for the use of English, this researcher sought to discover whether English has any importance in their “imagined communities”. The data revealed the pupils’ “imagined community” to have a realistic and serious side, perhaps reflecting Japanese society in general and the serious approach taken to education. The data also reveal pupils’ “imagined community” revolves around a future life that for the majority will be lived in a relatively small world limited to Japan, a community distanced from the wider world. Thus English does not have a significantly important role to play. The pupils will take the entrance examinations for Japanese universities and subsequently seek employment with Japanese organizations. Attendance at one of a small number of prestigious universities is *the* key to employment and a successful career. In such a community, the ability to use English is not required with the exception of a small number of professions.

For the vast majority of pupils, experience of English is limited, a school subject to be studied for university entrance. The pupils expressed their wish to speak English fluently but in reality this is not something that is required. What is important is to do well in written tests where knowledge of grammar and translation skills is required. The examinations do not test ability to use English despite government statements favouring the development of communicative ability. After the examinations, English does not play a significant role in most people’s lives. Many Japanese can afford a comfortable life without English. Undoubtedly Japanese society is changing. Nevertheless, it remains the case that most Japanese will live their lives in an inward-looking and relatively closed society and the pupils “imagined community” appears to be a fairly accurate reflection of this society. Accordingly, English does not have an important place in the imagined community of the pupils, particularly among the Year 5 pupils. This is reflected in their participation, or lack of, in classroom activities. The Year 5 pupils appear to be more aware than the Year 3 pupils of what is important in their future world. They may also have a greater sense of the value adults and school give to English. As there is no homework and the tests are easy, they may perceive that English is not accorded the same level of importance as other subjects and as a result choose to invest less time and energy in English than in other subjects.

One Year 5 girl had some overseas experience, having been on home stay in North America. She also has a private native English tutor and relatives living overseas. Additionally, her parents make charitable donations to support a child in a foreign country. She expressed her wish to go and live in other parts of Asia in the future in order to study animals. In her interview she says

she likes the English lessons at school very much, more than her private tuition because the lessons at school are fun and the private tuition more studious. Her English is not the strongest in the class but is certainly very good. Despite being one of the most rebellious pupils in the classroom, she behaved very well in the interview as if she were trying to impress the researcher. However, judging from her interview data, her imagined community appears to be a wider one than that possessed by other pupils, one not limited to the academic community of a typical Japanese student or to a career within a Japanese organization. It is possible that English may have more importance in her “imagined world”. However, it is difficult to find a relationship between her presumably wider “imagined community” and her participation in the actual classroom community. That is, she does not appear to invest much in the classroom.

Considering the particular situation the Year 5 pupils are in, it is perhaps understandable if no straightforward relationship between her rebellious attitudes in the classroom and her positive comments in the interview is evident. As revealed in the qualitative analysis, there is little affordance in the Year 5 classroom. Even if the pupils were motivated and would like to involve themselves more it would not be easy for them to do so due to the nature of the learning environment. It would of course be unfair to imply that this environment is something caused solely by the teacher. Rather, it is more likely to be the result of a complexity of interactions involving teacher, the pupils and the school itself. The degree of engagement in the Year 5 classroom community is likely to depend on each pupil’s conscience rather than image.

17.1.2 Fun types of “imagined communities”

Although this research was not able to identify pupils’ imagined communities clearly, it is logical that the pupils must have a different type or types of “imagined community” from the real world in which they live, one that is full of fantasy and fun. Usually younger children do not have a practical need to use English. They are still too young to have clear future needs to study and use English. Additionally, it is very likely that the younger pupils in Year 3 have a different type of “imagined community” from that of the older Year 5 pupils. Even the older pupils though can be expected to have different types of “imagined communities” to those possessed by more mature teenagers and certainly those of adults. Such communities are likely to be more fun and exciting for them than the reality of the classroom.

The researcher obtained information from the Year 5 pupils in informal conversations. The favourite activities among the Year 5 boys are computer games, watching cartoons, playing baseball and football. They dream of becoming professional athletes, listen to and watch Japanese pop stars and comedians. The girls also like Japanese pop stars and television. Their favourite activities involve indoor types of activities such as chatting, making accessories or nail painting. There was no opportunity to ask similar questions of the Year 3 pupils. However, in

one lesson when the teachers asked the Year 3 pupils what their favourite films were, they answered “Home Alone”, “Harry Potter” and “Doraemon”. “Doraemon” is a Japanese animation in which a robot from the future comes to live with a boy and his family and helps the boy in various ways making use of advanced technological gadgets. From this information it appears that the fun side of “imagined communities” appears to involve being a pop idol, a premier league soccer star, a baseball player, or identifying with the imaginary world of cartoon characters. Differences in interest obviously exist owing to age and gender variations. While the younger pupils’ “imagined communities” appear to involve more fun-filled Disney World types of communities, the older pupils, particularly the girls’ “imagined communities” are getting closer to the real or adult world.

The Year 3 pupils are keener on classroom activities and more actively participate than the Year 5 pupils. This could be due to a need by younger children to please teachers and thus actively engage in classroom activities. They may also enjoy English more because it is something new and resembles play, classroom activities such as games, stories and songs having fun and imaginary elements in common with their imagined communities of fun, fantasy and excitement and also perhaps something in common with their own real world. However, as the pupils get older, their idea of fun changes and may contain more realistic elements. They also become more self-conscious and shy. As their more realistic “imagined community” emerges, they may realize that using English is something unnatural. Accordingly they invest less energy and effort in the subject, and in so doing reflect the values of their parents, the school itself, and the wider real world community that is Japan.

In the pupils’ fun type of “imagined community”, English does not appear to play a significant role. If the pupils do not have a need to use English in their “imagined community”, and if fun and imagination are the key features of their “imagined community”, the teacher is confronted with a dilemma. If English is not needed in the imagined communities of the pupils, then why should they value it and invest time and effort on the subject in the classroom? However, if fun and imagination are features of their ‘imagined communities’ then perhaps by bringing into the classroom their elements of “imagined communities”, fun, fantasy and imagination and associating English with fun and imagination in the classroom, pupil investment and involvement might be stimulated. By combining pupil interest and English, a teacher could stimulate pupil motivation to learn. Undoubtedly with young learners it is important to have elements of fun incorporated into classroom activities. However, as the differing classroom realities of the Year 3 and Year 5 pupils demonstrate, these elements must be associated with the changing and maturing levels of the pupils themselves, not what the teacher determines to be fun.

Where pupils do not have an interest in the broader world and thus lack motivation to learn English, the teacher might introduce a topic linked to pupil interests, seeking to broaden the pupils' view and in so doing build pupil motivation to access the wider world through the medium of English. For example, teachers could use Ichiro as a topic in lessons, a popular and successful Japanese baseball player in the American major league. He is the pupils' dream figure, a professional athlete, and even more, he plays in an English speaking country. A teacher by combining pupils' "imagined world" with English lessons will almost certainly find the process of motivation an easier one. Additionally, a teacher may be able to connect the pupils to a wider world, broaden their view and enhance their interest in learning English. In this way pupils' interests may be connected to classroom activities and pupils encouraged to invest more of their energy and time in English language learning activities.

Kanno and Norton (2003) states that imagined communities are "no less real than the ones in which learners have daily engagement and might even have a stronger impact on their current actions and investment" (p242). This is particularly so with young learners as they live in a world of imagination and fantasy. They enter and are absorbed in worlds of fantasy and imagination everyday through the books they read, the cartoons they watch, and the games they play, the imaginary roles they perform. Imagination is very much part of their life and is reality for them. Recognising this importance, imagined communities should be very much part of their life in the English classroom.

Chapter 18 Discussion

This chapter brings together findings from the data analysis to answer the three Research Questions set forth in Chapter 3. Additionally, in 18.4, an attempt is made to answer the three Research Questions established (Chapter 14) to seek an understanding of the problematic Year 5 class. Finally, the limitations and implications of the study are discussed.

18.1 Research Question 1: The nature and types of discourse

This question sought to determine the nature and types of discourse in a Japanese primary EFL classroom. Data from the Year 3 class revealed seven patterns of discourse, Patterns A-G (Chapter 7.2). Patterns C, D and F are observed to have a significant influence on the emergence of affordances and participation.

18.1.1 Pattern C: Teacher controlled discourse—the norm

Pattern C occurred most frequently, some seventy percent of all discourse (Chapter 8). Overwhelmingly the dominant pattern, the norm in the classrooms observed, this pattern involves teacher elicitation, pupil provision of the language use desired, and teacher evaluation. It enables a teacher to check and assess pupil performance and knowledge, reinforce performance and understanding, and develop fluency.

This dominance of Pattern C, the heavy reliance by teachers on display/assessment questions, raises a number of concerns. First, Pattern C does not appear to create many opportunities for new learning and flexible use of language. The intent is correctness of form, accuracy and memorisation rather than flexible and creative language use to stretch pupil ability and an exploration of potential and communication. A second concern is that the direction of lessons is both pre-determined and tightly controlled by the teacher. It is always the teacher who asks questions and the pupils who answer, their roles and status fixed. Pattern C therefore appears to circumscribe and discourage student initiated language use and teacher response to contingent learning opportunities. A further concern is that teacher-controlled discourse may have a negative influence on pupil motivation and sense of agency. With less control, the pupils might develop more confidence, a greater sense of involvement, possibly resulting in less subversion.

18.1.2 Pattern D: Discourse permitting learning to emerge—the shifting state of learning

Pattern D was the second most frequently observed pattern comprising approximately 20 percent of discourse over the eight lessons. As with Pattern C, the teacher decides the direction

of discourse and the pupils' provide what the teacher requires. However, the fact that the teacher provides contingent assistance means Pattern D provides opportunities for pupils to extend their current levels of ability via mediated learning within the ZPD. In other words, the teacher uses Pattern D to judge pupil ZPD and to provide and adjust assistance as required, contributing to new learning, raising pupil performance above their current level of ability. In providing adjustment for pupil ZPD, Pattern D emerges as a transitional pattern, one in which the learner's potential for change in the ZPD is shown and a dynamic involving transformation of learning and participation occurs.

18.1.3 From Pattern D to Pattern C: the dynamic of transformation—variability to stability

Although transformation does not occur in Pattern C itself, Pattern C provides clear evidence of the dynamic transformation of pupil participation. Pattern D involving heavy scaffolding occurred frequently at the beginning of activities. Gradually, as activities were repeated, less assistance was required. Finally Pattern C emerged revealing dynamic transformation, the pupils requiring less assistance and demonstrating more independent participation. In other words, Pattern C, teacher controlled and involving the elicitation and evaluation of pupil language use, is the discourse of norm pupils are required to engage in. Learner development occurs as a shift from functioning in Pattern C at a lower level to a higher level of language use and participation via Pattern D. Thus, the appearance of Pattern C after Pattern D is evidence of learning and transformation, of advancement in pupil ZPD.

18.1.4 Discourse Pattern F: Pupil initiated discourse—an unpredictable pattern

In contrast to the systematic nature of Discourse Patterns C and D, the study also reveals the existence of an unpredictable pattern of learning, Pattern F. Pattern F formed 5 percent of discourse patterns observed and is a very different type of discourse, one with the possibility for pupils to initiate language use, for recognition of pupil motivations and interests. In Pattern F the pupils are more autonomous and independent, able to change the direction of a lesson, initiate turns, suggest and negotiate their own agenda. This is a conversation like process, the result unpredictable, a marked contrast to the predictability of Patterns C and D.

18.1.5 Discourse in the Year 5 Class

The system of categorisation derived from the Year 3 data provides insight into the Year 5 classroom. It reveals a different balance of discourse types, pupil participation and learning. These dissimilarities reveal much about the respective learning environments, the differing levels of participation of both pupil and teacher. They also call for the researcher to seek causes for the differences revealed, to recognise the importance of and seek to understand non-discourse factors influencing the learning environment.

As a result of the bottom up approach taken in the Year 3 data, the system of categorization appears less applicable to the Year 5 data. This is also due to factors such as preparation for school events and the extensive use of Japanese during lessons. A further complication was indiscipline. The result was a very different type of discourse to that found in the Year 3 class. For example, pupil refusal of teacher elicitation, refusal to provide information sought. Additionally, there were an extremely small number of occurrences of occasions in which the teacher provided assistance. Therefore, the system of categorization on its own provided an insufficient explanation of the discourse patterns observed. A focus on the sociocultural context proved helpful here, illuminating the nature of the negative participation (See Chapter 16). One major factor identified was the interplay between the older pupils' maturing cognitive level and the lack of recognition of this by the teachers and the English department. A further was the need to give recognition to the pupils' "imagined community" as a means to create more age appropriate affordances.

18.2 Research Question 2: The Types and the Nature of Affordances

The concept of affordances helps us to understand how the transformation of Discourse patterns occurs at the micro-level in discourse. The following provides a brief summary of types of affordances, features of affordances, and how pupils make use of these for language learning and participation.

18.2.1 Affordances as complex interaction

Learning through discourse was perceived as affordances, each one involving six dimensions. It is through a complex interplay across these six dimensions, interactions between pupil and the total classroom environment, that affordances arise and the nature of affordances is determined. A change in one dimension has an effect upon the other dimensions and the nature of the affordance. It was observed that two dimensions in particular, those of *Primary Assistance* and *Secondary Assistance* have a vital role to play in the learning process, in successful pupil language use and participation. These are associated with discourse Patterns C and D. Additionally, analysis also revealed the importance of context to the emergence of discourse patterns, in particular Pattern F which occurs contingently.

18.2.2 The importance of teacher choice in the creation of affordances

Strong Affordances emerge when what a pupil needs to achieve an action is provided by the classroom environment and is recognised by the pupil. Tasks and activities need to be attractive, meaningful and useful to pupils and at a level slightly above their current ZPD, that is, offer pupils the opportunity to elaborate and stretch their ability. The determining factor here is

Primary assistance, this itself a result of teacher choice reflecting sensitivity and responsiveness to pupil need. At the lesson preparation stage, the following emerged as the key factors for creating Strong Affordances: 1) to design tasks and activities that contain clear language learning objectives (2) to design frames appropriate to the achievement of lesson objectives (3) to select learning objectives within pupil ZPD and (4) to select activities and materials meaningful to pupils and promoting of pupil engagement.

18.2.3 The importance of pupil agency in the emergence of Strong Affordances

Comparison of the two year groups reveals the importance of pupil agency and motivation. Pupils use opportunities when they are within the ZPD, are perceived to be meaningful and arouse interest. When these three characteristics occur together, then pupils are found to be more likely to engage in an activity. Many of the activities in the Year 3 class had a specific language focus, were appropriate to pupil age and had purpose for the pupils. In the Year 5 class the teaching goals were less clearly defined and focused, the range of activities limited, inappropriate to pupil age and less thoughtfully designed. The implication here is that pupil engagement and motivation are something teachers need to recognise and cultivate, acknowledging the significant impact they can have on learning.

The nature of affordances resulting from pupil active agency is manifested in a particular feature observed. In most cases, affordances occur in teacher-led discourse. The teacher senses and offers assistance needed as a result of responding to pupil need. However, there are occasions when pupils initiate creative English use or provide feedback to the teacher, requesting the precise assistance they feel they need. The assistance obtained is well adjusted to their need and the affordance that emerges is a Contingent Strong Affordance (in Pattern F). The implication here is that affordances are a two way interactive process, teacher and pupil influencing each other. Also, that power relationships between teacher and pupil change when pupils are motivated and active in their participation. Pupils' "imagined communities" and the bringing of their interests and sense of fun into lessons may be a key factor here in creating motivation and learner agency in the classroom.

18.2.4 The importance of teacher flexibility in making use of contingently arising opportunities

Analysis of the data reveals that Contingent Affordance was always at the same time a Strong Affordance. This strong correlation indicates that contingency, arising as it does largely as a result of pupil initiation, is closely bound up with pupil motivation, and that pupil motivation is a strong factor driving engagement. It also appears to call for more teacher flexibility and willingness to respond to pupil initiated learning opportunities, a willingness to recognise the driving force of learner motivations and a preparedness to deviate from pre-determined

objectives and lesson plans in response to such motivations. It is a need for appropriate interactively adjusted assistance offered contingently by a teacher or peer pupils. Even when a teacher plans a task appropriate to the pupils' ZPD, the resulting affordance is unlikely to be one of Strong Affordance without moment-by-moment provision of contingently adjusted assistance.

18.2.5 Evaluation of the adoption of affordances in EFL research

As a result of this study, it is the view of this researcher that the concept of affordances is a valuable construct for research, one capable of capturing and providing insight into the complex, interactive, emergent and organic nature of learning. It is a holistic means of discourse analysis taking account of the social and contextual nature of classroom interaction and learning, an approach based on a non-reductionist paradigm. Through the interplay among dimensions *within* the classroom environment, learner agency and learner ZPD can be observed to interact with and respond to the environment. It is an approach that accords well with a participatory perspective of learning, one that permits us to observe learning as an ever expanding use of language and changing of relationships in a community via participation in the sociocultural activities of the community.

When Strong Affordances emerge, the pupils become pragmatically engaged in discourse, appropriate new language use and achieve an intended action. They are both learning and using language, participating in the classroom activity. When affordances emerge, the discourse is real, meaningful and authentic to the classroom context. That is, the activity is focused on language learning and the discourse is meaningful, enabling the learner to engage pragmatically and become a functioning member of Widdowson's (1998) classroom EFL "community" (See 2.8).

18.3 Research Question 3: Evaluation of "Guided Participation"

This study has I believe demonstrated the value of a participative perspective in revealing the process of "guided participation" in the classroom. It is a perspective capable of illuminating the nature of classroom interaction and in particular how learning perceived as participation occurs. Making use of a "participation metaphor" approach, this research examined the language use of socially constituted individuals in the classroom and sought to discover evidence of pupils becoming participants in the primary EFL classroom community. Thus, in applying the participation metaphor (See Sfard 1998 in 2.3.2, Rogoff 1990 in 2.6.2) to an EFL classroom, development can be defined as becoming a responsible member of the classroom language learning community, using the language of the community and acting according to its norms.

18.3.1 Learning to communicate in the language of the community

When a Strong Affordance emerges, that is, when pupils are capable of attending to and making use of types of discourse arising in the classroom, often seen as a transformation from Pattern D to Pattern C, this meets the condition of participation established by Sfard (1998), that of using the language of the community to participate in the activities of the community. For example, in Storytelling of *The Enormous Turnip* and Guessing game, the pupils managed to learn the new phrases, requiring less and less assistance in the process, while pragmatically engaged in the discourse, sharing the language specific to the community through collaborative interaction. Thus, the pupils learned to use the language to take part in the sociocultural activity of the classroom. This suggests that the “participation metaphor” is indeed one applicable to the illumination of classroom learning.

18.3.2 Learning to act according to the norms and values of an EFL community

In the Year 3 class, the classroom discourse is teacher controlled and pupils provided with few opportunities to deviate from the tight control. Thus the norms, values and expectations of this EFL community appear to be those of accurate reproduction of language use modelled by the teacher, pupil passivity under control of the teacher the preferred behaviour rather than creativity with the attendant danger of improvised language use and multiple mistakes. They are learning to participate in a community that is passive and obedient to the teacher, rather than one of creation and exploration. This can be seen in the dominance of discourse patterns C and D and in the change from C to D and back to C again, the learning pass, as learning occurs under strict teacher control. Patterns E and F involving pupil’s initiative occur in unexpected and contingent ways but do so infrequently.

At first glance the Year 5 pupils appear not to share the school-wide norms and values of being submissive and controlled. However, when in their homeroom teacher’s classes, they are under tight control and behave submissively. It is in their English classes, where norms and values are ambiguous, that the pupils appear to be confused and misbehave. The issue is not that the pupils do not conform to the expectations made of them. It is that those expectations are perceived not to be enforced or are unclear, a definite requirement given the lack of age appropriate activities likely to appeal to pupil interests and motivations.

18.3.3 The question of full participation

Although the pupils were observed to participate, it is questionable whether they can be full participants in a different EFL community. They are learning in their own particular community where lessons are formal and controlled by the teacher, a context in which they are expected to take a relatively a passive role, providing accurate reproduction of language. This is a type of participation in which the pupils do not have to be independent and autonomous participants

with responsibility for their own learning. However, in a different context the pupils may be required to explore freer language use and to make their own decisions. Agency and autonomy are important elements in the motivation of pupils and in the building learner independence. There was little evidence of the pupils being permitted such freedoms in this study.

Different schools, teachers and pupils have different perceptions of the educational process, appropriate behaviour and what it means to be an independent and responsible learner. From one perspective tight teacher control is the norm, little value given to pupil autonomy and meaningful use of language. From another, pupil initiative and responsibility are valued, the expectation one of change, of an ever *transforming participation* within a dynamic classroom community (Larsen-Freeman, 2002, 2003). In the former, it is difficult to evaluate the process by which learners become independent. In the latter, where learner autonomy and initiative valued, then it can be expected there will be evidence of contingency, instances of student initiated learning and teacher responsiveness to pupil need.

Classroom activities are nested in the larger framework of community. Thus, if, in their other classrooms, the pupils have little opportunity to be creative and behave independently, can we rightly have such expectations within the ELT classroom? If the teacher in the ELT classroom permits greater pupil autonomy of learning, has different expectations concerning learner behaviour, the teacher is imposing conditions and expectations outside of those of the wider school community that the pupils are unlikely to accept. This can be seen in the discipline problems observed in the Year 5 class.

Van Lier (1996), in a study of a tertiary ESL context, emphasizes the importance of contingency in the classroom, the prompting of initiation together with dynamic and elaborative language use. This research supports such a view. When Contingent Affordances emerge in Pattern F, pupils are observed to use their linguistic resources fully, negotiate feedback and initiate their own agenda, changing the nature and direction of an activity. This occurred contingently and did not seem to arise directly from teacher structuring. The classroom is an unpredictable environment, one in which environmental factors interact and create favourable conditions for initiative. However, such pupil initiation has the potential to subvert the class, a means to undermine the tight control of a teacher. All the more reason therefore to adopt a more pupil centred approach, incorporate pupils' interests, sense of fun, and make use of Contingent Affordances. The Year 5 pupils were undoubtedly less enthusiastic about classroom activities. As a consequence, they used initiative to subvert and to take advantage of the teachers. The implication is once again that initiating participation at an appropriate level and of a type appropriate to the community appears to be a key factor in pupil engagement in the learning process, in creating affordances, participation and language development.

18.3.4 The nature of “guided participation” in the classroom community

If learning is seen as participation, then it might be thought correct to view “guided participation” in the EFL classroom as similar in type to that “guided participation” encountered by Rogoff (1990) in daily sociocultural activities. However, as noted by Widdowson (Chapter 2.8), the classroom community is different from that of a real English speaking community. Consequently, classroom activities cannot be the same and do not necessarily prepare the learner to participate in real activities within an English speaking community. This suggests that the nature of “guided participation” as found in the EFL classroom is different from that of Rogoff’s notion of “guided participation”.

The context of Rogoff’s original study (1990) is a child’s daily life in which adults provide help by means of *structuring* and *interpersonal communication*. The context of this study is a formal educational context in which similarities exist, for example, a choice of activities as Primary assistance and the provision of contingent assistance as Secondary assistance. However, participants in Rogoff’s study are parents, caregivers and young children, the parents and caregivers being expert practitioners and skilled participants in daily life activities. In the Japanese primary EFL setting of this study, the teachers are the ‘expert’ practitioners and the pupils the novice practitioners. EFL teachers are not only expected to be expert users of English in real situations outside the classroom, but are also expected to be ‘experts’ in classroom learning. That is, it is required to distinguish between learning in real life sociocultural contexts and learning that occurs in the classroom. The classroom context is one distanced from the wider sociocultural community, one in which the teacher is required to create and foster opportunities for participation, opportunities for learning not naturally arising out of daily-life activities but ones deliberately created. Within the context of the EFL classroom community, becoming “‘expert’” practitioners means increased participation within that EFL community, not necessarily a wider and immediately available English speaking community. The aim is to develop language ability to participate in the classroom learning activities.

The above distinction is reflected in the nature and type of pedagogic activities in which pupils engage. In Rogoff’s study (1990), the activities engaged in by novices are real, pre-existing within the community, and the child learns by actual participation. The purpose is to achieve full participation in the life of the community. Activities in the EFL classroom have a different nature. Some may be similar to sociocultural activities in the wider social community. The majority, however, will be classroom-specific with an English language learning focus. Additionally, the pupils and their actions constituting the community of the classroom EFL classroom affect the nature of the classroom activities and community, which are different from the real English speaking community. Thus the activities engaged in by pupils may not be

“real”, as they do not pre-exist within the wider social community and opportunities for participation within the wider community limited or non-existent. The purpose of EFL classroom activities is primarily language development through the classroom specific activities and may only have a minimal relationship to participation by the child in the wider sociocultural community. That is, due to its context, the EFL classroom does not and cannot produce ‘expert’ participants’ in real life English speaking sociocultural communities. “Guided participation” in a classroom EFL community context inevitably produces pupils who are ‘expert’ users in *that context*. Apprenticeship to become a member of a classroom community is specific to a classroom community and may therefore be expected to have some limitations as a means of preparing pupils to become full participants in an English speaking community.

18.3.5 The value of “imagined communities”

The gap between the sociocultural world outside the classroom and the EFL learning context of the classroom has been noted above. Attention to the “imagined communities” of pupils may assist in bridging this gap by appealing to their interests and building motivation to access the real community. The selection of activities and tasks can play a significant role in fostering pupil engagement. If an “imagined community” is as real to a young learner as a real life community, associated with fun and engagement, then teachers need to take greater notice of how this may be called upon to benefit the learning experience. It is the task of the teacher to judge how best to stimulate pupil interest by introducing aspects of English and English speaking culture likely to appeal to pupil interests and motivations.

18.3.6 Guided participation in the EFL classroom community

The concept of “guided participation” emerges as a valuable concept to illuminate the classroom language learning process. Insight into the way in which a novice learner depending on an expert’s assistance develops into a more independent and responsible learner is observable in the data analysis of this study. Rogoff (1990)’s notion of “guided participation” does help the researcher to understand the process of learning, though its application is not straightforward. In the formal EFL situation, “guided participation” in classroom activities does not directly lead pupils to participation in authentic activities beyond the classroom. It does not deny such a possibility but it is difficult for this to occur. Formal education does not necessarily have direct application to authentic real life situations. Therefore, in order to use Rogoff’s “guided participation” to conduct formal educational research, it is necessary to understand more fully the nature of the classroom community and to evaluate the possibility of applying the idea in such a community. What “guided participation” in the EFL classroom does is perhaps inevitably to guide the pupils towards becoming an expert user in the classroom community, and the challenge is to help him/her cope with the real English using world in an unknown future. In the

Japanese context there will be few opportunities for immediate participation and use of English in the outside world.

18.4 The Year 5 class

In Chapters 14-17 an attempt has been made to examine and interpret the very different classroom environment observed in the Year 5 class, a problematic class with discipline problems. To accomplish this, five research questions were established (Chapter 14) to guide the researcher's enquiry. In the following an attempt is made to answer these questions.

18.4.1 Research Question 1: What types of affordances are there in the Year 5 class?

This first research question is one essentially concerned with the role of the teacher in the creation of affordances, and here the data reveals the Year 5 teachers provide weak or non-existent support for the emergence of affordances. Analysis of the Year 5 lessons reveals a lack of quality and quantity across the dimensions of affordances, resulting in a predominance of Weak Affordances and inactive participation. Indeed, when the Year 5 lessons are compared with the Year 3 lessons, the two year groups differ markedly in three dimensions: Intended actions, Primary assistance and Secondary assistance. The Year 3 class had clearly defined Intended actions (learning goals), well designed Primary assistance (planning) and responsive Secondary assistance (contingent adjustment). None of these were clearly delineated in the Year 5 data. Thus, teacher attention to these three dimensions can be viewed as instrumental in determining the types of affordances emergent in the two classes, the differing quality and quantity of the resulting affordances available to the pupils and opportunities for participation.

18.4.2 Research Question 2: How do the pupils make use of the given learning environment?

Turning to the pupils, it was revealed in Chapter 15 that the Year 3 pupils make use of affordances in a positive way, participating actively in and enjoying classroom activities. However, the Year 5 pupils present a different picture. They appear to find classroom activities unexciting and lacking in meaningful opportunities for language use. Furthermore, they are actively disruptive of class activities, contradicting the teacher, singing and talking to themselves. One possible explanation here is a possible mismatch between the activities and materials selected by teachers and the age level and interests of the students. A second possible explanation is the confusion shown by pupils concerning what is expected of them, the need for clearer direction and guidance if they are to make use of what are otherwise inaccessible learning opportunities. A third and compounding factor is a failure by the teachers to provide sufficient opportunities for the pupils to make use of and stretch their abilities, to afford opportunities within the pupils ZPD. Thus there appears to be a negative complementarity

working in the Year 5 class. The teachers fail to provide the pupils with a positive learning environment and as a consequence they are both unable and unwilling to make use of opportunities for affordances that do emerge, resulting in Weak Affordances or no affordances. In such circumstances it is not surprising that there is little evidence of language development, little sign of a dynamic transformation in their roles in activities. Not only do the pupils fail to participate in a constructive manner, they actively engage in disruptive behaviour, their participation frequently uncooperative, rebellious and destructive.

18.4.3 Research Question 3: How do affordances affect the pupils' participation?

The three dimensions mentioned in 18.1 above, Intended actions, Primary assistance and Secondary assistance, are significantly different from one another. They do however all result in the creation of opportunities for affordance, though these may vary widely in type and level of pupil participation. One reason for the disruptive behaviour of the Year 5 class may be the lack of each of these three dimensions, whether individually or collectively. Certainly their absence is in marked contrast to the learning environment created in the Year 3 classroom. Additionally, it maybe that where these dimensions do exist, but do so in a weak form, they are not sufficient, either individually or in acting together, to stimulate pupils to make use of potential affordances available within the classroom environment. Furthermore, affordances are undoubtedly influenced by non-pedagogic factors as well. This of course is true for both the Year 3 and Year 5 groups, though in the case of the latter the interview data does reveal a problematic relationship between the teachers and the pupils, one very different from that observed in the Year 3 class, and one that can be expected to contribute well to the types of affordances in the classroom.

18.4.4 What motivates pupils?

Examination of the interview data suggests that lesson design has the potential to significantly affect whether affordances emerge or not. Specifically, it appears that examining what 'fun' really means for pupils, in particular for pupils of particular ages, and incorporating the construct of fun into lesson plans could be a key factor in the emergence of Strong Affordances and the development of active participation. The notion of 'fun' is therefore a dimension of affordances that needs to be re-considered in seeking to develop our understanding of how affordances develop and how they might be incorporated more actively into the daily classroom.

Perhaps one of the main reasons for the problematic nature of the Year 5 class is a failure on the part of the teachers of the class to appreciate both the value of and need for appropriate 'fun' activities. The native-speaker teacher says that the pupils are tired of 'fun' and not enthusiastic any more. It may be the case that the kinds of activities the teachers feel to be 'fun' do not reflect a child-centred and age-related view of fun. It may be limited 'fun' defined by adults such as singing a song. Older pupils may not perceive a 'fun' activity chosen by an adult as

interesting and meaningful and as a consequence they do not participate in the 'fun' activities. This in turn means that the teachers may be reluctant in the future to adopt 'fun' activities any more. Therefore it appears important that teachers give particular attention to what the children themselves, particularly the older children, see as 'fun', activities in their out-of-school lives as well as in the school. Bringing real 'fun' elements into the classroom may be one key to the motivation of pupils and the creation of Strong Affordances. Here the notion of "imagined communities" may have much to offer. As "imagined communities" affect the participation of young children in the real life situations, teachers might gain much by appealing to the "imagined communities" of their pupils, seeking to utilise them in the classroom.

18.5 Limitations and Implications

The following points out a number of limitations of the study, in particular limitations associated with research design and methodology. However, despite the limitations, it is felt to be a study of value, illuminating social and environmental influences on the learning process, aspects of language learning not sufficiently explored in the field of EFL research. The implications of the study are also presented.

18.5.1 Limitations: research design

There are a number of limitations concerning the research design of this study. First, the research is limited in terms of its generalisability, being a small-scale case study of only two classes in one school. It is a study illuminating the particularity of a specific group in depth rather a study of large-scale trends. Thus analysis of a different class and a different school may reveal different types of discourse and affordances. However, the 'rich' reporting of analysed data aims to help teachers recognise commonalities (See Chapters 10 to 17). Secondly, the five months of the observation period was not long enough to observe significant longitudinal development, even within one class. The study did reveal some transformation over time in activities, for example, in Singing. However, it was difficult to see development in other activities such as Language-focused activities or Guessing games. Observation for a longer period of time would, it is believed, have revealed clearer evidence of transformation in the pupils.

18.5.2 Limitations: methodology

There are a number of limitations concerning the methodology of this study. It is important that these be recognized in order that the study and its findings might be properly evaluated, but more especially that future research in the field of classroom interaction take account of such limitations. Of particular note are concerns related to categorization and the measurement of participation.

The coding of Discourse actions

The coding system for Discourse actions may need further refinement. The coding system was developed based on data collected from a limited number of lessons from the Year 3 class. It was then applied to an analysis of the complete transcripts of twenty lessons. Validity was ensured by use of an inter-rater reliability check. However, if the coding system is to be applied to other classroom situations, it may be necessary to make adjustments to the categories in order to gain wider applicability.

Categories of Discourse patterns

The categories of Discourse patterns may also benefit from further development. It was observed that some patterns result in both Strong and Weak Affordances. In particular, some Pattern Ds create Strong Affordances whilst other Pattern Ds create Weak Affordances. The determining factor in this difference appears to be the appropriateness of assistance provided and the eventual degree of success of pupil performance. Only by examining how assistance leads to eventual outcomes was it possible to determine which Pattern D (Assisted language learning activity) resulted in the creation of Strong Affordances and which in Weak Affordances. However, the system of categorisation was not expected to show an obvious and direct relationship between Discourse patterns and types of affordances. It is possible, by making use of outcomes, to further sub-divide the categories in an attempt to seek a more direct relationship. However, such an attempt would also rely heavily upon the researcher's interpretation of the data. For some this heavy reliance on a researcher's interpretative ability may be perceived as a weakness, but it is the study's strength, a means to build understanding of the messy world of human interaction.

Scales for participation

The research documented the process of pupils becoming more active participants in an increasing range of activities. However, both the pupils' development of language and their levels and types of participation may need a more systematic description in order to understand more fully how development through participation takes place. It is an issue of how to scale participation in activities to show degrees of development. The fact that a pupil's range of activities is increasing is the sign of development. However, to benefit fully from adoption of the "participation metaphor" as an alternative way to define learning, the adoption of some form of developmental scales would undoubtedly be beneficial.

18.6 Implications

Implications are made for theoretical frameworks of research, research methods, pedagogy and practice, and further research.

18.6.1 Implications: Theoretical frameworks

The theoretical framework used to carry out this study borrowed from environmental and participative perspectives of learning. This use of two theoretical constructs is believed to have resulted in more comprehensive and valid research findings than would have emerged had a single theoretical construct been employed. The notion of “guided participation” provides an ontological direction to the research, and the concept of affordances a concrete theoretical direction to analysis of the process of learning through interaction.

Adoption of an ecological view in the analysis of interaction making use of the concept of affordances contributes to an understanding of interaction in three ways. First, learning resulting from a process of interaction is of a holistic and complex nature, the learning environment to consist of a number of different components or dimensions. It is within this ecology that learning occurs, emerging out of the complex interaction/complementarity between dimensions. This is a vibrant reality that the mainstream SLA theory of individualistic and computational learning fails to recognise. Secondly, learning is revealed to be unpredictable, emergent and context-dependent, as is ecology in the natural world. Analysis of classroom affordances reveals the provision of contingent assistance by the teacher, assistance that emerges as a result of responsiveness to pupils and varies according to pupil readiness and the nature of tasks. Such contingent learning opportunities are not planned and not on the syllabus. This clearly indicates that learning and learning opportunities are unpredictable, emerging in unpredictable and non-linear ways. Thirdly, analysis of affordances confirms the importance of learners as active agents. As the availability of opportunities does not guarantee affordances, opportunities have to be perceived by the agent. In the research, when the pupils were interested and motivated, learning opportunities were taken up. Learners are active agents and make use of affordances for further action if they are relevant and accessible in the learning environment. Learner’s agency is revealed to have an important role to play if complementarity between learner and environment is to occur. Once again, this is a very different view to that of mainstream SLA in which the learner is perceived to be a passive recipient of information. It is therefore the view of this researcher that an analysis of language learning in a classroom context making use of the concept of affordances is an effective and revealing approach to the analysis of classroom interaction.

The ecological complementarity that occurs as a result of the active learner making use of the environment can also be explained by Rogoff's notion of "guided participation" which argues that learning can be perceived as collaboration. In "guided participation" learning is viewed as embedded in a sociocultural context in which the teacher provides support and the learner makes use of it through interaction. Complementarity also requires an active teacher in addition to an active pupil in collaboration, arising from the way that the teacher takes up the learner's feedback and reacts to it. It is an explanation compatible with an ecological perspective, each recognising the importance of interaction or social activity.

The complementary nature of an ecological and a "guided participation" perspective is to be seen in their views of learner interaction with the environment or sociocultural community. In the theory of ecology, learning is understood as outcomes emergent from affordances, a result of pupils making use of the environment as a system. That is, by making use of what is there, the learner is not objectifying the environment. Rather, the learner is building an accommodating relationship with the environment and an increasingly efficient way of adapting to the environment. A similarity of relationship is to be seen in the notion of "guided participation". According to Rogoff, (1990) learning involves a process of coming to share the common values and practice of a community. That is, learning means to develop and transform, to take on increasing responsibility for managing the activities of a community. A learner's performance becomes integral to interpersonal aspects of the learner's functioning and, as a consequence, the learner's language is not to be viewed as a private individual object but rather as a socially shared one. Therefore, an individual's language cannot be separated from the language of a sociocultural group. In both instances learning derives from interaction with the immediate world of the learner, language a resource shared by those within that world.

Both the ecological and the participative perspectives share the same definition of learning represented by the "participation metaphor". In fact, by attending to discourse, pupils in this research were observed to be developing their ability to participate even when passive and controlled re-production of accurate language use was called for, rather than freer, creative and initiative language use. The pupils were learning the discourse particular to the classroom community and the norms of behaviour specific to the classroom community. Thus the assumption that language development is environmental, context embedded, socially situated and occurs through interaction is empirically supported in this research.

It is this researcher's firm conviction, one confirmed by the findings of this research, that learning is not simply a psychological matter of acquiring linguistic knowledge. Rather, it is also viewed as the development of social ability to participate, to function in the activities of a group and the ability to call upon sufficient (no matter how limited) language to permit such

participation. In other words, language is one aspect of activity particular to a sociocultural group as that language required for participation depends upon the types of activities in a community. Language cannot be separated from activity. As the ability to participate in different ways and in greater depth builds, so does the ability to make use of language necessary for activity. This is a perspective of language learning, one combining ecological and participative perspectives, that this researcher believes has the potential to contribute much to research in the field of language learning, providing a strong theoretical framework with which to undertake research and analysis.

18.6.2 Implications: research methods

The implications of the research methods used in this research need to be explained in more detail. The sociocultural discourse analysis method was devised to analyse the dynamic of classroom discourse, the variety of discursial features interacting and influencing pupil learning. The unit of analysis selected, discourse action, and the categories chosen were adopted and adapted to analyse discourse from a sociocultural perspective. The method devised enabled the researcher to seek to identify discourse patterns with a focus on educational activity. Additionally, a system to identify affordances within the identified discourse patterns was also devised. The system uses six dimensions of affordances and interaction across these enabled the researcher to identify types of affordances, the major findings of this research. These methods were developed grounded in the theoretical frames of sociocultural and ecological theories. As the methods devised in this research are systematic and comprehensive, something that might be argued to be lacking in existing methods of sociocultural discourse analysis, the method is believed to provide empirical validity for the research. Additionally, as this study has revealed much about the interactive nature of learning, it is felt that the methods employed have much to contribute to the further development of analysis methods from a sociocultural perspective and also to our understanding of classroom based language learning.

18.6.3 Implications: pedagogy and practice

The findings from this research have practical implications for teachers and those involved in syllabus and curriculum design. Most notably these are associated with “participation” and how “participation” can be enhanced.

Incorporating pupil interests and creating motivation

This study has revealed that pupils develop through engagement and participation in activities, interacting with other participants who also assist. A participative approach to language learning and teaching would therefore be one encouraging pupils to connect with others, to perceive communicative purpose. There are a number of ways in which this might be achieved. In their lesson planning teachers can seek to encourage ‘participation’ by building engagement into their

lessons. Incorporating pupil interests and motivations are key factors here. In addition, it is required for the teacher to take into consideration factors such as pupil readiness, language focus and appropriate tasks and activity for achieving intended learning. In carrying out this process, the teacher should also give consideration to the nature of the dimensions of affordances, in particular, the interplay among them and how this is likely to affect pupil learning and participation.

A particularly useful means to advance pupil participation and learning is to create more Contingent Affordances. By adopting an ecological participative approach, pupils will be exposed to contingently emergent opportunities and language use arising out of and appropriate to context. The Contingent Affordances arising from the context, the here and now of the environment, are what interest children. For young learners personal interest/motivations are all important. Interest promotes participation and participation prompts a search for language with which to communicate in the participative process. Therefore a syllabus and teachers must allow for contingent use and activity. However, these affordances may not fit with intended planned learning or indeed anything on the syllabus. A key determining factor creating learning opportunities is pupil initiative to use language. Thus, the importance of classroom dynamics needs to be taken into account, the variety of influences at work. There is the need for the teacher to recognise these, not to adhere strictly to a rigid plan, tasks and syllabus. It is recognition that learning takes place in a number of ways and is heavily influenced by context. The difficulty for the teacher is to “manipulate” context for learning purposes. Another difficulty is how to flexibly develop contingent opportunities into rich and beneficial learning experiences for the pupils.

Activities (games) and language gain

Although incorporating pupil interests into activities and nurturing pupil motivation are key factors for creating learning opportunities, it is important to remember that the overall aim is language learning. Games and other activities should not be occasions for merely having fun without language gain. It is a generally held view in primary English that games help learning and therefore games are encouraged everywhere. In this research, however, it was discovered that some games such as memory games and touch games simply created excitement but little in the way of positive learning outcomes. They do not require pupils to elaborate their language use. Pupils may be excited and absorbed by such games. However, they may not serve the ultimate purpose of the language learning community, that is, learning language.

The necessity for literacy development

Problems caused by a literacy demand in activities were manifested in a number of lessons. At the primary school level, priority is usually given to the development of oral skills and lexis.

Thus schools spend less time and energy for literacy development. Additionally, development of literacy skills is much more demanding and takes more time than the development of oral skills. However, observations in this research indicate a clear need to provide for literacy development. If not, then the need is to limit literacy demands made of pupils in classroom activities. Lack of reading ability was reflected in the difficulty the pupils had in making use of affordances available and participating in cognitively appropriate activities. The need for a careful and gradual introduction of literacy skills from an early stage is called for, particularly if the maturing cognitive development of pupils is to be accommodated and made use of.

Fun and communications as curriculum and syllabus aims

Ecological and participative approaches to learning suggest that appropriate aims for Primary English would be (1) that children have fun and enjoy the learning experience; (2) that communication be encouraged in learning activities rather than the learning of separate and discrete elements that are to be tested; (3) that pupils be encouraged to develop an interest in the cultures of English speaking countries and also of the wider world. By adopting fun in activities, an accessible and meaningful learning environment will be created, pupil motivation enhanced. In creating such an environment the teacher's role is particularly important. As young learners do not have immediate needs to use English, it is the teacher's role to foster motivation to learn English, to create interest in English speaking cultures and the wider world. Unless the teacher deliberately seeks to raise pupil interest in English, it is difficult to see how such motivation might arise naturally in a country like Japan in which English is rarely used, particularly outside of the major metropolitan areas.

Making use of 'participation' in assessment

Primary English based on a participative approach also requires assessment criterion different from that traditionally found in the Japanese school system. Assessment should aim not at measuring language in terms of the lexis and grammar acquired isolated from context. Rather, it should seek to measure pupil ability to participate or function in their expanding repertoire of activities and social experience by attention to pupil actions and utterances.

'Participation' can be useful as criteria in both summative and formative assessment. In particular, it appears to be a very useful tool for formative assessment. Assessing pupil potential in terms of how they can develop in their participation with scaffolding would contribute to understanding how children will develop and what assistance will be required (See 2.4.1). This would be in accord with Vygotsky's (1978) advocacy of the use of the ZPD in assessment. Assessing learning as transformation of participation can avoid the difficulty of deciding the acquisition point of discrete linguistic items. By looking at children's development as 'participation', teachers can also see pupil development as organic and whole, involving many

dimensions. Additionally, assessing development as ‘participation’ may also be a more encouraging and democratic method of assessment in the eyes of pupils, as learning to use language is understood as development to become an active member of a classroom community through interaction and collaboration, rather than assessment of individual innate aptitude. Assessment carried out of the ZPD in interaction and mediation is unlikely to be perceived as a threatening experience for the pupils.

18.6.4 Implications: further research

Reflecting the limitations already discussed, an appropriate starting point for further research into the interactive nature of language learning would be to study different groups of learners both at the same school and at a different school. In particular, a study of another class of older pupils taught by different teachers within the same school would be beneficial in investigating longitudinal development. Although children would be different, the classroom community might be expected to contain similar norms and expectations to those of a Year 3 class taught by the same teacher. Alternatively, following the development of a particular class over several years would provide a real longitudinal study. If a Year 6 class, a final year primary class, is studied, it would reveal what might realistically be expected of primary English if it is to become a compulsory subject in Japan. In terms of documenting longitudinal change, a more detailed study of focus pupils including pupils with weak English would be of value. Additionally, research on pupils at other schools in different environments would also be beneficial. Finally, more extensive interviews to discover pupils’ sense of “fun” and their “imagined communities” would have practical implications for informing the kinds of activities and tasks suitable to increasing pupil engagement.

Reflecting the lack of scales of development, the development of scales for the assessment of participation, and also the assessment of language use, would be of undoubted benefit. If social interaction and the “participation metaphor” are adopted as appropriate approaches to seeking a greater understanding of language learning, the development of assessment schemes based on the theories is required. Scales developed for the researcher also have the potential for use by classroom teachers to conduct formative assessment of their own teaching practice.

18.7 Concluding Remarks

This study has revealed how interaction affects the learning and the quality of learning of young learners. It is fascinating to discover how actively young learners make use of their learning environment and how important close social bonds are to their learning. The important role of teacher as guide and mediator emerges clearly from the study, as does the importance of interaction in the learning process.

The following is a quotation taken from data recorded by the researcher. It is a child's remarks on an English language course text. The child was reading a piece of short conversation in the book where several Japanese children are talking about their families.

“Why do they (characters in the course book) talk in English? They've got Japanese names. They are all Japanese.”

The quote shows the child is participating and thinking about the lesson. It should make any teacher wonder how s/he and all young learners perceive not only the conversation in the text but also the English language, learning and participation in the classroom (community).

Appendix A: Interview Questions for the Teachers

A: Background information on their teaching experience and qualifications

B: Perceptions of the pupils.

Take details of their perceptions of the individual pupils in terms of personality, attitudes and progress.

C: Perceptions and beliefs of teaching

1. How are lessons and the curriculum planned and prepared?
2. What is the aim of the English teaching programme of the school and primary English in general?
3. How can pupil performance be improved?
4. When do you feel lessons are successful?
5. When do you feel you have difficulties in teaching? How do you cope with difficulties?
6. How do you access the pupils?
7. What is important in teaching young learners?
8. How do the pupils approach English and other subjects?
9. How do you perceive your relationship with the pupils?

Appendix B: Interview Questions for the Pupils

For the Year 3 pupils, an imaginary situation was set up, using a puppet as a newly arrived student at the school. The pupils were asked to explain what learning English is like to “the new student” who asks the questions given below. For the more mature Year 5 pupils, the questions were asked directly.

A. Perception of English and English language learning

1. Do you enjoy learning English?

If yes, what is enjoyable about learning English

- a. Talking with the teacher in English
- b. Talking with pupils in pairs or in groups in English
- c. Learning new words and sentences
- d. Singing and chants
- e. Games
- f. Understanding things you did not understand before
- g. The course book
- h. Stories
- i. Others

If no, what is not enjoyable.

- a. Talking with the teacher in English
- b. Talking with pupils in pairs or in groups in English
- c. Learning new words and sentences
- d. Singing and chants
- e. Games
- f. When you do not understand lessons/what the teacher says
- g. The course book
- h. Stories
- i. It is embarrassing to speak English
- j. Too easy
- k. Others
- l. What do you do to cope with difficulties?

2. Why do you study English?

- a. Useful to learn English for junior high school.
- b. It is compulsory
- c. Parents want you to learn

- d. To make foreign friends
 - e. To speak with foreign people
 - f. To travel to foreign countries
 - g. To live abroad
 - h. To learn English songs, stories and play English games
 - i. To use the internet and email in English
3. Do you want to continue to study English? Why or why not.
 4. What are your favourite subjects?

B. Participation in the class and alternative participation outside the classroom

1. Do you do homework? Why or why not?
2. Do you raise your hand when the teacher asks questions? Why or why not?
3. Do you sing songs/practice speaking/play games actively in the class? Why or why not?
4. Do you chat or play with friends in lessons? Why or why not?
5. Do you study English at home for lessons? If so take details.
6. Do you study or use English other than for lessons at school?
 - a. Take private lessons.
 - b. Watch English programmes on TV.
 - c. Read English books
 - d. Use the internet in English
 - e. Practice English with siblings/friends/pets/dolls?
 - f. Play with foreign friends in English
 - g. Take the STEP tests (proficiency tests)
 - h. Go abroad
7. Do your parents help you study English?
8. Do you read a lot in Japanese?
9. If you were a teacher, how would you teach a lesson? (for Year 5 pupils only)

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